

LESSON 4: CULTURE

GRADE LEVEL 2-3
(1) 15 MINUTE PREP LESSON
(3) 45 MINUTE LESSON



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LESSON 4: CULTURE

ELA STANDARDS:

- Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.

SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS:

- Identify some cultural and environmental characteristics of specific places.
- Explain the elements of culture (how people speak, how people dress, foods they eat, etc.).

LESSON OVERVIEW:

During this lesson, students learn about the different aspects of culture and how immigration builds the unique culture of different American cities. After the first day, students interview a relative and prepare to bring in an artifact of the culture of their parents heritage.

FROM THE FILM:

America is a multicultural quilt. As people move to the U.S., they bring with them the culture of their home country. Throughout the film, we see how immigration to the United States has contributed to building the rich and unique culture of many different cities.



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MATERIALS:

- Culture of Our School Community Sheet*
- AMJ Culture Teacher Handout*
- Culture of My Family*
- Optional: Construction paper cut into triangles or 2 inch strips

TEACHER PREP:

Before this unit, it is helpful to communicate with parents because of their involvement in several of these lessons. Inform parents ahead of time that students will be learning about culture and to be prepared to answer questions about the culture of their heritage. It is also important to notify parents ahead of time of the date you plan for the “cultural heritage day” and that students will be expected to contribute an artifact of their family’s culture.

DAY 1:

Print off enough copies of *Culture of Our School Community* for students to share a sheet with a partner. Print off enough copies of the *AMJ Culture Teacher handout* for student pairs to have one city image each. Print off enough copies of *Culture of My Family* for each student to have one.

DAY 2:

Have ready lined paper for students to write paragraphs.

DAY 3:

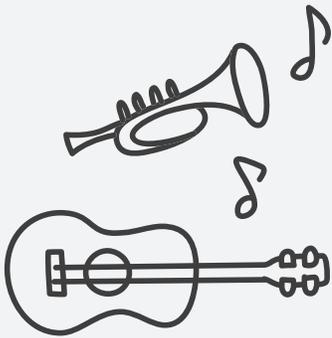
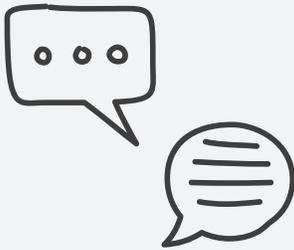
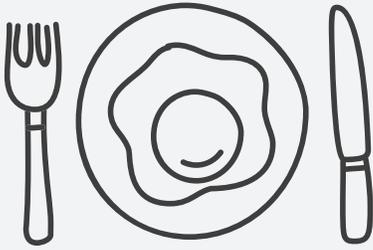
If you are going to have students write what they learned on the pieces of construction paper, chose to either cut construction paper into two inch links of triangles and give each student enough to write several things that they learned from the presentations on each one. It is also helpful to speak with parents and students ahead of time to know what cultural artifact they will bring and if you need to prepare anything to support them (i.e. having paper plates for students that bring food, speakers for students who bring music, etc.).

TO DO:

BEFORE VIEWING THE FILM:

Prepare students to view the film, *America’s Musical Journey*. Ask students to think of a time they visited a town or person’s home other than their own. Have students think of how the city or home was different from their own. Ask them to think of how it was similar. Have students think pair share with a partner and give their thoughts. Explain to students that much of what they described is part of what people describe as culture. The culture of an area describes is language, religious beliefs, traditions, and art. Music is a large part of an area’s culture. Students are about to view a film that talks about the different types of music in America and the culture of their origin. Ask students to pay special attention to what cities the movie features and the culture they see within it.

LESSON 4: CULTURE



TO DO (CONTINUED):

DAY 1:

1. Ask students to write down one city they remember being mentioned in the film *America's Musical Journey*. After the city, have them write down at least two things they remember being shown or said about that city. Have students ball up the paper, and when you call "SNOWBALL!" through them high up into the air. After all the papers have landed, instruct students to each find one paper snowball, unfurl it, and read what another person has put. Have a few students share what they have for the class.

2. Note that much of what they are describing is the "culture" of a city. Define culture for students. Note that culture has many different factors or aspects. Culture includes the kinds of food people eat in an area, the flag of that community, the language that is spoken, the music that is heard, etc. To start, have students work with a partner and reflect on the culture of your school. Have students collaboratively fill in the *Culture of Our School Community* sheet.

3. Now, tell students that they are going to look deeply at the culture of the American cities featured in *America's Musical Journey*. Hand each pair of students one of the screen shot pictures in the *AMJ Culture Teacher Handout*.

4. Ask students to circle all the different aspects of culture they are able to see within the image. At the end, introduce students to their homework. When they go home for the night, they should use the *Culture of My Family* sheet to interview their parents or guardians about the culture of their family's heritage. Tell the class that you are going to host a cultural heritage day. On this day, students will write about their family's culture and share one aspect of it with the class. This could mean bringing in food from their culture, a piece of artwork, music, or any other aspect of culture. Mark the day on the calendar and send home a note to parents to remind them of the students' responsibility for sharing that day.

DAY 2:

1. Remind students that during the next lesson, they will have a cultural heritage day. Just like the film *America's Musical Journey* shows ways that people of diverse backgrounds can come together to make new and beautiful music, you are excited to see the diverse backgrounds in your own classroom!

2. Have students get out the *Culture of My Family* sheet. Tell them that before they share their artifact and what they learned about their culture with the class, they must first plan what they will say. This means they must write a paragraph that they can read from.

3. Review with students how to properly write an informational paragraph with a topic sentence, supporting details, and concluding paragraph.

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TO DO (DAY 2 CONTINUED):

4. Instruct students to use the *Culture of My Family* sheet to write a short paragraph describing their cultural heritage.
5. Have students practice speaking the paragraph out loud with a partner.

DAY 3:

1. Welcome students to the cultural showcase day! Remind students that they are going to present a speech to the class about their family's cultural heritage. As students are sharing their cultural heritage, they should showcase what they brought in with the class. This may mean sharing food or showing a music video clip, so prepare ahead of time if additional coordination may be needed.
2. If you would like, students can write down one new thing they learned during each student's presentation on small pieces of construction paper cut into 2-inch strips or triangles. At the end of class, you can have the students link the construction paper into a chain or connect the triangles with string to make a multicolored reflection of all the different aspects of American culture in your classroom.
3. Call students up one at a time to present their cultural heritage paragraph and talk about their artifact.

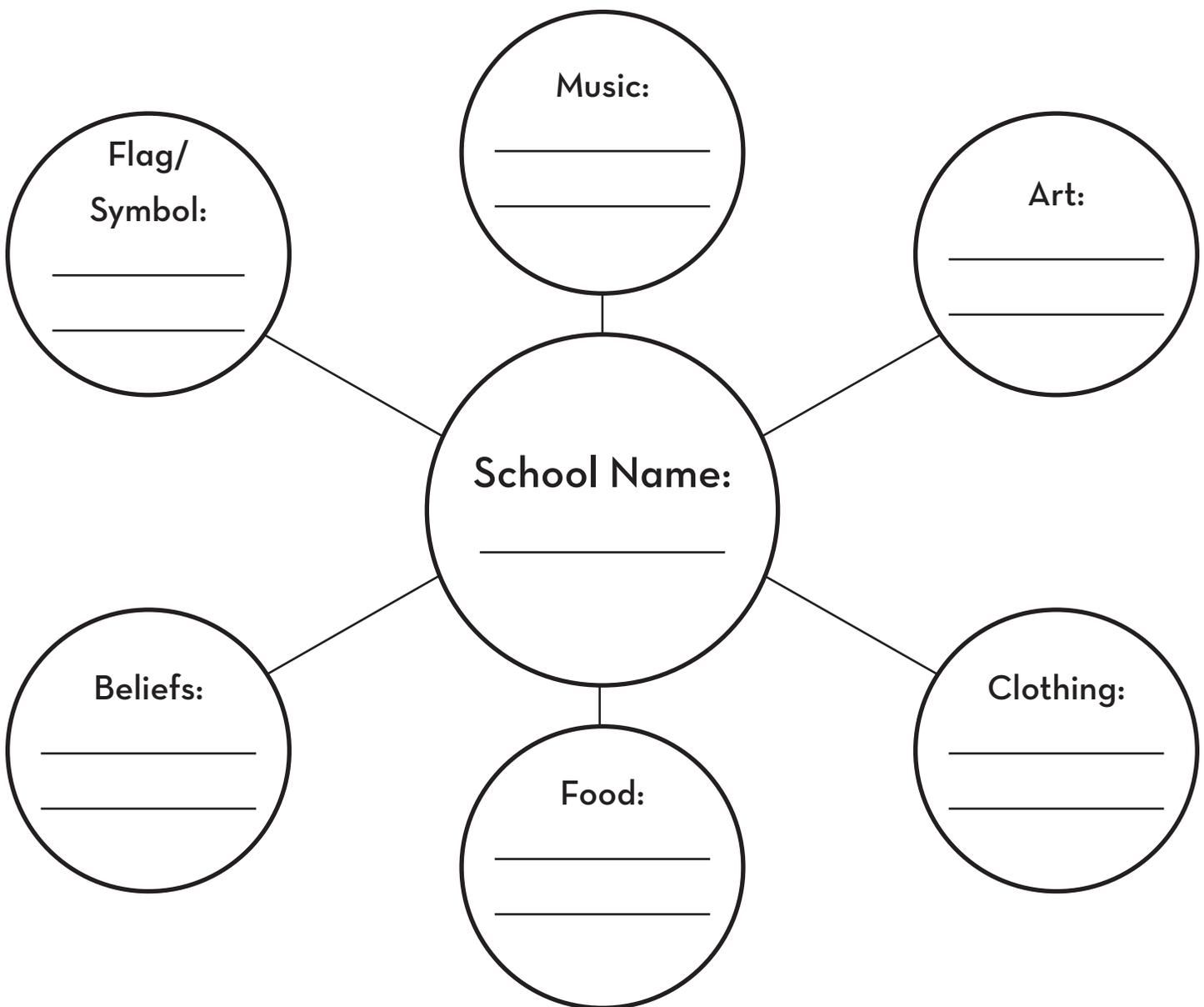
EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

To investigate the cultures of the peoples that formed our nation, consider reading books with students that highlight the traditions that influence our modern music. For example, *Dance, Nana, Dance* by Joe Hayes retells the cultural folklores of Cuban Americans in the same rhythmic tones that underlie the musical traditions from that area.



Culture of Our School Community

Directions: Find a partner. Write the name of the school in the center circle. In each of the surrounding circles, decide with your partner, what would fit in that for your school's culture. For example, under "music" you may think of a school song, or a jingle that is played during announcements. Is there a song your teacher commonly plays in the classroom?



Culture of *America's Musical Journey* Cities

Directions: Below is an image from *America's Musical Journey*. For the image you are given, circle the different aspects of culture that you see in the city. Label it as one of the types of culture (music, art, clothing, food, beliefs, flag/symbol).

City: Chicago

Circle At Least 3 Aspects of Culture!



Summarize: Describe the culture of this city! Use two adjectives.

Culture of America's Musical Journey Cities

Directions: Below is an image from *America's Musical Journey*. For the image you are given, circle the different aspects of culture that you see in the city. Label it as one of the types of culture (music, art, clothing, food, beliefs, flag/symbol).

City: New York

Circle At Least 3 Aspects of Culture!



Summarize: Describe the culture of this city! Use two adjectives.

Culture of *America's Musical Journey* Cities

Directions: Below is an image from *America's Musical Journey*. For the image you are given, circle the different aspects of culture that you see in the city. Label it as one of the types of culture (music, art, clothing, food, beliefs, flag/symbol).

City: Miami

Circle At Least 3 Aspects of Culture!



Summarize: Describe the culture of this city! Use two adjectives.

Culture of *America's Musical Journey* Cities

Directions: Below is an image from *America's Musical Journey*. For the image you are given, circle the different aspects of culture that you see in the city. Label it as one of the types of culture (music, art, clothing, food, beliefs, flag/symbol).

City: Nashville

Circle At Least 3 Aspects of Culture!



Summarize: Describe the culture of this city! Use two adjectives.

Culture of My Family

Directions: Interview your parents about their culture. Where are they from? How would they describe it in two words (adjectives)? What cultural aspects do they know of in each category? Fill in the responses below.

The diagram consists of a central circle connected to six surrounding circles. The central circle contains the text: "My Family is From:" followed by a blank line, "2 adjectives that describe the culture are:" followed by two blank lines. The surrounding circles are labeled as follows:

- Music / Art:** Two blank lines.
- Language:** Two blank lines.
- Clothing:** Two blank lines.
- Food:** Two blank lines.
- Beliefs:** Two blank lines.
- Flag/ Symbol:** Two blank lines.