As Dr. LaWare talked about in lecture, being successful as a public speaker involves not only knowing your audience, but also knowing yourself, recognizing that your perspective on the world, your values, priorities, what you see as significant, is shaped by your “standpoint” or your location in the culture. This includes your cultural, racial and class background. It can also include growing up in a rural, suburban or urban environment, which create very different perspectives on the world.

In certain public speaking situations, it can be important for you to communicate something about your cultural background and experience so others can better understand who you are. Everyone has a cultural background and one way we can come to understand our own culture is by looking at family or community traditions and comparing and contrasting those traditions with others. It helps us to recognize that ours are not necessarily the norm.

For the paired perspectives presentation, you are asked to decide, with your partner, to each share something about a family (or community) celebration tradition. This can be the way your family celebrates the holidays whether the family celebrates Christmas, Diwali (DEE-wali), Hannukah or Kwanza. You can share one aspect of the holiday tradition, such as a food tradition, or a decorating tradition or special activities for children, or ways gifts are exchanged. Another option would be agreeing to talk about the ways your family celebrated birthdays. Again, food tradition, gift giving tradition might all be possible to talk about (choose one). Another option would be both talking about how your towns you came from celebrated their founding or ethnic heritage. Each person should share one aspect of the celebration and illuminate it with a brief example, description or story. So, the first subpoint would be the overview of the particular tradition and the second would be the brief example or description.

The requirements and organization of speakers (including responsibility for intro, connectives, etc.) remain the same as they are described in the workbook, only the topic is different. Each person is sharing something about their own family tradition surrounding some common event such as a holiday celebration (could be even that they don’t celebrate anything around the holidays if they are Muslim for example), a birthday or a community founding / ethnic day.