XIDS 2100 Writing Assignment 2:

Critical Response Essay: (“Language Lesson, 1976” OR “Because My Father Always Said . . .”)

**Write a 1.5-2-page essay that includes a summary of and critical response to the text under consideration (must be McHugh’s poem or Alexie’s short story)**.

Assignment Due Date: Friday, July 13, by beginning of class (in CourseDen dropbox AND in hard copy).

First paragraph:

* Write an opening paragraph that introduces the text and author. Include a brief description of the text (roughly two sentences) and then transition to your focus/topic from the text. Include two to three textual examples that make your focus/topic visible to your audience. End with a claim/thesis statement in which you take a position concerning the meaning or significance of your topic in contemporary culture. In other words, WHY does it matter to think about your chosen theme or phenomenon in our particular cultural moment?

Body:

* Write one to two body paragraphs that present(s) a case for your position (the claim you make at the end of your introductory paragraph). Here, you need concrete evidence from the text and possibly from experience with culture outside the text. Spend most of the space on the page establishing a relationship between the evidence you’re presenting and your own position in regard to why your topic matters.

Final paragraph:

* Conclude your essay by leaving your audience with a sense of why your argument/position matters. What do you want your reader to remember? What can the poem or story teach us about the focus or topic you’ve chosen to write about? What happens when we critically assess cultural marginalization or accepted notions or narratives about our personal or national identity?

 Focus/Topic Options:

1. Cultural Marginalization (based on race/class/etc.)
2. Accepted or inherited notions about self and other
3. Accepted or inherited notions about patriotism or nationhood
4. Historical narratives about America