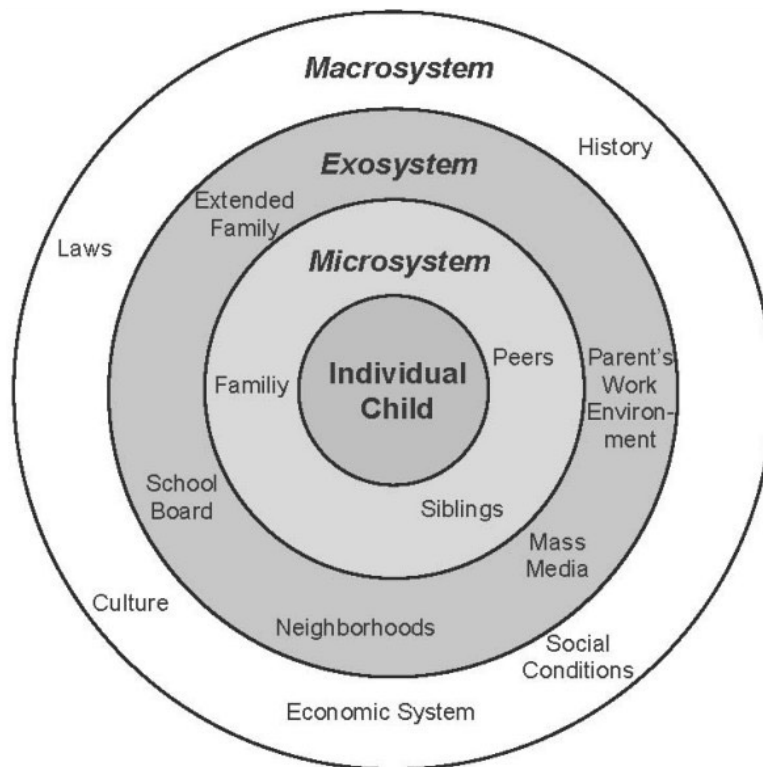


# Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?

An Autobiographical essay



How has your life been shaped by the ecosystem in which you live? How has the literature (and media) in *this* time and *this* place where you have grown up shaped your identity? You have been exposed to media, stories, and texts from the time you were very small, whether you are an avid reader or not. As you developed your own sense of self-awareness, you had favorite stories (either storybooks, family stories, even movies) that you heard over and over. Through this lens, you were learning about your world and the world around you (windows and mirrors). School and your education have exposed you to even more ideas and texts. Through all of your experiences, exposures, and your own life, you have created a sense of self. Your identity was only

partially there at birth: your family had ideas for you, your genetics had ideas for you, but YOU shaped you as well. Your experiences (good and bad) combined to form your world view. Reading is an important way that people construct their own lens and their own identity- whether through the news or through fiction, there is a lens between the reader and the writer. Reading allows you to experience the world through both mirrors and windows and to gain an understanding of the experiences, relationships, and environments that are not part of your daily life.

## The Assignment

Your assignment is to create an interactive self-portrait of how your own identity has been shaped via media. What stories, texts, narratives, news shaped who you are today? How did you navigate the sea of words and ideas? How did they shape you?

Please do not only offer a descriptive narrative on your life from picture books to novels. Please DO offer an analytical, artful, creative story that will help us to gain an understanding of your sense of self as it was shaped through text.

This analysis should be 2-3 pages, double spaced.

You may use media from school, from home, from independent or assigned readings. These sources must each be explained in terms of how they helped shape your identity. You must provide textual evidence from at least three different sources.

In addition: You must create a Google Slides presentation, a short creative film, a TED talk, or a collaged work of art that includes text as well as visual media.

## The Process

Start by brainstorming: think about who you are, key moments in life, and stories you enjoyed

Shape these thoughts through thinking about the essential questions from the unit (see syllabus)

Go back to these texts. Re-read them (if it's a picture book, look through; if it is a news story, go back and find it). Find passages that resonated with you in terms of your own identity. How do they relate to your own experiences? Use a doc to make pictures, quotes, pages, etc. You may make a digital or a paper collage of these sources.

Record your ideas and thoughts. You may use digital or paper. Think of it as an index card for each source: write some notes and save them. You will use them for your essay.

Make an outline. Use the essay outline of your choice to make an outline using your thoughts from your collage. Craft this into a rough draft as an essay, but also create a visual timeline.

Share your outline, rough draft, timeline, and collage with your peer editor.

## I. Who am I?: Understanding ourselves through Literature

- a. How do texts reflect our lives? How does this affect us?
- b. How is our identity made up? What factors shape this?
- c. How do our decisions change or shape us?
- d. How does our sense of self affect us? How does it affect others?