

Whole group: Did reading the chapter and listening to Ms. Phillips change your attitude or future behavior in any way?

Regina:

Reading about the stories of immigrants who came to the US for various reasons—in search of better opportunities, escaping conflicts, etc—and listening to Ms. Phillips reinforce the idea that there is no one way to be American. These people talk about assimilating into the culture, how the cultural values they were raised and identified with became influenced with what they perceive to be American values. Therefore, in terms of attitude or future behavior, there is a need to understand that American people are the result of multitude of experiences and different cultural values.

Ahyoung:

Reading the chapter led me to raise empathy and have a deeper understanding of the experiences of immigrants. I learned more about different cultures and the importance of preserving identity. In the book, the women tell their stories: why they immigrated, how they felt as immigrants, and what hardships they struggled with. They left behind their languages, cultures, jobs, and even families. It may not result in immediate and tangible changes in behavior, but it contributes to a broader understanding of the immigrant experience and diverse cultures. I realized there should be power in the people who tell other people their own stories.

Zesen Ma:

Reading about these chapters made me realize that people gave up many valuable and important friends, family and occupations, in order to come to the U.S. for a better life. They often struggled a lot at first, in a brand new nation. But they were all very tough and resilient, and finally they were able to overcome the language barrier, cultural shock, and homesickness, and built a life for themselves. I really admire their courage and spirit for coming into a new world and adapting to the environment. I think it is very difficult to accomplish such things. During Mr. Phillips' talk, she mentioned two factors that were most difficult for these women, when they immigrated to the United States. The first one is language and the second one is culture. In the books, most of them struggled with these two factors as well. Some of these women chose to do the interviews in their native languages and some of them chose to use English. I think using their native language shows how much they miss their country and culture. During the talk, I think Mr. Phillips raised two questions; What does it mean to be American? What is American culture? Being an international student, I don't think I am the most qualified person to answer these two questions, but I think diversity and freedom are the two factors that make the American culture and people in this nation so unique compared to many other cultures. Diversity brings so many different talents, power,

knowledge, and culture into this one place. And the freedom here is the container that can protect and hold these differences. It was an inspiring talk, and I learned many new things and perspectives.

Kevin:

The stories of the immigrants made me reflect on the different motives and backgrounds of moving to the U.S. For instance, the majority of the people in my situation as an international student do not face life-threatening dangers, or another desperate reason to settle down in America. This helped me rethink about the gravity of moving to another country, and what it means to leave your home. It also helped me realize that my global experiences would have been very different if it weren't for the technological advances that allowed me to remain connected to my roots.

Aldo:

Reading through the chapters on immigrant experiences, I was deeply moved by the sacrifices many made – leaving behind cherished friends, beloved family members, and established careers – all in pursuit of a better life in the U.S. Their initial days were often marred by struggles, navigating a world so unfamiliar and at times, unforgiving. Yet, their tenacity and resilience shone through, as they battled linguistic challenges, cultural differences, and the gnawing pangs of homesickness to carve out a niche for themselves in a new land. Their sheer courage, their ability to step into the unknown and adapt, is truly commendable. Such feats, I believe, are monumental. During Susan Phillips' discourse, she emphasized two primary challenges faced by these women upon their immigration to the U.S.: the language and the cultural divide. This resonated with the book's narratives, with some women opting to share their stories in their native tongues, perhaps a poignant reminder of the homes they left behind. Ms. Phillips posed two significant questions during her talk: "What does it mean to be American?" and "What defines American culture?" As an international student in the U.S., I find myself here driven by the quest for opportunities and experiences, especially in the data science industry, that I felt were limited in my home country. While I might not have a deep-rooted understanding of the American identity, I perceive its uniqueness to lie in its diversity and the freedom it offers. This nation's strength emerges from its amalgamation of varied talents, knowledge, cultures, and backgrounds, all thriving under the protective embrace of the freedoms championed here. Ms. Phillips' insights were undoubtedly enlightening, broadening my horizons on the immigrant narrative.