

Student Writing Samples

Below are student writing samples for the Inheritance: A Family Interview Project lesson. All the pieces were written by student authors from 826 MSP.

My Family Interview

by Johnny Vasquez

My mothers word's burden me

My mother's name is Maria Vasquez and this is her story. Once my mom told me to sit down and hear what she had to say, I knew in my mind at least part of her life had to be painful to hear. She told me that she found a job at the age of 8 in Ecuador, where she grew up in a two-story house she had to clean and cook 24/7. Her boss paid her well and let her sleep in a room. She saved up her money her whole life and she enjoyed her job making tamales, cooking, cleaning. It was hard work for her. But also she told me that she didn't have a mother or father, but she had a sister. Her sister took care of her and she taught my mother how to clean but the sister died right before she found a job. This hurt her so much but was able to focus on work and she cried all the time.

My mother's words burden me when my mother finished talking about how hard she worked when she was a kid. She talked about the people she lost. She lost her father and mother in an accident and they were the only family members my mom had during the time when she was a kid. Her sister taught her many things and also disciplined her and helped her in a way. But then her sister died unexpectedly and she was left alone with no father, no mother, not even a sister, but she pulled through it. Then when she was in her late 30s, she got married to a person I didn't know. She loved him so much they even had a cat, a house, and everything but then everything changed. Her husband died in a car crash and she was alone again then she was forced to put the cat up for adoption because she couldn't take care of it anymore. She lost her job and she felt hopeless so she crossed the U.S.A. border for a new life.

My mother's words burden me at this point knowing what she went through all her pain. It saddens me, but I knew it was important for me to know so I continued then after finishing her tragic past. She told me that when she met my father in a bar. They talked and danced and got to know each other a few months later, my dad introduced me to my new mom. She became my stepmom, but we share an intimate mother-and-son relationship. What my mom told me next was that when I was little, I ran to her with open arms around her throat and kissed her cheek and she said by that point I stole her heart. From then on me and my step mom spent almost all the time together and I felt happy hearing it then she told me about how she wants my future for me. She wants me to finish high school, go to college, have a well paying job and marry someone I love and have kids and should visit her and all I could do was smile. Hard working, dedication, perseverance, pain, and here is what it takes to have value in life.

My name is **Johnny Vasquez** and I was born and raised in Saint Paul, Minnesota. I live by an ok kind of neighborhood where I could visit my friends, hang out in the park and get to school on time. My family and I are Christian believers and almost every Sunday or Saturday we go to church. I speak two languages like Spanish and English. My parents know very little about English and they always call me for help if they need help reading the mail or anything that they don't understand and translate it to Spanish. I don't really like writing about myself because I get so in depth about myself that I get "distracted," but my best subject would be math because it's easy for me to understand more of it than science. My favorite food would be ramen, my favorite sport would be soccer since I grew up with it in my life. I have one sister and three older brothers and they all are grown adults but my brothers live with my family but my sister lives in Ecuador with her four kids. I want my future career to be a uniformed officer or a k9 unit but before I think about that I want to accomplish something my whole family hasn't done. I want to graduate from college and earn a bachelor's degree.

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My Name

by Ikra Abdi

I was born in the year of 2005 in Ethiopia, and I traveled a lot in Somalia. My name was, however, picked by my grandpa. My name has a beautiful meaning behind it. It means *read*. When I was a little girl, my whole name was different. It was spelled in Arabic like in the English version of the Quran. It was spelled *Iqra*, but today it is spelled *Ikra*.

Growing up was difficult because I didn't speak English, so every time I looked around, people were always glaring at me. I didn't know whether or not they were talking about me. I first lived in New York where I made many friends using my hands to talk; however, I always thought it was weird.

Although I didn't live like a wealthy person, I lived like a normal person. My parents worked a lot to provide me and my siblings a living. My parents always told me not to go outside. They were scared it was dangerous, like it was back home. I always argued with them, telling them that all people were not the same. Even though I never went outside, I looked out the window every day wondering how it was outside. It was a Thursday night when I heard my mom talking on the phone, saying that it was very dangerous out here in New York. Of course I wasn't happy. When I told people about my name, they thought it was weird because I was obsessed with my name. My name was used a lot back in the ancient days, our Prophet Muhammed (pbuh) was in danger at the time. Angel Jibril brought the Kitab or Quran to our Prophet (pbuh). The first page or in Arabic (surah) was Iqra in the whole entire Quran. My name is not only important because of the past history, but because my name is my identity and it shows who I am; I am IKRA ABDI.

My nickname is **Ikra Abdi**, I was born in Ethiopia but I was mostly raised in Tennessee. I live in a nice neighborhood with a responsible community. I can speak full Somali, a little Chinese and I'm gettin better with my Korean. I want to go to Winona State University, my future dreams are runway modeling, acting, be an entrepreneur or maybe basketball.

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Special Items Can Bring Family Together

by Maria Clara Flores

My golden necklace looks like a small rope and it's shiny. It was given to me by my father for a religious occasion. My parents have different religions. Since my father grew up with a different religion, he gave me a spare necklace he had since he was two. And after that it made me feel more connected with my father. Sadly, I would like to be more connected with my father's side of the family since they are mostly all in Mexico. The last time I saw them was when I was the age of seven, but after that I haven't seen them since. My father would explain to me that my grandparents gave him the necklace, and how he was close to my grandmother. The necklace is a symbol of his and my grandmother's relationship

So technically when my parents were young they had a type of Romeo and Juliet romance. So when my parents were neighbors they grew up together because they attended the same school, but what was terrible was that both their parents never got along. But after some time my mother gave birth to my brother. So after a few years, my grandmother opened up to my mother and cared for her as a daughter, and since my grandfather was close with me and my older brother. We still love him and adore him. But we also bring religion here and connect with family.

I am **Maria Clara Flores**. I was born in Minnesota. I am Mexican American and I speak Spanish and English. I want other students to know that it doesn't matter what race you are from that anything is possible because you can accomplish any dream.