

SAMPLE ORAL HISTORY NARRATIVE

My name is Carmelita Santos Lopez. I was born in Balayan, Batangas on March 8, 1965 to Carlos and Lolita Santos. My father graduated from the University of the Philippines with a BA in accounting, and my mother has a nursing degree. They met while attending UP. I have two younger sisters, Mariel and Linda. Both my parents came from middle-class families, which is why they were able to attend UP.

After graduating from nursing school, my mother decided to complete her internship at the University of Washington. I was only 2 years old when my mother left for the States. My father's family took care of me while my mother was in Seattle. After three years, she was able to file for permanent residency status, and she eventually became an American citizen. My father and I arrived in the United States in 1972, under the first preference category of the family reunification provision of the 1965 Immigration Act. We became naturalized U.S. citizens in 1977.

I was so excited to finally have our family all together. As soon as we arrived, my mother got pregnant with Mariel and then Linda. There were very few Filipinos in Seattle at that time. We lived in a small house in Beacon Hill, which is near Harborview Medical Center, where my mother worked as a nurse in the surgical unit. Today, she is a nursing supervisor of the surgical recovery unit and is looking forward to retirement.

At first it was hard for Dad to find a job. He had to work as a janitor in the Federal Court House in downtown Seattle. He eventually passed the postal service exam and was able to find a job in the US Postal Services, which is where he is working today. We moved out of Beacon Hill in 1979 and bought a house in Bellevue, which is a middle-class neighborhood. You could say we're a model minority family.

My sisters and I attended Catholic schools while we were growing up. For high school we attended Seattle Prep, where we were the only Asians in our class. Since I was ten years old, I expected to attend Seattle University, a Jesuit institution, so I didn't even bother to apply to other schools. I graduate with a business degree in 1987 and immediately worked for Microsoft. Today, I'm a marketing manager for Microsoft and I manage the Pacific Islands account, which is Hawaii, Guam, and Northern Marianas Islands.

I met my husband Thomas Lopez while I was at Seattle University. Before I met Thomas, I only dated white men. We met at a party. He walked up to me and started speaking to me in Tagalog. I had a hard time answering him because my family spoke English at home, so I understand the language but have a hard time answering. At first I thought he was very obnoxious and I didn't really like him. But we kept going to the same parties and we eventually started dating.

Thomas is a strange Filipino because his family is extremely rich, but he chose to help poor people. He's a mestizo, so people have a hard time figuring out what he is. When I first met him, I didn't even know he was Filipino. He's currently an English literature teacher at Seattle Prep. Thomas visits his family in the Philippines nearly every year, and he's mainly responsible for maintaining our Filipino heritage. We have a three-year-old daughter, and Thomas speaks to her in Tagalog all the time, so she's bilingual. My Tagalog has improved since I met Thomas.

We're a middle class Seattle family that is very much Americanized. We shop at the Puget Sound Cooperative, Nordstrom, and REI. I've experienced very little racism while in Seattle, except for some few instances but those are usually just ignorant people. I'm really happy with my life and my family.

Note: Since this SAMPLE ESSAY was written in HTML code, your paper should have a different format.

The final paper should be indented on the first line of each paragraph and single-spaced through out the entire essay. Carmelita Santos Lopez is a completely fictitious person...any resemblance to any person, living or otherwise, is completely coincidental.