



Melting Pot or Salad Bowl? Cultural Diversity

cultural identity, diversity and assimilation



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Published by K20 Center

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Grade Level	9th – 12th Grade	Time Frame	3-4 class period(s)
Subject	Social Studies	Duration	150 minutes
Course	Human Geography, World Human Geography		

Essential Question

How does culture shape our identity? Is there an appreciation for cultural diversity? Is it better to assimilate into a dominant culture or retain all or part of your cultural identity?

Summary

This is a social studies version of an English lesson, "Diversity Quilt: A Lesson on Culture," which can also be found on this website. This lesson uses some similar and adapted activities and strategies from the original lesson. Students identify aspects of their own cultural identity. Students evaluate the extent to which cultural diversity contributes to or divides communities or a country.

Snapshot

Engage

Students examine images of various cultures. Students determine whether cultural diversity enriches our lives or detracts from it.

Explore

Students determine the components of culture. Students interview peers to determine cultural identity and the diversity of the class. The class identifies any cultural commonalities or similar identities within the "class" community.

Explain

Students match the terms of cultural identity, diffusion, acculturation, and assimilation to scenes in a short video clip. Students evaluate to what extent the United States is a "salad bowl" or "melting pot."

Extend

Students contribute to a class or school cultural diversity quilt.

Evaluate

Students complete a question and vocabulary handout for an assessment and write a short essay.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Social Studies: World Human Geography (9th through 12th grade))

WG.3.3: Explain the processes of cultural diffusion, acculturation, assimilation, and globalization regarding their impact on defining a region.

WG.3.5: Explain how cultural characteristics, such as language, ethnicity, and religion impact different regions.

Attachments

- [Cultural Interview Handout - Spanish.docx](#)
- [Cultural Interview Handout - Spanish.pdf](#)
- [Cultural Interview Handout.docx](#)
- [Cultural Interview Handout.pdf](#)
- [Cultural Self Assessment Shortened - Spanish.docx](#)
- [Cultural Self Assessment Shortened - Spanish.pdf](#)
- [Cultural Self Assessment Shortened.docx](#)
- [Cultural Self Assessment Shortened.pdf](#)
- [K20 Center Cultural Diversity Power Point.pptx](#)
- [Show Our Culture Video Clip and Vocabulary Handout - Spanish.docx](#)
- [Show Our Culture Video Clip and Vocabulary Handout - Spanish.pdf](#)
- [Show Our Culture Video Clip and Vocabulary Handout.docx](#)
- [Show Our Culture Video Clip and Vocabulary Handout.pdf](#)

Materials

- Student Culture Interview Handout or Student Self-Assessment Handout
- Student Question and Vocabulary handout
- Teacher PowerPoint slides
- Quilt squares 4"x4" made of white construction paper
- Art materials: Colored markers, colored pencils, crayons, and any other art supplies available
- Glue or tape
- Color bulletin board paper or copy paper

Engage

Teacher's Note - Prior To The Lesson

On the teacher PowerPoint provided, links are embedded in each slide that correspond to the questions on culture. These links lead to Google image searches that correspond to the culture on the page, so the images shown in the search should update to continue to be relevant over time. The links only work while in presentation mode. Once you get to the images, each culture shows sections that define culture further. You may wish to take time to show some of these defining sections. If the links are not working in the PowerPoint, be sure to have the Internet available so you can run your own Google image search on the class computer. Then, project the the computer screen for the rest of the class to see. Once in your browser of choice, head to Google to search for images from each culture. Use the titles at the top of the PowerPoint slides as good search terms. Once on the image page for your search, use the color tabs at the top of the page (under the search bar) to narrow the image search to "America" to show how this culture changes once diffused or assimilated into American culture.

The teacher says, "Today we are going to look at various cultures. As you look at the images of each culture, I want you to think about the following questions . . ." (The Google image links and questions are provided on slides three through six for each culture.)

1. What do you notice about the Asian culture images?
2. What information do these images tell you about the culture?
3. Are there any images that might seem offensive or not representative of Asian culture?

After a discussion about Asian culture, the teacher will follow (in the same manner as above) for the Latino culture slides and the African American culture slides. Students will discuss the same questions about each culture as before. PowerPoint slides three through five have the questions and the Google image link listed for each culture to prompt discussion.

Show PowerPoint slide six. Ask students to think about the questions on the slide. Have them turn to an elbow partner and share their thoughts with that partner about these questions. This is a [Think-Pair-Share](#) activity (for more information on this strategy, follow the link or use the URL listed in the Resources section). Have partners share their discussion or answers.

Show PowerPoint slide seven. Again, have students participate in [Think-Pair-Share](#) activity. Have partners share their answers with the class.

Explore

Tell the class that they are going to discuss cultural identity further by examining the class's cultural identity. The teacher may choose to have students conduct peer interviews or complete a cultural self-assessment (see shortened version below).

Pass out the peer interview sheets to all students. Read the questions aloud which are on PowerPoint slides 8, 9, and 10. Ask if any students need more explanation. Pair students with a new partner. Allow 20 minutes for partners to conduct the peer interviews with each other. Time interviews for 10 minutes each partner.

Have partners introduce each other and share information from the interview sheets to the class. Ask the audience to listen for statements that have commonalities among the class. After most of interviews have been shared, have students stop and discuss commonalities among the interviews they heard and also areas of differences. Emphasize that commonalities are ways we have **a shared cultural identity and differences are our diversity**.

After most or all interviews have been shared, as a whole-class, discuss commonalities and differences among the class. Ask students, "How does cultural diversity enrich our lives? How does sharing a common cultural identity enrich our lives?"

Cultural Interview- Shortened Version Activity

In the interest of time, you may wish to use the shortened cultural self assessment sheet rather than the longer version (found under Attachments). Read the questions aloud prior to student completion. Have students answer 10 questions about themselves on their own. Once this has been completed, use PowerPoint slides eight and nine to discuss cultural trends within the class. For example, regarding the question of language, ask students to raise their hands if they or family members speak a language other than English. Ask students to tally the class numbers next to the questions on their sheet as they are discussed.

At the end of the class discussion, ask students to describe what cultural trends they see in this class community. How culturally diverse are we?

Explain

Pass out the vocabulary terms handout to every student. Tell students that they will watch a short video clip and then answer the questions on the handout. Show the video clip, from [Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story](#). The link is on PowerPoint slide 10. (Note: Check access to this video full-screen; you may need to create a free Wing Clips account). The video can be found at the link on PowerPoint slide 10 or in the Resources section of this lesson. Explain that the movie clip is based upon the true story of Bruce Lee, a martial arts expert and movie actor.

Students may need to see the video clip twice before beginning the handout. Ask students to complete the handout on their own, circulating around the room for assistance, if needed.

At this point, these handouts can be turned in for a grade or students may be allowed to grade their papers. Answers to the handout are shown on PowerPoint slides 11 and 12. The teacher can choose for students to turn in the handouts first for a grade but the teacher should STILL go over the answers on PowerPoint slides 11 and 12 for student understanding.

The Answer Key is also listed below:

1. The Chinese leaders wish to keep Kung Fu training from others who are non-Chinese. What impact might this have? *Answers will vary, but the impact of withholding Kung Fu training could be viewed as making Chinese more "foreign, alien, or suspicious" to non-Chinese.*
2. Why does Bruce Lee believe teaching martial arts to Americans is important? *Answers will vary, but Bruce Lee believed that sharing Chinese culture (like Kung Fu) would demystify Chinese culture to other Americans.*
3. Teaching Kung Fu to Americans would be an example of? cultural diffusion
4. Not teaching Kung Fu to non-Chinese people would be an example of? retaining cultural identity or cultural diversity
5. Bruce Lee was an early martial arts leader in the 60s and 70s. Since that time, martial arts studios and training academies have become part of the American culture. Many Americans know Kung Fu. This is an example of? acculturation
6. Bruce Lee was proud of his cultural identity but also adopted many American ideas. He became an American film actor. His adoption of American culture is called what? assimilation

Is the United States a melting pot or salad bowl? Discuss with students about how the Chinese leaders wanted to keep Kung Fu as something exclusive to their own culture and not share it with an American culture.

Place these elements of culture back on the board: traditions or rituals, religion, race, gender, dress or clothing, music, food, and language. Ask students to identify what is meant by an American culture using these elements of culture? This could be a wide-open discussion with varying answers.

Show PowerPoint slides 13 and 14 "Is the United States a Melting Pot or Salad Bowl?" Ask students to identify what type of culture the United States is currently. Begin a class discussion:

1. Are we a country that has assimilated immigrants into a melting pot? Are all Americans expected to act in a certain way?
2. Are we more of a culturally diverse country where cultures have their own communities?
3. To what extent are we (the United States) a mixture of the two? Is there some assimilation but not all?

Teacher's Note - Discussion Notes

To create a robust discussion about the United States being a salad bowl or melting pot, the teacher may need to probe further with questions. For example: "Should Muslim-American women wear the traditional headdress, the hijab, in public?" "Should all people who do not speak English be required to learn the language?" "Should all people be required to stand for the singing of the Star Spangled Banner, our national anthem?"

Place signs around the room that say "Melting Pot," "Salad Bowl," or "Mixed Salad." Explain that "Mixed Salad" is a mixture of the two--that some ideas of American culture are non-negotiable but cultural identity is not fully assimilated either. Ask students to determine to what type of culture they believe the United States currently is. They will show and discuss their opinions through a [Magnetic Statements](#) activity.

Ask students to take a stance by standing next to the sign that they believe reflects their views. Have the students gathered around each sign discuss the reasoning for their choice with the other classmates standing with them. Have each group choose a spokesperson to explain their stance and reasoning.

Ask students to return to the desks. Ask them to get out notebook paper and write one paragraph about whether they believe the US is more a melting pot or salad bowl. Ask them to write a second paragraph of things they believe should be assimilated by all culture if they live in the U.S. For example, should everyone say the Pledge of Allegiance?

Extend

Option 1: Revisit the elements of culture with students: food, language, traditions or rituals, religion, race, gender, dress or clothing, music, and so on. Ask students to reflect upon their personal culture and the larger "American" culture to create a class "community" quilt. Directions for the community quilt squares are on PowerPoint slide 15.

Pass out two quilt squares. Ask students to draw and label one example of **cultural diversity** on one square and draw and label a second square of assimilation that most or all people enjoy in an American culture. Attach squares with glue to chart tablet paper to create a diversity and assimilation quilt.

Option 2: Have students write 3-2-1 statements on notebook paper to demonstrate understanding of this lesson. Students write:

- Three benefits of cultural diversity
- Two challenges of **cultural diversity**
- One benefit of immigrants assimilating to the American culture

Evaluate

The interview questions or self-assessment can be a participation grade. The Bruce Lee/Kung Fu vocabulary and question handout can be used as an assessment. The 3-2-1 statements or the quilt squares can be assessed as well.

Resources

- Levine, L. (n.d.). Cultural Interview Questions: Excerpted and Adapted. Retrieved from http://www.sjsu.edu/people/linda.levine/courses/HRTM111/s1/Cultural_Intervxw_Questions.doc
- Magnetic Statements Instructional Strategy: K20 Center. (n.d.). Magnetic statements. Instructional Strategies. Retrieved from <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/d9908066f654727934df7bf4f50761bf>
- Think-Pair-Share Instructional Strategy: K20 Center. (n.d.). Think-pair-share. Instructional Strategies. Retrieved from <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/d9908066f654727934df7bf4f5064b49>
- Show Our Culture video: Dragon: The Bruce Lee story. (1993). Show Our Culture [Video clip]. Dragon: The Bruce Lee story Wing Clips. Retrieved from <http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/dragon-the-bruce-lee-story/show-our-culture>