

A Look At Culture (A Comparative Study)

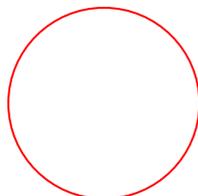
OBJECTIVES

1. The students will be able to define culture and indicate its components.
2. The students will be able to distinguish between surface and deep culture.
3. The students will gain an understanding and appreciation for the Japanese, American, Lakota Native American, and Hispanic cultures.
4. The students will be able to explain factors that impact culture.
5. The students will be able to compare and contrast between the Japanese, American, Lakota Native American, and Hispanic cultures.

The students will study the cultures of the Japanese, the Lakota Native American, and Hispanic in relation to the American culture by using several conceptual tools which are called the “universals” of culture. These “universals” are functions which culture serves and which are found in some form in every culture on earth.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

1. Divide the students into groups of three or four.
2. Give each group a large piece of newsprint with a circle drawn in the center.
3. In the circle, the students will write as many things as they can that they have in common.
4. Around the outside of the circle, the students will write things that they do not have in common with the group, things that are uniquely them.
5. The students will share their similarities and differences with the group.
6. Through this activity the students will realize that they have many things in common with their group regardless of their cultural heritage.



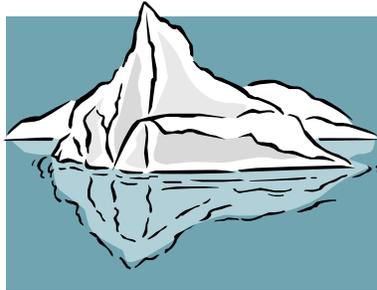
CULTURE CONCEPT

OBJECTIVES

1. The students will be able to define culture and indicate its components.
2. The students will be able to distinguish between surface and deep culture.

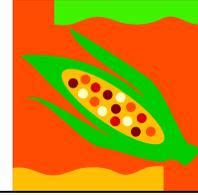
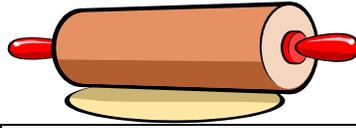
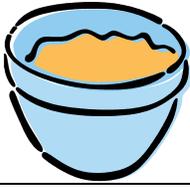
ACTIVITY: ICEBERG CONCEPT OF CULTURE

1. The students will brainstorm the definition of culture.
2. Using the iceberg as an analogy, the students will discuss aspects of deep culture opposed to surface culture.



ACTIVITY: ARTIFACTS – WHAT AM I?

1. Divide students into three groups.
2. Each group will create a bag of artifacts that is representative of the American culture. The groups will then switch bags and discuss the other groups' concept of the American culture. To complete this part of the activity, the students will create a class description of the American culture.
3. Each group will then be given a bag of artifacts from the Japanese, Lakota Native American and Hispanic cultures. The groups will hypothesize about each culture based upon the artifacts. Each group will be given the opportunity to examine the artifacts from each culture. The students will then make a class description of each culture. At the end of the unit, the students will determine how accurate their descriptions were.



JAPANESE	HISPANIC	LAKOTA
Rice bowl	Tortilla	Corn
Floor plan	Mural	Beadwork
Sumie painting	Papel picado	Dream catcher
Coke can	Picture of barda	Muk muk bag
Durama doll	God's eye	Eagle feather
Picture of kimono	Sarape	Peace pipe
Headband	Virgin de Guadalupe	Medicine wheel
Fan	Rosary	Animal painting
Kanji	Proverb in Spanish	Fancy shawl

MATERIAL UNIVERSAL – FOOD

OBJECTIVES

1. The students will understand the importance of rice to the Japanese culture, corn to the Lakota culture, tortillas to the Hispanic culture, and fast food to the American culture.
2. The students will be able to show that rice, corn, tortillas, and fast food are deeply embedded in the universals of culture.

ACTIVITY: MORE THAN JUST FOOD

Indicate the significance of the following foods to their respective cultures by filling out the following chart:

Rice to the Japanese

Corn to the Lakota

Tortillas to the Hispanic

Fast food to the Americans

	JAPANESE	LAKOTA	HISPANIC	AMERICAN
FESTIVALS				
LANGUAGE				
ARTS				

LITERATURE				
FOOD				
PSYCHOLOGY				
ECONOMY				
SOCIOLOGY				
POLITICS				
GEOGRAPHY				
HISTORY				

MATERIAL CULTURE: HOUSING

OBJECTIVES:

1. The students will understand how population density impacts the culture – from housing to personal relationships
2. The students will apply the idea of small denotes quality to the Japanese society and “bigger is better” to the American culture.
3. The students will compare and contrast housing in the Japanese culture, American culture, Lakota culture, and the Hispanic culture.



ACTIVITY: CHAIR ACTIVITY

The students will compare the land area and population density of Japan to California. Through this activity, the students will see how population density impacts culture. They will then brainstorm other areas which would be affected such as price of housing, housing demand, size of apartments, furniture manufacturing, personal relationships, advertising etc.

ACTIVITY: HOUSE PLAN COMPARISON AND ANALYSIS

Students will compare the house plan of a Japanese residence and garden for a family of 5 or 6 people to that of an American family of the same size. They will list the similarities and differences between the two house plans and analyze their significance. Students may extend this activity to include a comparison with Mexican and Lakota home. (Students should note that Japanese homes illustrate using limited space creatively; American homes are larger and more spacious; Mexican homes are very private; Lakota homes are generally less modern as material possessions are of little importance.



ART

OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will observe that Japanese art illustrates harmony through contrasts.
2. The students will compare the creative, free American art to the self-disciplined Japanese art.
3. The students will identify the importance of Mexican murals.
4. The students will compare the relationship between man and nature found in Japanese and Lakota art.
5. Copying the masters, the students will create their own masterpiece.

ACTIVITY: JAPANESE SUMIE ART

Students will view several example of Japanese Sumie painting including examples of makimono and kakemono. They will analyze the themes and characteristics found in these paintings. Following examples found on the internet, students will be given the opportunity to create their own sumie.

ACTIVITY: ART COMPARISONS

Students will view examples of art from Japanese, Lakota, American, and Hispanic cultures. They will list similarities and differences found in these pieces of art. They will also discuss how art relates to and depicts the culture.

ACTIVITY: MURALS

Students will create their own class mural. Murals always tell a story or personal feelings about social issues.



PROVERBS

OBJECTIVE

The students will illustrate that proverbs are “mirrors of a culture.”

ACTIVITY: JAPANESE, NATIVE AMERICAN, HISPANIC, AMERICAN

The students will write in their own words the meanings of the list of proverbs and then indicate the value, belief etc. underlying the proverb. They can also illustrate the proverbs.

Japanese

A stick before you tumble: seek help before it is too late.

The water which fell from the plate will not go back.

A sweet is better than cherry blossoms.

Single effort, double gain.

You will gain three moons if you wake up early in the morning.

Lakota Native American

When a man moves away from nature his heart becomes hard.

Force, no matter how concealed, begets resistance

Everything the power does, it does in a circle.

A man or woman with many children has many homes.

Many have fallen with the bottle in their hand.

Hispanic

Do not rejoice at my grief, for when mine is old, yours will be new.

Flattery makes friends, and truth makes enemies.

He that is rich will not be called a fool.

He who knows nothing, doubts nothing.

In a calm sea every man is a pilot.

American

The early bird gets the worm.

Cunning men deal in generalizations.

Nobody has ever bet enough on a winning horse.

After all is said and done, more is said than done.

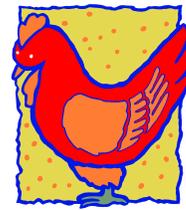
The more sins you confess, the more books you will sell.

FOLK TALES

Through selected folk tales, the students will gain insight into the moral and psychological make-up of the people within that culture. Cinderella is an excellent folk tale to analyze in that it can be found in many cultures and takes on the flavor of that culture.

ACTIVITY: KAMISHIBAI

1. Divide the students into three groups. Group #1 will receive the Japanese folk tale “The Monkey and the Crab.” Group #2 will receive the Spanish folk tale “the Half Chicken” and Group #3 will receive the American folk tale “the Little Red Hen.”
2. Each group will create a kamishibai or paper play of their fairy tale. The scenes of the story are drawn on 8 or 10 large cards which are placed in order of the events that happen in the story.
3. The students will discuss the cultural values exemplified in the three folk tales as well as the similarities and differences between the cultures as is indicated in the folk tales.



LANGUAGE

OBJECTIVES

1. The students will learn simple greetings in Japanese, Spanish, and Lakota.

2. The students will gain an insight into Japanese and Hispanic cultures through use of the polite form.
3. The students will learn the importance of body language as a form of communication.

ACTIVITY: GREETINGS

1. The instructor will model simple greetings using the polite and familiar forms in Japanese and Spanish. The students will repeat the greetings paying close attention to pronunciation. In pairs, the students will role play greetings in various situations.
2. Students will learn the significance of the bow in Japanese culture, the abrazo in the Hispanic culture and the no touching in the Lakota culture compared to the handshake in the American culture. In pairs, the students will role play situations using simple greetings and the appropriate body language.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND CONTROL

OBJECTIVES

1. The students will be able to compare the importance of the family and group to the Japanese, Hispanic, and Lakota cultures in contrast to the importance of independence to the American culture.
2. The students will be able to distinguish the significance of a name in the Japanese, Hispanic, and Lakota cultures.
3. The students will gain insight into the concept of group consensus and social control.

ACTIVITY: WHAT IS IN A NAME?

Students will complete a worksheet analyzing the significance of their name and also the significance of names in other cultures.

ACTIVITY: FAMILY CREST

After viewing and discussing the Japanese mon, European crest, and the Lakota medicine wheel, students will create their own family crest and explain its significance.



EDUCATION

OBJECTIVES

The students will compare the education and its importance in the Japanese, Lakota, American and Hispanic cultures,

ACTIVITY: JAPANESE, HISPANIC, LAKOTA AND AMERICAN EDUCATION

The students will do research about education in the various cultures. They will share this research with the class. In pairs, using a Venn diagram, students will compare and contrast the educational beliefs of the various cultures.



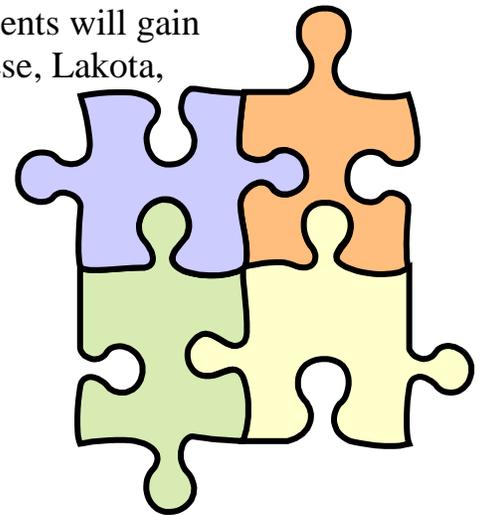
WORLD VIEW

1. The student will be able to analyze the effects that Shintoism, Buddhism and Confuciousism have had on the Japanese mind.
2. The students will be able to compare and contrast the Japanese Shinto worship of nature to the Lakota spirit worship.

3. The students will be able to list the differences and similarities between the belief systems of Japanese and Lakota to the Judo Christian beliefs of the Hispanics and Americans.

ACTIVITY: JIGSAW

1. Divide the students into groups of three. In each group, students number off. All number 1 students receive an information sheet describing some of the customs of the Japanese culture, and number 2 students receive an information sheet describing some customs of the Lakota culture. Number 3 students receive a sheet describing customs of the Hispanic culture.
2. The students read their individual information sheets and note the main points.
3. For five minutes, students share their ideas with another student with the same number.
4. Returning to their original group, the students each have five minutes to share with the other two members of their group about their respective cultures.
5. To finish this unit, the students will review their class descriptions of the cultures based upon artifacts. They will determine the validity of their hypothesis.
6. The objective of this entire project is that the students will gain valuable insights and understanding of the Japanese, Lakota, Hispanic cultures in relation to their own culture.



If you would like more information about any of the above activities, contact patrandolph@earthlink.net.

