Write your full name:

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1. What’s the story behind your name? How and why was it chosen for you?
2. What people, places, events, things or ideas do you associate with your name?
3. Do you feel like your name represents/reflects who you are? Explain why or why not.
4. How would you describe the connection between your name and your sense of who you are?
5. If you could change your name, would you? Why or why not? If you changed it, what would you change it to? Why?

**WRITING INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. **Write a short narrative (approximately one page, single spaced).**
2. **You will write about your name, what it means, how you got it, and how it reflects you.**
3. **Include at least one anecdote (short personal story) about your name.**
4. **Consider using one example as a model for your writing, or combine elements of all of them.**

My Name

By Alex Yeganegi

Alexandra Malih Yeganegi. A mouthful.

My immigrant father had to change his name for the Americans, and he did not want his child to go through the same struggle, so they chose Alexandra. Classy, elegant, timeless, is what they say. He never wanted a nickname for his daughter. But I say nine syllables is too long a name when the teacher calls roll.

In third grade, I asked my teacher to call me “Alex.” He hates when people call me “Alex,” a “boy’s name,” he says. He still calls me Alexandra. To this day, he is the only one. Those who don’t know always spell it wrong, with an “ia” at the end.

Malih: named after my aunt. A fake Persian name; I have always felt cheated. They shortened the real name, Malihe. It means “beautiful” in Farsi, but a poetic way to say it, not just on the surface. My aunt is beautiful both figuratively and literally, so I am honored to be named after a woman as strong as steel.

Yeganegi. “Honesty.” Honestly, as difficult as the name is, it defines me. I am happy to not be a Jones or Smith; no offense to the Jones’ and Smiths. A reflection of my culture and a unique part of who I am. A cause for confusion and mispronunciation. “Yeg-uh-neh-gee,” “Ye-gonna-get-it,” a million ways to mess it up.

The question will be when I get married. In one culture, women take the new name. In the other, women keep their own name. How much easier life might be, to become an “H……” with Alabama roots and it a name that rolls right off your tongue. But Yeganegi is a part of me I am not sure I am willing to give up. Decisions lie ahead.