



Bryant-Taneda – Literary Studies 11

*Simple Recipes* by Madeleine Thien <http://mostlyfiction.com/excerpts/simplerecipes.htm>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Block: \_\_\_\_\_

## LANGUAGE CONSTRUCTS CULTURAL IDENTITY: Newspaper Op-Ed /6

Cultural context is the values, environment, and practise and of a culture.

Language constructs cultural identity; there is a relationship between the language a person learns and his/her identity.

Goal: Students will type a 150-200 word newspaper Op-Ed (see definition below). Look up an example of an Op-Ed from any major newspaper like The New York Times, The Sun, etc. Students will target their Op-Ed to people in their twenties and thirties.

Wikipedia defines an op-ed as short for "opposite the editorial page". It is a written prose piece typically published by a newspaper which expresses the opinion of an author usually not affiliated with the publication's editorial board. Op-eds are different from both editorials and letters to the editor.

### Students check list

- ☐ Follow the article structure provided below
- ☐ Include an edited rough draft below your good draft
- ☐ Limit the use of first person or it will become redundant

### Beyond the check list

- ☐ Ask a 20/30-year old to edit your writing (they are your target audience)
- ☐ Read a New York Times or The Sun Op-Ed

### Article Structure

Opening (2-3 sentence) paragraph:

Sentence 1 and 2: Type an engaging sentence to catch your reader's eye. Introduce Madeleine Thien's short story *Simple Recipes*. Your newspaper editor wants something to keep your audience engaged.

Sentence 3: Impress your reader with one example of how Thien uses language to construct cultural identity. For example, you might explain how Thien uses the idea of washing and cooking rice as a focus, or motif, to explain the challenge of immigrating as a Chinese - Malaysian into the Canadian way of life. You may choose to parallel some aspect of your family cultural values and how your family has adapted to society. For example, your grandfather may have immigrated from Austria and his involvement in World War II shaped his ideas and the family's ways of integrating into Canadian society. Or, consider how you or your parents' ideas and ideals affect the way that you perceive integrating into the rules of modern society, the internet, or social media.

Short Body paragraph #1:

Sentence 4: Explain how Thien's cultural reference relates to your family culture/history. The Op-Ed is a personal opinion.

Sentence 5: Provide an example from your family culture/history to support sentence #4.

Sentence 6: Describe the language that is necessary to explain your example of cultural identity.

Short Body paragraph #2:

Sentence 7: Explain another point that develops your family culture/history.

Sentence 8: Provide a supporting detail from your family culture/history to support sentence #7.

Sentence 9: Describe the language or beliefs that are necessary to explain your cultural identity.

Closing (2-3 sentence) paragraph:

Conclusion sentences: Reiterate your main point. Say something insightful about how language constructs cultural identity. Provide a solution and allow your opinion to stick in your audience's mind.