

Prompt: Some students have a background or story that is so central to their identity that they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.

It was an average day in Mr. Foertsch's fifth grade class, but I was sick with a cold and desperately in need of a tissue. My teacher was discussing our morning grammar warm-ups with his back to the chalkboard. So, I waited tolerantly with my arm raised to a near vertical. By then, however, I was in desperate straits. Luckily, a nice boy sitting next to me mustered up the courage to bring me a tissue box. Instead of saying thank you, I quickly snatched it out of his hands and guiltily (why guiltily? Perhaps there is a more appropriate word?) stared at my desk. To my utter astonishment (why astonishment?), when I looked up, my classmates were just idly scribbling away in their notebooks. As I wiped away my stray tears, I was perplexed as to why no one noticed that a boy showed a girl an act of kindness.

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Commented [A1]: (This is a little vague. I found myself wondering what the problems in the situation were. You clarified it at the end, in your last sentence, but starting from the word "guiltily" I was a bit confused as to what the dynamics of the situation were... I can explain this a bit more to you if you contact me in the free chat area.)

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Growing up in (I think you should mention where you were raised. (Growing up in the United States in an orthodox Indian Hindu family, I was always disappointed by of the answers reasons my parents gave me when I questioned their definition of a "proper girl." From a young age, I was taught to avoid the opposite gender so that I would not fall in love outside an arranged marriage. I was also remove an extra space here-taught to not wear clothes above my knees or show my shoulders because it would beis too revealing; that education should be my one and only priority; to always let my father mtake the final decision in external matters; warned not to go to social gatherings where boys would beare-present; and to wear a bindi (mention with a short explanation what a bindi is) (traditional forehead decoration) at all times.

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Commented [A2]: you don't need the word warned here because we are still reading from the beginning of the sentence when you said you were "taught."

I was always the let's avoid that phrase, since you are not in fact, a man. (outsider, misfit, exception) odd man out,

Try it like this: I was always the misfit. -Whether it whether it was during picture-day when I was the

only girl wearing a bindi, or in the summer when I was the only person wearing a long-sleeve shirt and jeans at school. I always stood out as the exception. My parents responded to my pleas to fit in like. Like most immigrant parents and nos, ~~no~~ amount of persuasive speeches, sentimental discussions or abrasive fights could change their minds. —it was time. But slowly, ~~a~~ As they went to their jobs work and interacted with their work colleagues, ~~slowly,~~ they began ~~started~~ to better understand the American culture. ~~culture of America.~~ Now finally they understood that , socializing with a boy does not mean I am going to fall in love with him. —Now, ~~wearing~~ a dress does not mean I am flaunting my body and ~~Now,~~ there is more to life than just an education. And a surprising thing happened: As they changed, I changed too. Realizing how important Indian culture was to my family, I began to follow my culture at home without quarreling. Slowly but surely, I built trust with my family. I reached an intermediate position between the two extremes of American and Indian culture. My family began to accept that I could be American while still being Indian.

At high school, when my friends asked why I never went to any high-school dances, I said it was because my family disapproved of me socializing with boys. When I ~~have~~ tried to explain the reasons sing behind many of my actions to my friends, their response was always a simple “Oh...” with an expression of alarming disapproval. My peers never seemed to realize that I had made a purposeful choice to follow my own culture. ~~never seemed to realize that following my culture is my choice.~~ It ~~was no longer a~~ ~~is not a~~ decision that was being ~~is~~ forced upon me. ~~—not anymore.~~ And even ~~Even~~ now, I still don't always wear shorts, (but I'll wear them on a run), I don't go to all the dances, (but I will go to senior prom) and I won't keep in close touch with a boy, (but I might invite one to my house) ~~not always wear shorts, go to yearly dances, or keep in close touch with a boy. Yet, I am able to wear shorts during a run, go to senior prom, and invite a boy to my house.~~

I have learned that f Following one's culture does not always have to be oppression from other cultures. Reaching a middle-ground isn't inadequate; it is progress towards the acceptance of

Commented [A3]: This was just a different way that I thought to write this out. If you don't like it, then just leave it as you had it.

Commented [A4]: Wasn't sure if you have already gone or will go.

Commented [A5]: This is a little vague. Do you mean you will not have physical contact with a boy? Or do you mean that you will not constantly socialize or interact with one specific boy?

other ideals. I am not suffering by practicing two principles, I am fulfilled. I strongly believe that I can continue in my middle-ground position with my parents and find a middle ground position with the world. I only hope to convince others around me that although we may not agree with the ideals of other principles, the least we can do is to understand and accept them.