Capstone Project

"Little Cami's Suitcase of Many Worlds"

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WC: 615

Use this link to access my Non-Traditional Capstone Project, “Little Cami’s Suitcase of Many Worlds”: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HuRVo9KUgSiAZY-z0Y-Z7UnK4ARSEFFb/view?ts=69a537f9, followed by my explanation below.

For my CIL capstone project, I chose to create a children’s book titled Little Cami’s Suitcase of Many Worlds, which I will present through a recorded reading addressed to my younger self, represented by my sister. I selected this non-traditional format because my Certificate in International Learning journey has been deeply personal, developmental, and identity-shaping. Rather than submitting a conventional reflective essay, I wanted to demonstrate my learning through storytelling and metaphor, which mirrors the way cultural identity and lived experience are often transmitted within families.

I also chose this format intentionally for my sister. As a younger child growing up between cultures, she is navigating questions of belonging, similar to the ones I once struggled with. When I was younger, I often experienced my bicultural identity as confusion or fragmentation. I questioned why our home felt different from school and interpreted the difference as something negative. Through this project, I aim to provide her with language and reassurance that I did not have at her age. By framing intercultural identity as expansion rather than division, I hope she can understand her experience with confidence rather than doubt. In this way, the capstone becomes not only reflective but relational and forward-looking.

The central metaphor of the “suitcase” represents the internal accumulation of languages, cultural frameworks, global awareness, and lived experiences that I have developed throughout the Certificate and more broadly my life. Although the book is written in accessible language for

children, it embeds complex ideas related to migration, global systems, interconnectedness, and worldview formation.

Through this project, I demonstrate knowledge of international and global systems by acknowledging that migration is shaped by opportunity, inequality, and structural forces rather than simply individual choice. My family's movement between countries is situated within broader global contexts, reflecting insights gained through coursework focused on global issues and systems.

The theme of interconnectedness is woven throughout the story. I intentionally describe how local and global realities are connected and how systems are "woven like thread." These metaphors illustrate my understanding that global issues are not distant abstractions but lived experiences that affect families, communities, and identities. My international experience in Sicily further reinforced how interconnected cultural, economic, and social systems shape daily life.

A significant transformation during my CIL journey involved understanding culture as a worldview rather than surface-level difference. In the book, I describe culture as values, assumptions, and invisible rules rather than surface level assessments like food or language. Through my coursework, intercultural engagement, and experiential learning, I came to recognize that my Canadian perspective is not neutral or universal but one of many possible lenses. Studying and living abroad challenged me to examine my assumptions and develop greater cultural humility.

The project also demonstrates growth in intercultural communication. I frame bilingualism not merely as translation but as perspective-shifting. Skills such as listening without judgment, asking questions, navigating ambiguity, and adapting across contexts were strengthened through language learning, intercultural training, and daily life abroad. These competencies reflect the Certificate's emphasis on applying cultural awareness in both local and international contexts.

Most importantly, this capstone reflects personal transformation. What once felt like being "in between" cultures now feels like being expanded across them. I no longer see my identity as divided but as layered and interconnected. I understand myself as a bridge between perspectives, capable of engaging across cultural boundaries with empathy and awareness.

By presenting this reflection as a children's book addressed to my younger self and my sister, I demonstrate not only what I have learned but how I intend to apply it beyond the university setting. The Certificate in International Learning has reshaped how I understand identity, systems, and communication. This creative project captures both the intellectual growth and the relational impact of that journey.

Dear Cami, I am moved by your little book. I assume that you made the drawings yourself. What a wonderful poem! There were too many brilliant little insights in your rhymes to count. I trust that you will find some way to share this more widely. In any case, your little sister is lucky to have you. I have no suggestions and you can submit it as it is. Can you also make the

video available to Pat. I would like her to see it too. I am approving it immediately.

Congratulations!