

Connect to Our World: Building a Global Community of Learners

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Introduction

My goal in writing this unit is to develop a cultural friendly atmosphere to educate students about cultures and ethnicities globally as well as locally and nationally. When starting this unit, I thought about how the year starts out by learning about who my students are as students (their names). Next, building a classroom community of learners (school family). Then we focus on learning about families and cultures in the lesson, My Place in This World. Finally, we learn about the globe and maps. As a kindergarten teacher, I know that in social studies, we build a structure which starts from the foundation and then adds each floor or layer. At first students are not use to this; however, by using primary sources (artifacts, examples of items from cultures, maps and globes) makes the learning real/meaningful to students. Some students in turn become unknowingly “*key informants*” (*individuals who have firsthand knowledge of their community and culture*) because they are willing to share information about their culture with you. ¹Therefore, my objective is to scaffold the lesson, building upon each piece of knowledge presented.

Rationale

In my kindergarten social studies classroom, students learn about the family (cultures and customs), geography (maps, globes, continents, and cultures) as well as holidays. Five/six year-olds are very aware of the self, the community and the family. However, they are not aware that there are many facets that make up their family and community. They are knowledgeable about people being different because of what they can see. There is a lack of understanding of *why* people are different and what makes us the same as humans. The idea that there are different cultures, ethnicities, languages and religions that make up the human race is difficult for them to grasp. Therefore, many times students have discussions among themselves about languages, skin color and why people celebrate holidays and traditions a certain way. If students can understand their family dynamics, ancestry, and culture. Then they can answer the age-old question: Who am I and where do I come from? How connected are we to others? Is there a difference among the

¹ Omohundro, John, *Thinking Like an Anthropologist: A Practical Introduction to Cultural Anthropology* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008)

ethnicities/cultures that make up the human race? Children are just as curious as adults. Therefore, it is important to help them have knowledge about self and others.

During the first five months of the year, part of the kindergarten curriculum includes building a community of learners where we guide students into having a responsive classroom, learn about each other and their families. In our social studies block, students learn about cultures and traditions as well as maps and globes. Part of a five year-old and six year-olds development is to learn how to share and get along. In this twenty-first century, the school community in which my students are part of is very diverse. It is important as an educator that I prepare students for interacting and understanding other cultures and peoples.

School Demographics

The school at which I teach, Thurgood Marshall, is an elementary school that serves grades K-5. There are 874 students at Marshall. Students at Thurgood Marshall come from a variety of ethnic and economic backgrounds (28% Caucasian, 33% African American, 26% Asian, 7.5% Hispanic/Latina and 5% Multiracial). A significant amount of our population receives assistance from ESL, which currently serves 151 students this year. Some of the special services that the school offers to our early childhood/primary students include enrichment program, literature groups, Project Music and mentors throughout the school year during the school day. Our school offers a variety of extracurricular activities such as fifth grade basketball, Zumba for Kids®, Mad Science, Soccer Shots, Art Class, Jitterbugs and Yoga Programs. During the school year, a multicultural night and Black History Celebrations are offered to all students. The guidance counselor has a class included in the expressive arts schedule which presents wellness and school climate. This aids in the promotion of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBS) to reinforce character traits such as community, respect, responsibility and academic effort. The staff works very hard to build a community of critical and independent thinkers on all levels.

Content Objectives and Goal

Before my kindergarten students can truly understand other cultures, they have to understand who they are and what makes them unique. They have to have an understanding that they come from not just a family but that their family is part of a bigger community. This community is their culture, religion, etc. When students understand what a culture is and that the culture comes from a country which is part of the world. Then they can then understand that they are also part of this world.

In this unit, students will be taught to ask questions and share/compare about things in their family/community culture, national culture and world culture when responding

during discussions and drawing or writing. The following objectives will be addressed in this unit:

- We receive our names from special person, from our parents' life experiences, from our ancestors, or cultural/religious experiences.
- Family relationships are important and they are defined different ways in different cultures.
- The meaning of cultures (able to define and identify what culture is).
- The meaning of ethnicity (able to define and identify the difference between ethnicity and race).
- How do we get our skin color?
- Explain that each country has more than one culture, and that each culture has its own language(s), customs and religions.

The social studies standards I am covering require that my students be able to identify types of human settlements, connections between settlements, and the types of activities found in each. The Kindergarten English Language Arts curriculum that I teach requires, students analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text. These standards will help students to relate to the commonalities between peoples and to understand the differences among cultural groups.

In order to create this appreciation of cultures every student I the teacher will take on the role of an “*ethnographer*.” All participants have to become involved in learning about the culture that they are discovering. In the text, *Conformity and Conflict*, Spradley and McCurdy, state that ethnography is the work of describing culture.² The central aim of ethnography is to understand another way of life from the native point of view. One way for my students to engage in ethnographic fieldwork is to participate in discussion after listening to the literature and interacting with objects from various cultures. Each student has knowledge and materials (foods, language, clothes, literature and genealogies) of their own culture that they can share. The teachers' role in this process is to facilitate the learning by presenting text, images and artifacts which the children can use as a foundation to discuss and draw conclusions. Students will also gain knowledge of cultures through images (photographs and slides). Kindergarteners learn to construct knowledge through discussion and play. They need to interact with their peers and real objects. Therefore, this curriculum unit will focus on providing opportunities to discuss, interact with objects, and view images.

² Spradley, James and McCurdy, *Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology* (New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc., 2012)

In order to avoid stereotyping and misrepresentation of groups and cultures, literature and visual images will be checked for authenticity. The multicultural literature used will be authored by people represented of that culture. Students will be encouraged to think about their own lives and what is important to them (family and culture). I will create a model of a *Culture Wheel* by the teacher. A culture wheel is values, beliefs, experiences of a culture that individuals find important. The culture wheel will include areas common to the understanding capacities of a five year-old. Those areas on the wheel will include institutions, arts, shelter, language, recreation, traditional clothing, food and beliefs. They will fill in their culture wheels and then discuss them. The wheels will be displayed for students to use later to compare and contrast with the literature studied.

Students will listen to and study kindergarten level multicultural texts written in a creative fiction and non-fiction style. Multicultural books that represent cultures respectfully and positively can be found by using the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) which have lists of books by and about people of color. The students, with the guidance of the teacher, will listen to each text and then use that text to learn about the people, the culture and the world. I have selected six pieces of literature to build the foundation of presenting various cultures and countries represented in the classroom and our world. These texts were selected because they are representative of the cultures students in the class come from and are appropriate to read to 5-6 year-old children in one class. Each story tells about a real cultural experience which will allow students to make a text to self - connection and text to world- connection. The students, with teacher guidance, will use the culture wheel to make comparisons based on topics on the wheel. We will research culture, geography (location on the globe), family dynamics, and settlement structures. The children literature selected for this unit are:

1. *Alma and How She Got Her Name* by Juana Martinez- Neal
2. *The Name Jar* by Yangsook Choi
3. *Amelia's Show and Tell Fiesta* by Mimi Chapra and Martha Aviles
4. *Islandborn: Before and After* by Junot Diaz
5. *Bringing The Rain to Kapiti Plain (Rise and Shine)* by Verna Aardemas
6. *Bow Wow Pow Wow* by Brenda J. Child
7. *All Are Welcome* by Alexandra Penfold and Suzanne Kaufman
8. *Everybody Bakes Bread* by Nora Dooley
9. *All the Colors We Are* by Katie Kissinger

The connections made by my students will be added to the class culture wheel. An example of this is after discussing *Alma and How She Got Her Name* and *The Name Jar*, naming a child will be added on the section of beliefs.

Teaching Strategies

My students will build a foundation of understanding cultures by first understanding that cultures are part of communities. During our connections with literature, artifacts, etc. they will learn that communities are diverse. Students will be encouraged to ask questions relating to culture such as what is the same and different about two different cultures. They will use the personal cultural “artifacts” and text read to guide our classroom discussions to make text to self, text to text and text to world connections. My students will also use maps and globes to ask questions of each other regarding culture. Students in my class will understand cultures even more by the experiences of handling artifacts and materials, view videos and images to make these connections.

A technique to guide discussion is think-pair-share strategy. Think-Pair-Share encourages student participation from all students and promotes individual and peer accountability. Think – pair – share (TPS) is a collaborative learning strategy where students work together to solve a problem or answer a question about a reading. As stated by F. Lyman, *The Responsive Classroom Discussion*, this strategy requires students to think individually about a topic or answer to a question; and share ideas with classmate and then share both partners’ ideas with the whole class discussion.³

Anchor charts will be used to explain a variety of terms, vocabulary, and concepts. An anchor chart is a tool created between the students and teacher that captures the most important content and relevant strategies of a given lesson. Anchor charts support instruction and anchor student learning. In *Reading with Meaning*, Debbie Miller insists, anchor charts should be created in front of the students and should include visual aids. Research shows anchor charts help students make connections between concepts, build on prior information learned and provide visual cues to develop independence.⁴

A graphic organizer will be used to develop student thought. In *Use Graphic Organizers Effective Learning* by Dr. Katherine McKnight, she states, Graphic organizers create a strong visual picture, and support students by enabling them to see connections and relationships between facts, information, and terms.⁵

Artifacts (art, diversions, adornments, applied arts and devices) will be used to engage students in experiencing other cultures and to have a sense of cultural relevance. Students will share artifacts that are important to their family’s daily life. This *material culture* is important to understanding students’ cultures. According to Jules David Prown, in *Mind in Matter* “by undertaking cultural interpretation through artifacts, we can engage the other culture in the first instance not the minds, the seat of our cultural biases, but with

³ Lyman, F. (1981). “*The responsive classroom discussion.*” In Anderson, A.S. (Ed.), *Mainstreaming Digest*. College Park, MD: University of Maryland College of Education.

⁴ Miller, Debbie: *Reading with Meaning, 2nd edition: Teaching Comprehension in the Primary Grades.*

⁵ McKnight, Dr. Katherine: *Use Graphic Organizers for Effective Learning* (Teach Hub.com)

our senses.”⁶ In a classroom of kindergartners, using their senses is a developmentally important part of their making connections to the world. Handling an artifact makes culture tangible and real to them. It requires students to use their prior knowledge, research skills, and critical thinking abilities, says Ann Whittemore in *Using Artifacts to Engage Students in Critical Thinking Activities*.⁷

Kindergartners will learn to act as *ethnographers* to understand *cultural anthropology*. For kindergartners, we will describe cultural anthropology as the study of humans, their culture and development. Ethnography is a description of the culture based upon what the observer saw and heard when people were “being themselves.” This unit will require my students to do work of an ethnographer. In order for students to act as ethnographers they must participate in activities of the culture they are studying by asking questions, eating foods that they might consider “strange” or foreign, learning a new language, watching ceremonies, taking field notes, tracing out genealogies, observing play, and interviewing informants. As ethnographers, students must be concerned with what people do, what people know and the things people make and use states, Spradley and McCurdy, *Readings in Cultural Anthropology*.⁸ To successfully connect students to their world this unit will consist of five months of learning from civics (community), culture (family) and geography (maps and globes). This unit will require my students to do the work of an ethnographer. Students will be given a series of questions to interview their parents at home about how they celebrate a *custom*. A custom is a group’s way of doing something. Parents will write the answers for their students and the students can draw pictures to their parents’ answers so they can remember what was discussed about their family’s custom of celebrating birthdays.

Students are very aware of their ethnicity (ex. Indian from India) which they come from. They do not necessarily know that they have a *culture*. *Culture* is a way life. It is their family’s way of life. Therefore, students are the perfect *informants*. Students are able share information about customs, clothing, food, dances, music and traditions of their culture. They are the members of the group being learned about that provide us with information about their own culture. They are the very knowledgeable individuals who have a knack for explaining their own culture, John T. Omohundro calls these types of individuals that exhibit these skills as *informants*.⁹

⁶ Prown, Jules David: *Mind in Matter* (The Henry du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1982), 3.

⁷ Whittemore, Ann: *Using Artifacts to Engage Students in Critical Thinking Activities* (Lesson Planet, July 26, 2011)

⁸ Spradley and McCurdy, *Conformity and Conflict, Readings in Cultural Anthropology* (Pearson Education, 2012)

⁹ Omohundro, John T., *Thinking Like an Anthropologist: A Practical Introduction to Cultural Anthropology* (McGraw Hill, 2008)

Globes and maps will be used for students to identify the countries in which they come from as well as the country mentioned in each children's text. This will help children to identify geographical areas that are similar and different. Students will know that there are different places in the world where people live. They will come to recognize that the world is full of diverse people.

Communities

Students will learn about communities and how to identify parts of communities. During the first month of school, they will learn that they are part of many communities (i.e. school, home, ethnic and cultural). We will start with our school community. This will help students to understand and be able to define what a community is. A *community* is defined as a group of people who live and work together in the same place. Students will be asked to look at who is in their school community (classroom). We will create a T Chart of people in our class and what continent we are from. The first weeks of school, I will read a story about names, since our school population has students from many cultures with names that are not the general American style name. *Name Jar* by Yangsook Choi, is a good example. Students will be able to identify with having a name that is different or wanting to change their name to fit in. To incorporate analyzing the character and connecting to the text, I will have students share with a partner how they feel about the main character, their own name and share about a time when they have wanted to change something about their self to fit into a group or place. As a follow-up, I will give students a piece of paper and crayons, encourage them to draw one thing about their self that they like. To help these student led discussions, understand their uniqueness and that they are special, enlist parents' help by sending a letter home and a person shaped die cut. Ask them to explain and write down for their child, where their name came from and why did their parents choose this name. In addition, I will ask parents to use die cut of a boy/girl to help their child make a likeness of their selves.

At the beginning of the lesson, I will show photos of the !Kung people of Botswana, Africa on the northern fringe of the Kalahari. The !Kung the infant a name of a close living relative, usually that of a grandparent, aunt, or uncle, according to well-established rules of precedence. The relationship that ensues between the child and the "namesake" is likely to be important in both their lives. They believe that the first couple of children should be named after the father's family. The rest of the children can be named after the mother's side of family. I will inform children that other cultures find that naming children after relatives is highly important as Majorie Shostak mentions in *Nisa, The Life*

and Words of A !Kung Woman.¹⁰ By reading, *Alma and How She Got Her Name* by Juana Martinez- Neal, students will get an understanding of how our culture ties into our names. Once students have returned their answers to how they got their name, I will do the following:

- Hold a class discussion to share what their learned from their parents.
- Ask students to make an anchor chart titled, How We Got Our Names.
- Take a survey of how many people got their names from family members, etc.
- Create a chart that allows students to see all the ways culture influences naming a child.
- Take a picture of the child and their paper doll die cut and an explanation of their name attached.
- Create a bulletin board with each of these items.

In order for students to tie in culture, ethnicity and geographic regions, students will each receive a blank map of the world. We will create a color map key and chart for each continent. The color is for identifying the continent as well as country each student comes from. For example, the color for Africa is orange. We will write each child's name under the orange countries from the continent of Africa will be under the chart. We will then look at a map of Africa and identify the country the student comes from. In this way, students will make the connection between student, country and continent. We will continue to use the maps throughout the unit to identify geographical areas mentioned in our discussions and text.

Family

I start the lesson with the question, who are the people in your family? I state that a *family* is a group of people who are related. In many cultures, a group of people related and not related (whether by blood or marriage) are called clans-family, or tribe. One such people group are the Zulu of South Africa. Children will come to understand that family can mean different things to other people in the world. According to A.T Bryant in *The Zulu People*, there a no words in the Zulu language that means mother, father, sister or brother. Everyone in the Zulu family head-clan is called by the same name. Every father is called *uBaba* (clan father) and every mother is called *uMame* (clan mother); every boy is called (*umFana waMi* which means my boy or son) and every girl (*iNtombazana yaMi*

¹⁰ Shostak, Marjorie, *Nisa, The Life and Words of A !Kung Woman*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 181 -182

– my girl or daughter). The words for clan-brother is *umFowetu* or *uDadewetu* for clan-sister. There is an endless list of names for clan members.¹¹

A display of photos of family members (ex. Grandparents, great grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, brothers, sisters, mothers, and fathers) will be posted during the lesson. I will provide chart paper for the class to create a family web. This will build background knowledge prior to reading, *My Family Tree and Me* by Dusan Petricic or *Me and My Family Tree* by Joan Sweeney. Before, I start reading, I will ask students, who are your great - grandparents, grandmothers, aunts, uncles and cousins? Then, I will read the book. Afterwards, I will ask again, who are your great-grandparents, etc. We will have a discussion about the positions of the family members. Then, the children will be asked to think about their family tree. Who is in your family? What do you call those people? Every family has these members but a lot of families have a special name for each member. In different cultures, the role is the same but what we call them is based on our cultures' language. I will provide the example of the Spanish language, where the word is *abuela*. I will ask, "Do you have another word for grandmother that you say at home?" Even if my students are American for generations, most of them have other words for grandparents. Next, I will encourage students to talk to their *elbow partners* about their family members and what they call them in their family language and culture. As part of our culminating event, we will have families create a family tree.

Customs

Every family is part of a greater community which is their culture. Cultures have customs and traditions. Families create individual traditions that are sometimes based on cultural customs. I restate that *traditions* are a way of doing something that is passed on in a family. Also, *Customs* are a group's way of doing something. Prior to discussing traditions and customs, I will gather a wide assortment of images of people from all over the world celebrating a custom. I will organize students in pairs and Give them an image and tell students to talk to their *elbow partner* about what continent and culture the people are from and what custom or tradition are they celebrating. After students have time to discuss the images with their partner, students will be brought back to the whole group where we will have a discussion about all the customs and traditions represented in images. Following the discussion, students will be given a minute to brainstorm a custom of their family. They will draw the custom on the paper. As a home - school connection piece, I will send home a note asking parents to send in a picture of their celebrations. It can be a drawing of the celebration with labels of what the celebration is and who is in attendance and what the items are in the picture or a photograph with the same

¹¹ Bryant, A.T., *The Zulu People, As They Were Before The White Man Came*, (Piertermaritzburg: Shuter and Shooter, 1967), 426

descriptions written of on an attached sheet. Families will be given two days to return these items for students to share. These items will help students to describe what makes people unique and how families are the same and different across cultures.

In addition, I will give students a series of questions to interview their parents at home about how they celebrate a *custom* (i.e. a birthday celebration or wedding). They will be reminded that a custom is a groups way of doing something. Students will ask their parents the following

- What is a birthday custom that our culture practices?
- Why is it important to practice our custom this way?
- What are some important facts about the custom?

Parents will write the answers for their child and the child can draw pictures to their parent's answers so they can remember what was discussed about their family's custom of celebrating birthdays.

Traditions

I open up this lesson by reviewing that *customs* are a group's way of doing something. I inform the class that, today we are going to learn about traditions. According to Rebecca Fraser – Hill in *Examples of Family Traditions to Build Bonds*¹², family traditions are a way of transmitting family, history, and culture from one generation to the next. To help my students understand the concept of a tradition, I will display photographs of various traditions and have students tell me what the tradition is. Then, I will show a family tradition of mine and bring in a tangible item for students to see and possibly touch. I will have students predict how this item is used as a tradition.

In order for children this age to have a real sense of traditions, they need to make a connection to self. Therefore, we will create a class anchor chart of family traditions. I will provide examples of traditions to such as apple picking, making caramel apples, letting each child have a night to light the menorah, going to the first game of the baseball season as a family, setting out a plate of cookies for Santa. I will give them students a minute to think of a family tradition. Next, I will give them a piece of paper and allow them to write two sentences or label their tradition and what is the significance of the tradition. For example, every fall my family goes apple picking. Then, we come home and make caramel apples for everyone to enjoy. Children should share their pictures and sentences with the class. Last, I will hang these pictures on a bulletin display labeled, "Our Family Traditions." Students will have a sense of family, cultural and classroom community pride.

¹² Fraser – Hill, Rebecca, *Examples of Family Traditions to Build Bonds* (Everyday Wellness, November 4, 2018)

Cultures

I will introduce children to a *culture wheel* by displaying a blank culture wheel and a model of a completed culture wheel, both from an online search and from my own cultural background. While completing the wheel, I will go over the seven areas that are relevant to kindergarten students such as arts, language, foods, shelter, recreation, institution, belief, and clothing and discuss what I wrote/drew in each area. We will create a class culture wheel that we will display for students to use for comparison for similarities and differences of cultures represented in class and from the children's literature. In advance, I will prepare a blank cultural wheel with directions of how to complete. I will inform parents by a letter that they are going to fill out a cultural wheel with representation of their culture in each area and will include a picture of the class culture wheel as an example.

In class, I will tell students that they are going to listen to two stories that take place in the Caribbean Islands. The books do not reveal the country, I will ask students if they can guess by the details, description, and illustration where the location of each story on the world map is. We will set up a large *Venn diagram* with the two circles labeled with the names of the books used. A venn diagram is a diagram that shows the relationship between two groups of things by means of overlapping circles. The two books, I find perfect for this exercise are, *Islandborn Before and After* by Junot Dia and *Amelia's Show and Tell Fiesta* by Mimi Chapra and Martha Aviles. I will lead students in completing the Venn diagram.

The same strategies that I use in reading can be applied to learning social studies content. Kindergartners remember more information by completing a graphic organizer. By having students fill out the similarities and differences between the two texts, they are processing the information. Then, I will have students include in the diagram items about the characters, settings and plots (problem/solution) of the two texts. Then, I ask students to make a text to self - connection to think about where the characters are from, what is mentioned in the story about their home country, what or who made the characters remember their country. I will encourage students to think about themselves. What makes them think about where they are from? I will direct students to class culture wheel to compare about the two text to our wheel and what from the story would be on the characters' culture wheel. I will pair students up with a partner and give them an index card for them to write two things that they think represent each story and will ask them to include them on the culture wheel. I will instruct them to write/draw one thing on each side for both stories.

Comparison

As part of the standards for social studies CCSS, (see appendix 1), students are asked to identify types of human settlement, connections between settlements and the types of activities found in those settlements. One way in which I will do this is by continuing the conversation about the !Kung people. I will instruct how these people were *foragers* (practicing hunting, fishing, and gathering). Foragers live in relatively small groups (usually 15 to 100 individuals). There are very few typical hunter and gatherer patterns. Groups vary in composition of diet, food sharing, men's and women's work patterns, subsistence strategies, child care, settlement patterns, marriage systems, and fertility and mortality. I will use the graphic organizer, *K-W-L Chart* (a chart to gather student process of information) to see what students **know** about hunter and gatherers and **hat** they **want** to learn about them and what they **want** to **learn** about them.

To start this segment of the unit, I will continue using the images of the !Kung people, show a video of how the Sans use clicking sounds in their language. I will show pictures of their traditional shelter and clothing, hunting methods and foods. Then, talk about how in the past they were hunters and gathers but this is changing over time due to modernization. We will look on a map of Africa , locate Nambia, Angola and Botswana and color them in on the map. To help students get a visual of this part of the world, I will display photographs of Africa or read *Bringing the Rains to Kaputi Plains* by Verna Aardema. Next, I will introduce them to the indigenous people of the United States, the American Indians of the Midwest. The children will receive a map of the United States with the states labeled. We will locate those states which are home to the Ojibwe people. We will discuss how they too were foragers that were forced to move from their lands due to modernization. The Ojibwe people live in Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and North Dakota. We will read *Bow wow Pow wow* by Brenda J, Child and find a video of an, Ojibwe pow-wow on Youtube ® as a great resource for children to picture the importance of the pow-wow custom. We will discuss the life of a forager and how tribes and clans are important.

As a follow up, the class will split in half, where one half will be given a graphic organizer with either the word Sans People or Ojibwe in the middle. Their graphic organizer will have four boxes and each box will contain one of the following words: clothing, food, shelter, and language. The children will work independently and the entire class will regroup after completing their graphic organizer. We will discuss what we learned by completing what we **learned** on our K-W-L Chart. We will leave the chart up as well as maps of the United States and Africa.

Artifacts – Material Culture

I will bring in an American Indian choker that belongs to me. I will ask the students, what do they think this was used for and how it was used. Then I will redirect them to *Amelia's Show and Tell Fiesta*. We will discuss all the items the children brought to place in the basket for show and tell. I will inform them that artifacts hold value for the person who holds them. Artifacts can also bring out an emotional response from the owner as well as the person viewing it, states Jules David Prown in *Mind in Matter*.¹³ I will guide students in recalling how Amelia felt when her classmates brought tangible items and the response she had to the whooshing of her skirt. The skirt brought back many emotions and feelings of the country and culture she left behind. Students will bring in an artifact from their home which is specific to their culture. *Amelia's Show and Tell Fiesta* by Mimi Chapra and Martha Aviles is a good example. Students should be able to identify how Amelia could use her dress to tell about her culture and country. To encourage student led discussions, have students start out sharing with their elbow partner (person next to them). A letter will go home prior to when the artifact should be brought in. Parents and students will be encouraged to help their students write or draw what the object is used for, how it is used and how does it or what does it remind them about their place of origin or culture.

In order to help children make a connection (text to world) to this concept of similarities and differences in settlements around the world, we will read the book, *Everybody Bakes Bread* by Norah Dooley. This book helps students to see that many cultures around the world eat bread. We will discuss the many types of bread and will prepare a graph with the question: "Which kind of bread do you eat at home?" We will look for images of breads represented by the cultures in my room. We will have on display samples of bread from other countries, you can use plastic food or ask families to donate bread that they eat from home. Another option, I could use is photos of bread. We will encourage students to share if they eat any type of bread in the same manner as someone in the book. We will discuss the way the bread is baked and prepared at home. They can discuss with a partner and one student can share to the whole class the kinds of bread each of them in the pair eat. After the lesson on bread is completed, we will have a bread tasting with the kinds of bread mentioned in the story. We will talk about, why

¹³ Prown, Jules David: *Mind in Matter* (The Henry du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1982), 9.

bread is a staple (important) in all cultures. We will use the world map for children to identify the countries where the bread came from and have the children draw a little bread symbol in those geographical areas.

Geographical Areas and Human Settlements

Kindergarten students are curious about where each other are from. They have a sense of pride of where they are from. Students get excited when the name of their country is mentioned. However, with that sense of pride is a lack of understanding that other people come from distant and not so distant lands. Every year students have discussions about where each of them came from and why they have different skin colors. It is important for them to understand that they may have a different skin color but in reality everyone is the same. *All the Colors We Are* by Katie Kissinger is a great book that explains to students where our family (ancestors) comes from determines the color of our skin, but that this does not indicate any other kind of intellectual or cognitive differences. First, I will explain words like *melanin* (the amount of color in your skin), *ancestors* (relatives that lived long ago) and *equator* (an imaginary line drawn around the earth). Then, I will explain the three ways we get our skin: from our parents, our ancestors, and from the sun (geographical location). Next, I will use a globe to talk about ancestors living near or far from the equator is what decided what skin color we will be. Last, we will look at the globe and locate the equator and discuss the countries and continents our families come from and discuss how close they are to the equator which will help us answer how our skin color is the tone it is. As a follow-up, we will color our hand, using multicultural color crayons or construction paper. Then we will use all the hands to make a rainbow.

Making the Connection

We will make a class museum representing all the cultures in our classroom. We will send home an invitation asking parents to participate in our classroom museum. The museum will consist of art, traditional clothing, jewelry, food, spices, music, country map of family origin, photographs of country, housing and people/family. Families will be encouraged to wear traditional clothing and set up a display of their items. Children will be encouraged to ask questions, handle items (if possible), taste foods, smell spices, view art. I will encourage parents to provide an activity from their country that students can participate in. Some suggestions are learn a dance, make an art piece (ex. Origami), play a game (Mankala), or learn a traditional song. At the completion of the museum day, students will pick their favorite culture to learn about, why it was their favorite and three new things they learned about the culture.

Upon conclusion of this unit students will have a greater sense of where we come from as diverse groups of people. Students will learn why their names are special and how they got them by asking parents about naming traditions in their culture. In addition, students will have used texts and “artifacts” to understand what culture is. They will be able to describe what are customs and traditions are in their culture. Next, students will be able to compare and contrast two cultures to by using graphic organizers to share what is learned. Students will also learn to use maps and globes to identify geographical areas where certain people originate from. Finally, students will be able to identify and describe how cultures and ethnic groups are part of their local community and global world.

Notes

- ¹ Omohundro, John, *Thinking Like an Anthropologist: A Practical Introduction to Cultural Anthropology* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008)
- ² Spradley, James and McCurdy, *Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology* (New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc., 2012)
- ³ Lyman, F. (1981). "The responsive classroom discussion." In Anderson, A.S. (Ed.), *Mainstreaming Digest*. College Park, MD: University of Maryland College of Education.
- ⁴ Miller, Debbie: *Reading with Meaning, 2nd edition: Teaching Comprehension in the Primary Grades*.
- ⁵ McKnight, Dr. Katherine: *Use Graphic Organizers for Effective Learning* (Teach Hub.com)
- ⁶ Prown, Jules David: *Mind in Matter* (The Henry du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1982), 3.
- ⁷ Whittemore, Ann: *Using Artifacts to Engage Students in Critical Thinking Activities* (Lesson Planet, July 26, 2011)
- ⁸ Spradley and McCurdy, *Conformity and Conflict, Readings in Cultural Anthropology* (Pearson Education, 2012)
- ⁹ Omohundro, John T., *Thinking Like an Anthropologist: A Practical Introduction to Cultural Anthropology* (McGraw Hill, 2008)
- ¹⁰ Omohundro, John T., *Thinking Like an Anthropologist: A Practical Introduction to Cultural Anthropology* (McGraw Hill, 2008)
- ¹¹ Shostak, Marjorie, *Nisa, The Life and Words of A !Kung Woman*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 181 -182
- ¹² Bryant, A.T., *The Zulu People, As They Were Before the White Man Came*, (Piertermaritzburg: Shuter and Shooter, 1967), 426
- ¹³ Fraser – Hill, Rebecca, *Examples of Family Traditions to Build Bonds*, (Very Well family, November 4, 2018).
- ¹⁴ Prown, Jules David: *Mind in Matter* (The Henry du Pont Winterthur Museum, 1982), 9.

Resources

For Teachers

Bryant, A.T., *The Zulu People, As They Were Before the White Man Came*, (Piertermaritzburg: Shuter and Shooter, 1967), 426

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Spradley and McCurdy, *Conformity and Conflict, Readings in Cultural Anthropology* (Pearson Education, 2012)

For Students

Child, Brenda J. *Bow wow Pow wow*. (St. Paul, Mn: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2018).

Choi, Yangsook. *The Name Jar*. (New York: Dragonfly Books, 2001).

Diaz, Junot. *Island Born*. (New York, NY: Dial Books for Young Readers, 2018).

Dooley, Norah. *Everybody Bakes Bread*. (New York, NY: Carolrhoda Books, 1995).

Kissinger, Katie. *All the Colors We Are*. (St. Paul, Mn. Redleaf Press, 1994).

Martinez – Neal, *Alma and How She Got Her Name*. (Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press, 2018).

Penfold, Alexandra and Kaufman, Suzanne, *All Are Welcome*. (New York: Random House Children’s Book, 2018).

Appendix

1. Geography Standard 3a – Students will be able to identify types of human settlement, connections between settlements, and the types of activities found in each.
 - 1.1 Identify how people live in different locations around the world.
 - Essence: How people live in different places.
 - E1: Choose two places and explain how people live differently in each
 - E2: Give two places, identify how people live differently in each.
 - E3: Match people to the different places they live.
 - 3.3 Explain why different places have similar or different cultures
 - Essence: Places have similar or different cultures for various reasons
 - E1: Explain why cultures may be different or similar.
 - E2: Given descriptions of two cultures: identify reasons why they are different.

