Kids Creating Cultures

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Goals and Objectives

The fundamental goal of this unit Kids Creating Cultures is to immerse the students in all of the elements that make up a culture. These elements encompass a wide range of ideas from historical time periods, migration routes, family structures, rites of passages, to holidays and celebrations. We hope to increase the students understanding of what makes cultures unique and help them appreciate the similarities and differences that exist among cultures. Through the process of designing their own culture, deciding its history, the students will learn how cultures develop, change, and grow.

This unit of study is developed to foster the use of cooperative learning groups. The group needs to work collaboratively to make decisions that will depict the creative and critical thought processes of each member of the group. The use of research materials such as: maps, geography texts, almanacs, encyclopedias, atlases, and internet studies will allow the students to construct their culture's history and travels.

Another important facet to this unit is the hope that students will become aware of the necessity of one culture being part of another culture and integrating them to make the society around them a better place for all.

Sunshine State Standards

Social Studies

Time, Continuity, and Change

Standard 1:
The student understands historical chronology and the historical perspective. (SS.A.1.2)

1-understands how individuals, ideas, decisions, and events can influence history.

2-uses a variety of methods and sources to understand history and knows the difference between primary and secondary sources.

3-understands broad categories of time in years, decades, and centuries.

People, Places, and Environments
Standard 1:
The student understands the world in spatial terms. (SS.B.1.2)

1-uses maps, globes, charts, graphs, and other geographic tools including map keys and symbols to gather and interpret data and to draw conclusions about physical patters.

2-knows how regions are constructed according to physical criteria and human criteria.

3-knows ways in which people view and relate to places and regions differently.

Standard 2:
The student understands the interaction of people and the physical environment. (SS.B.2.2)

1-understands why certain areas of the world are more densely populated than others.

2-understands how the physical environment supports and constrains human activities.

3-understands how human activity affects the physical environment.

Language Arts

Reading

Standard 2:
The student constructs meaning from a wide range of texts. (LA.A.2.2)

5-reads and organizes information for a variety of purposes, including making a report, conducting interviews, taking a test, and performing an authentic task.

Writing

Standard 2:
The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively. (LA.B.2.2)

1-writes notes, comments, and observations that reflect comprehension of content and experiences from a variety of media.

2-uses electronic technology, including word-processing software and electronic encyclopedias, to create, and verify information.

Language

Standard 2:
The student understands the power of language. (LA.D.2.2)

1-recognizes different techniques used in media messages and their purpose.

4-selects and uses appropriate technologies to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of communication.

Responsible Health Behaviors

Health

Standard 3:
The student knows how to use effective interpersonal communication skills that enhance health. (HE.B.3.2)

1. understands the relationship between verbal and nonverbal communication (e.g., body language).

2. knows the skills needed to be a responsible friend
(e.g., communication and sharing).
3. knows nonviolent, positive behaviors for resolving conflict (e.g., peer mediation).
4. knows various ways to communicate care, consideration, and acceptance of self and others (e.g., by cooperating).
5. exhibits attentive listening skills to enhance interpersonal communication.

Program Overview

This unit of study is comprised of four areas. The areas are *Making Decisions, Creating a Culture, Project Choice,* and *Culminating Activity.*

The area of *Making Decisions* promotes activities that encourage brainstorming, research skills, and note taking. After brainstorming ideas the students will use of a variety of research materials that will help them make decisions accurately based on history. All decisions need to be able to fit into the larger picture of reality. The students will use the skill of note taking to compile the information that they will use throughout the unit. Examples:

- Name culture
- Historical time period
- Original habitat
- Reasons for migration
- Migration route
- Mode of transportation
- Geography of new settlement
- Demographics of people

In the area of *Creating a Culture* each group begins to construct how their new culture operates by reading and interviewing people of other cultures. The group will then apply what they have learned to their original culture. There are many areas that students can work on and it is up to the

teachers if she chooses to do all the areas, lets the students choose what they find most interesting, or students use what is most applicable to their chosen time period and/or habitat. Examples:

- Living quarters and buildings
- Family structure
- Power structure
- Economy and currency
- Education
- Language
- Religion and rituals
- Heroes and heroines
- Folklore
- Holidays and celebrations
- Dance
- Food
- Clothing
- Rites of passage
- Calendar
- Toys, games, and sports
- Defense and protection

The area of *Project Choice* provides the students the chance to share their *Created Cultures* in a variety of ways. It is up to the discretion of the teacher of how the projects will be distributed. Each group could have one major project or a number of projects. It is recommended that the students be guided towards choosing projects that can showcase their talents. Examples:

- Map making

- Projects (designing clothing, jewelry, flags, toys, inventing tools)
- Written projects (anthem, fables, Bill of Rights, poetry)
- Making music and musical instruments
- Choreographing rituals and dances
- Developing a form of transportation
- Making models of habitat and architecture
- Power Point presentation
- Dramatization

The last area is the *Culminating Activity*. This is when the groups have the opportunity to present their *Created Culture* to their classmates, other students, family members, and people in the school and community. The students enjoy working at the ***Living Cultural Museum*** where others can visit and learn about them. Again, this culminating activity is at the discretion of the teacher of how evolved she/he would like to make it.

Lesson Plans

Historical Time Period

Environment, climate change, natural disasters, discoveries, new knowledge, encounters with other cultures, trade, war, ease of communication, and the migration or movement to a new location all become part of a culture's history.

The time period in which this history takes place determines how the culture develops. Much of U.S. culture is based on the ideals of the Europeans that migrated to America in search of freedom and opportunity. In later years, immigrants who came from other nations brought new customs and ideas that also influenced U.S. culture.

To understand the effects of time periods on cultures, find out about the time periods below. Divide the time periods within the members of the group. This can be done as pairs or as individuals. Your job is to research and become an expert of your designated time period and describe it to the rest of your group.

ICE AGE	RENAISSANCE
INUSTRIAL REVOLUTION	BRONZE AGE
MIDDLE AGES	AGE OF DISCOVERY/COLONIZATION
NEOLITHIC AGE	VICTORIAN AGE
TWENTIETH CENTURY	SPACE AGE

Now imagine that your culture had its origin in one area or region of the earth and then migrated to another.

1-How did the time period of this migration affect the culture?

2-Did maps exist?

3-How rapid and sophisticated was communication with other cultures?

**Our culture's time period will be _____ because…*

Living Quarters and Buildings

All people need some kind of shelter, whether they live in caves, tents, castles or high-rise apartment buildings. The types of buildings people live in depend on the climate, natural resources, and social relationships.

The Iroquois lived in ***long houses*** made from elm trees. A long house was 50 to 100 feet long and had a hall down the middle. A dozen or so families lived in separate part of the same long house. People slept on wooden shelves along the walls and cooked their meals in the hall on open fires shared with other families.

In the Sahara Desert, people had to keep moving to gather food and to find fresh grass for their animals. These nomadic tribes lived in tents that they could carry with them and put up quickly at their next location.

Brainstorm as a group the answers to the following questions about shelter for the culture you are creating. Remember to always keep in mind all of the information you compiled making the decisions on your culture.

Are the houses communal or single-family dwellings?	**What are the sizes, shapes and styles of the houses where families live?**
What are the rooms like where people gather? Where are these rooms located?	**Where and how do people sleep?**
Where do people cook and eat their meals?	**What materials would you use to build your shelter? Draw what it would look like.**

Creating Totem Poles

Some cultures create statues or totem poles that represent beliefs, stories, or important figures from their pasts. Animals, plants, objects, found in nature, and even people can be included in a totem pole.

You are the totem pole maker for your culture. Design a totem pole that includes three to five different symbols from your culture's history. Your totem pole should be detailed, colorful, and large enough to be seen easily from across a room. Your totem pole should measure roughly 3 feet tall.

Your totem pole should be made from house hold items and art materials that are supplied by your teacher. It is not necessary that you purchase items from your local art store. Be creative when constructing your totem pole. Include with your display an information display explaining your totem pole for those who only have a chance to view your creation.

Happy Creating!!!!

Telling Fables

You are your culture's official storyteller. Review the characters, morals, and values your group decided on when creating your culture's folklore.

Read other fables for background information before you create your own fable. Compare the fables and decipher what are the similarities that all fables consist of. Write and illustrate a fable based on the beliefs, heroes, and history of your culture. Each fable should be composed of the major elements of storytelling. Your culture's fable should be bound and created by you.

THOUGHT : *You can also make an audio-tape to accompany your book so younger children can follow along with the story. Another idea is to create a video-tape of a reenactment of your fable.*

Write On!!!!!

Crafting Toys and Games

You are your culture's toy maker. Review the roles your group took about your culture's sports and leisure activities. Use those ideas to make some toys and games.

There are two parts to your task:

1-create and teach two games played in your culture

2-make at least one toy used by children in their leisure time

Be sure that your game has rules and that the game has all the items needed to play the game, if you are creating a game board your game should be inside a box. Remember to use only household items to construct your game (if needed) and your toy. Both the game and the toy should be interesting enough to engage others to want to participate. This task takes a lot of brainstorming, creativity, and critical thinking.

Are you the next Toys R' Us?

Reporting About Your Culture

An archeologist is someone who studies past cultures by analyzing the remains of the buildings, bones, and artifacts, such as tools, dishes, and other items used by the people in the culture.

Now that you have recorded the elements of your culture, you will publish a more detailed archaeological report. Each person in your group will be responsible for one or more section of this report.

Once all the sections have been written, edited and revised, you will compile them into one comprehensive report. In your group, decide who will write about each of the topics. Write that person's name next to the topic, along with the due date. Remember, your group may have ***all, many, or some*** *of the topics below. You need to schedule your due dates dependent on when the final due date is. If someone in your group is responsible for many topics, remember not to make all the due dates the same.*

Each person in your group should do the following for each of his or her topics:

- *Write one or two pages about each of the topics assigned.*
- *For each topic, write a detailed description of that aspect of his or her culture.*
- *Edit, proofread, and revise*

REMEMBER YOUR JOB IS TO INFORM OTHERS ABOUT THE FINDINGS OF AN AMAZING CULTURE THAT HAS NEVER BEEN KNOW ABOUT BEFORE. YOU NEED TO BE CLEAR SPECIFIC IN YOUR WRITING.

Who's Doing What in the Culture World

Possible Topics	*Archaeologist on Duty*	*Date Due*
Living quarters and buildings		/ /
Family structure		/ /
Power structure		/ /
Economy and currency		/ /
Education		/ /
Language		/ /
Religion and rituals		/ /
Heroes and Heroines		/ /
Folklore		/ /
Holidays and celebrations		/ /
Dance		/ /
Food		/ /
Clothing		/ /
Rites of passage		/ /
Calendar		/ /
Toys, games, and sports		/ /
Defense and protection		/ /

Living Cultural Museum

Plan with your group how you will use the space assigned to you. As a group discuss the following questions and write your answers below. After discussing the questions and making decisions create a diagram of how your area will look.

1-Where will your artifacts be placed?

2-How will each artifact be displayed, and who will make signs or explanatory materials?

3-What demonstrations or reenactments will be performed, and who will perform them? How long will this reenactment be?

4-Will your performance be live or on videotape?

5-What media assistance will you need? ***Be specific.***

Who will help you with this assistance?
What arrangements do you need to make?

On a separate sheet of paper, sketch the plans for your display at our Living Cultural Museum.