The importance of art in a multicultural curriculum

Shelly Sheree Beck

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THE IMPORTANCE OF ART IN A MULTICULTURAL CURRICULUM

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
In
Education: Elementary Option

by
Shelly Sheree Beck
June 1999
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Approved by:

Ellen Kronowitz, First Reader 4/16/99

Sharon Clark, Second Reader
Abstract

The purpose of this project is to address the growing need for multicultural education through the use of art. It identifies several approaches to teaching multicultural education and the importance it has on the development of today's students. The project consists of art lessons on five varied ethnic cultures. These lessons will enable students to understand the ideas and concepts of other people and cultures.
Acknowledgments

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my parents for their encouragement and support throughout this project.

To J.R., who encouraged me by always saying, "Keep going, you're almost there!"

And a very special thank you goes to my readers, Ellen Kronowitz and Sharon Clark.
# Table of Contents

ABSTRACT ......................................................... iii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ............................................... iv

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION .......................................... 1

Area of Concern .................................................. 1

Current Statistics ............................................... 1

Learning Styles ................................................. 2

The Arts in Multicultural Education ......................... 3

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ....................... 4

What is Multicultural Education? ............................... 4

Need for Multicultural Education ............................. 8

Approaches to Multicultural Education ....................... 9

Multicultural Resources ........................................ 12

Racism and Multicultural Education ......................... 13

Teaching/Learning Styles ....................................... 15

The Arts and Multicultural Education ....................... 18

CHAPTER III: GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND LIMITATIONS ....... 24

CHAPTER IV: PROJECT DESIGN .................................. 27

Project Evaluation ............................................... 28

APPENDIX A: Teacher Evaluation Survey ..................... 30

APPENDIX B: A Teacher Resource Guide ....................... 31

REFERENCES .................................................. 106
Area of Concern

Today's schools have many culturally diverse students. More and more classrooms contain a complex mix of races, cultures, languages and religious affiliations (Banks, 1994). Many educators today are concerned with teaching multiculturalism effectively to these students.

To satisfy this concern, multicultural programs have emerged. These programs emphasize dissolving myths and stereotypes associated with different race, ethnic, and gender groups (Bennett, 1995). The main goal of a multicultural education is to live in a world where individuals value and respect all cultures.

Current Statistics

According to Carpenter (1994), education has historically "reproduced the traditions, values, and culture of the dominant power structure." With more
than 10 million Asians and 115 million Hispanics living in the United States by the year 2000, it is the responsibility of educators to foster a curriculum that is representative of all cultures (Sahasrabunhe, 1992). Without a multicultural curriculum which presents the values and beliefs of all cultures, we will continue to add to the minority drop out list. When the curriculum does not reflect what students know and value, they disengage (Banks, 1993).

Learning Styles

Not all children learn the same way. Learning styles are a component of cultural behavioral styles, the habits, values, predisposition, and preferences that develop during the child’s cultural socialization process (Hilliard, 1991). For some students, culture of the home may be so different from that of the school that they have a difficult time learning in the context and manner presented by the school. Teachers who understand their students’ cultures can then design curriculum that meets the learning needs of their students. Teaching styles, classroom organization, curriculum, and involvement with parents and
the community result in culturally compatible teaching (Diaz-Rico and Weed, 1995). Art is an excellent way to introduce kindergarten students to multicultural education.

The Arts in Multicultural Education

The arts could be used to best achieve multicultural education through a variety of learning styles. Using the arts as a teaching tool in the classroom broadens the opportunities for students to transform understandings and apply their ideas to a creative form. Using art forms for working with ideas fulfills many of the goals for achieving a multicultural education and provides avenues toward its strategies (Goldberg, 1997). Art, as a language of expression, gives all students the opportunity to communicate and work with knowledge. So the question becomes, “Can art be used as an effective curriculum that can be utilized with an existing program or as a supplement to a program to address multicultural education?”
Chapter II
Review of the Literature

The review which follows examines literature relating to multicultural education. Areas of exploration include the definition of multicultural education, the need for multicultural education, approaches to teaching multicultural education, multicultural resources, teaching/learning styles, and effects and importance of the arts to multicultural education.

What is Multicultural Education?

Multicultural education has been described and interpreted many ways. According to James Banks, "multicultural education is at least three things: An idea or concept, an educational reform or movement, and a process" (Banks, 1993). He refers to the "idea or concept" as a belief that all students, regardless of their gender, social class, ethnic or racial characteristics, should have equal opportunity to learn in school. The "reform or movement" would change the
school so that all students have this equal opportunity. He adds that the "process" is an ongoing experience and doesn't stop with just one activity.

According to Christine Bennett (1995), multicultural education is an approach to teaching and learning that is based upon democratic values and beliefs, and seeks to foster cultural pluralism within culturally diverse societies and an interdependent world. Bennett describes cultural pluralism as an ideal state of social conditions where existing cultural groups are characterized by equity and mutual respect. On the other hand, cultural assimilation, or commonly referred to as a "melting pot" is where ethnic minorities must give up their traditions and then be immersed into the mainstream or predominant culture (Bennett, 1995).

Bennett further defines multicultural education in four distinct but overlapping dimensions. The four dimensions are discuss here as the movement, the curriculum approach, the process, and the commitment to multicultural education.

1. The movement of multicultural education is getting all groups of children to achieve equal educational
opportunities, especially ethnic minorities and those who are economically disadvantaged. One of its aims is to reform the total school environment, especially the hidden curriculum. The hidden curriculum includes grouping of students, teachers' attitudes and expectation, disciplinary actions, and school and community relations. Bennett notes that a school incorporating cultural diversity should in no way lower its standards of academic merit.

2. The curriculum approach develops knowledge of and understanding about cultural differences of various civilizations in the past and of contemporary ethnic groups. In the United States, the traditional curriculum is particularly monoethnic and Anglo-European. The curriculum approach integrates multiethnic and global perspectives of both minority and nonminority children. The ethnic movement primarily targets the poor.

3. The process is when a person becomes multicultural by achieving competencies in multiple ways of perceiving, evaluating, believing, and doing. Gudykunst and Kim describe a multicultural person as
One who has achieved and advanced level in the process of becoming intellectual and whose cognitive, affective, and behavioral characteristics are not limited but are open to growth beyond the psychological parameters of any one culture.... The intercultural person possesses an intellectual and emotional commitment to the fundamental unity of all humans and, at the same time, accepts and appreciates the differences that lie between people of different cultures. (Gudykunst and Kim as cited in Bennett, 1995).

The process dimension clarifies that in fact individuals can become multicultural. There is no need for them to lay aside or reject their own cultural identities to function in a different cultural environment, as in school.

4. The commitment is to use appropriate understandings, attitudes, and social action skills to fight against racism, sexism, and all other forms of prejudice and racism. When people become multicultural they might not find it necessary to solve basic problems of inequity or put an end to discrimination.

Multicultural education emphasizes clearing up myths and stereotypes associated with different race, ethnic, and gender groups. The main goal is to have individuals be able to live their everyday life with antiracist, and antisexist behaviors (Bennett, 1995).
Need for Multicultural Education

"By the year 2000, the United States will have 260,000,000 people. One of every three of them will be either African-, Hispanic-, or Asian American" (Diaz-Rico and Weed, 1995). By the year 2020, almost half of the students in the United States will be young people of color (Steinberger, 1991).

This population growth represents a dramatic change in America. The demographic shift is due to immigration and the differing birth rates among various populations (Diaz-Rico and Weed, 1995).

Education has been historically taught with an Anglo-European emphasis. Banks (1993) argues that "students disengage when the curriculum does not reflect what they know and what they value." The problem with this can be seen in recent drop out rates.

According to Wyman (1993), twenty-five percent of all students nationwide fail to finish high school. The Hispanic student drop out rate is 40 percent and Native American students drop out at a rate of 48 percent. An alarming fifty-six percent of Hispanics and 44 percent of blacks were considered to be functionally
or marginally illiterate.

Bennett (1995) reports similar statistics. In a 1990 Census, 44.5 percent of American Indian, 35.5 percent of Hispanics, 13.6 African-American, and 8.9 percent of Anglo-European students dropped out of high school. The needs of minority students are obviously not being met by the traditional educational system. It is clear that even though many minority groups may become a majority, they are not being successful in school.

Approaches to Multicultural Education

Traditionally, curriculum has presented the Anglo-Western European way of perceiving, believing, behaving, and evaluating. (Bennett, 1995).

Multicultural education does not want to exclude Western civilization from the curriculum, but wants what is taught about the West to be truthful, complex, and more diverse (Banks, 1991). The primary goal of a pluralistic curriculum process is to present a truthful and meaningful rendition of the whole human experience (Hillard, 1991).
James Banks has identified four approaches to the teaching of multiculturalism. According to Banks, these approaches have developed since the 1960's. Banks traces the indirect beginnings of multicultural education back to the Watts riots in 1965. The following are explanations of the four approaches.

The Contributions Approach is most frequently used because it is quick and requires minimal prerequisites. This approach focuses on heroes, holidays, and discrete cultural events. This approach is limiting because it only allows special days, weeks, or months to study a particular ethnic group or event. Little or nothing is studied before or after the event or occasion.

The Additive Approach, level two, utilizes a book, a unit, or a course but does not change the curriculum. Special multicultural books or units are added to the existing curriculum. According to Banks, it is essential to "illuminate key points of instruction with content reflecting diversity" (Banks, 1994). This can be accomplished by using the additive approach and recognizing the contributions of key people from several diverse groups. One limiting factor of this approach is that since the curriculum has not been
changed, the perspectives are still mainstream.

The **Transformational Approach**, level three, the actual goals, perspectives, and structure of the curriculum are changed. The regular curriculum includes a range of cultural perspectives. The transformational approach includes various perspectives and frames of reference "so that the subject matter is viewed from the perspectives and experiences of a range of groups" (Banks, 1994). Substantial revisions in curriculum, training, materials, and perspectives is the main limitation to this approach.

The **Social Action Approach**, level 4, is much like the Transformational Approach. They both require students to make decisions and to take action on social issues. Students learn to identify problems, gather the data, and then make their own value judgments. This approach also involves curriculum restricting and requires an intensive amount of time to implement.

Many times, these approaches blend and build upon each other. These processes are meant to be gradual and cumulative. The following section examines some of the content used in multicultural materials.
Multicultural Resources

There are numerous amounts of resources available to teach about different cultures. However, many of these resources have several faltering weaknesses within them. Sanchez (1997) observed that textbooks display their bias in any number of ways, "including stereotyping, omissions, distortions, over-representation, and biased language." Many children are taught that Columbus discovered the "new world" in 1492. There is never any talk about how the "new world" was not new to the Native Americans who lived here centuries before (Vann and Kunjufu, 1993). James Banks (1994) describes how there were many various published interpretations of the Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott. Banks says, "Viewing this event from different perspectives shows how historians construct interpretations, how central figures can be omitted from historical records, how history can be rewritten, and how students can create their own interpretations." Educators need to fill the missing holes in the existing curriculum in order for students to develop a broader understanding of history.
Banks points out that children are aware of their race and ethnicity at a very young age. He believes, "If realistic images of ethnic and racial groups are included in teaching materials in a consistent, natural, and integrated fashion, all children can be helped to develop more positive racial attitudes."

If classrooms use materials that do not portray diverse groups realistically, students are likely to develop, maintain and strengthen the stereotypes and distortions in the traditional curriculum. (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Without implementing the necessary changes needed in the curriculum, educators will continue to reinforce the racial prejudice and discrimination within the United States today.

**Racism and Multicultural Education**

Racial prejudice and discrimination occur in most societies. "Since the first major court decision of 1954, schools across the country have used a variety of desegregation plans in an effort to comply with the decision (Brown, V. Board of Education of Topeka, 374 U.S. 483)" (Morris, 1978). Alex Molnar (1989) says
that many people assume that racism was successfully eradicated during the civil rights movement in the 60’s, but he claims that this belief is not true. It is important to Molnar that educators realize that the problem still exists.

John O’Neil (1993) also agrees that racism is a significant problem in many schools across the nation. He believes that schools need to reduce racial conflicts among all students with a multicultural curriculum that is “a prerequisite for racial harmony and understanding”. Schools are often more diverse than many of the students’ own neighborhoods, which allows the potential for more conflict unless the school takes the necessary steps and appropriate interventions.

Although many laws have passed to protect against racial discrimination in employment, housing, and accommodations, these laws cannot forcibly change peoples’ thoughts and feelings. Molnar contends that racism exits in the hearts and minds of many Americans, which intern is being passed on to the next generation. He advocates that schools discuss racism and its harmful effects, provide classroom and schoolwide
activities which reveal the effects of racism on individuals and entire minority groups, and acknowledge and celebrate the strengths and contributions of diverse cultures. Educators cannot fix the problems of racism and prejudice alone, but they can provide students with an understanding and respect to appreciate and accept different cultures. This will help students to strive to live in a more equitable and just society.

Teaching/Learning Styles

Educators, want their students to learn. Then why don’t they let their students learn in the best way they know how, through their strengths? Gust and McChesney (1995) state that good educators constantly consider these questions when thinking about the learning styles of their students.

- Do you know how your students learn best?
- Do they learn best visually, orally, kinesthetically, inductively, deductively, independently, or in groups?
- Do they like activities with a high or low amount of
structure?

• Do they like learning about people or things?
• Are they process learners or product learners?

When educators learn more about their students, they learn to adjust and modify their teaching styles and methods to fit their students. Equity pedagogy is taking into account how students learn as individuals and members of a specific group. Educators must facilitate achievement among students of diverse groups by using particular strategies that best teaches a particular cultural group (Gust and McChesney, 1995). It is essential that educators provide students with a variety of ways to learn so that the student’s learning is in harmony with their cultural backgrounds.

According to Diaz-Rico and Weed (1995), humanities provide important alternative learning modalities. They define a learning style as “individual preferences for processing information”. Information is gathered and stored in the memory base and then used for making decisions. Culture appears to influence every part of this process by setting rules that guide the way the
individuals select strategies and approach learning (Shade and New, 1993).

Many teachers know who will pass or fail in their class within the first month of school (Morris, 1978). These teachers also judge their students as fast, average, or slow learners. This often times destroys the ego and self-concept of a group of students because their cultural heritage labels them "deprived or "disadvantaged".

Bloom (1976), disagrees with these teachers that the learning abilities of students are fixed when they come to school. The present educational system makes judgments about students' learning capabilities which reduces opportunities for these students.

According to Bloom, there are three learning domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. Cognitive learners usually learn what the teacher wants them to learn through group instruction, books, and assignments. The teaching style of teacher and the learning style of the student are matched. Schools favor cognitive learners because they learn the way schools think they should learn.

Affective learners usually learn best through
group interaction. These students are people-focused and gather information through conversation. Schools tend to be biased against these students because they don’t conform to the typical quiet and orderly school environment.

Psychomotor learners usually learn best through activity and movement. These students learn by feeling, touching, and manipulating objects. Schools tend to be biased against these learners because they do not conform to the typical sit still and listen school environment.

When learners are forced to learn in a way that is not compatible with their learning style, it takes them more time. This labels them as a slow learner. In order to give each student an equitable chance to learn, the goal is to find strategies which take individual differences into consideration. These learning strategies can best be met through the arts.

The Arts and Multicultural Education

In most American schools, the arts are viewed as a filler or peripheral curriculum rather than essential
to the educational process. Many of our schools today are experiencing financial cutbacks and unfortunately the arts are generally the first classes to be cut. John Dewey (1934) argued for the nature and importance of art by saying,

Art is the living and concrete proof that man is capable of restoring consciously, and thus on the plane of meaning, the union of sense, need, impulse and action characteristic of the live creature. The intervention of consciousness adds regulation, power of selection, and predisposition. Thus it varies the arts in ways without end. But intervention also leads in time to the idea of art as a conscious idea - the greatest intellectual achievement in the history of humanity. (p. 5)

Although art has not been a central aspect of most school programs, some educators still provide cultural art experiences for their students, but many of these educators do not understand the reason or purpose of the importance of these activities. The arts, as languages and expressions of cultures and peoples throughout the world, provide many concrete opportunities to educators who are dedicated to multicultural education (Goldberg, 1997).

According to Leonard Davidman and Patricia T. Davidman, multicultural education is defined as a multifaceted, change oriented process that can be
outlined in six interrelated yet distinct goals: (1) providing educational equity; (2) empowering students and their caretakers; (3) valuing cultural pluralism in society; (4) promoting intercultural/interethnic/intergroup understanding and harmony in the classroom, school, and community; (5) developing an expanded multicultural/multiethnic knowledge base for students, teachers, administrators, and support staff; and (6) supporting students, teachers, staff, and administrators who think, plan, and work with a multicultural perspective (Davidman & Davidman, 1994).

By combining goals and strategies presented by Davidman and Davidman (1994), and incorporating notions of process as described by Nieto (1996), Goldberg has developed seven general principles that outline the connections of multicultural education and the arts. The seven principles are:

- The Arts Expand Expressive Outlets and Provide a Range of Learning Styles Available to Children - By integrating the arts, students who learn kinesthetically, spatially, or auditorially are given more opportunities to communicate their findings and understandings.
• The Arts Enable Freedom of Expression for Second Language Learners - Students are allowed to express and communicate their ideas without having to depend solely on using English.

• The Arts Provide a Stage for Building Self-Esteem - Many educators have seen positive effects on self-esteem by integrating the arts into their curriculum.

• The Arts Encourage Collaboration and Intergroup Harmony - Students work together which furthers their awareness of other cultures and harmony between them.

• The Arts Empower Students and Teachers - The arts empower students to become self-directed learners and respect of others' work.

• The Arts Deepen Teachers' Awareness of Children’s Abilities and Provide Alternative Methods of Assessment - Teachers observe students in a broader sense and in multiple ways.

• The Arts Provide Authentic Cultural Voices and Add Complexity to Teaching and Learning - The arts allow students more tools to understand different cultures. It allows students to study different cultures by
introducing them to a wider range of experiences.

Principles 1 and 2 talk about the individual child and methods relating to learning and expression. Principles 3 through 5 describe the construction of a community in which members feel confident, respected, and reflective. Principle 6 describes the ways the arts help educators understand their multicultural students. Principle 7 discusses the content of multicultural education and how the arts develop understanding of world cultures. These principles together provide a view of education that can be strengthened and connected through the integration of the arts.

Many authors in the field argue for art instruction in schools. List (1982), states, “The arts provide a means for learning history and are a key for understanding the ideas and concepts of other people and cultures. They provide visual pictures of people, places, events, and cultures in history that can be more illuminating than the printed word”.

The arts provide an exciting and emotional experience not found in textbooks. The arts allow students to create their own ideas which then allows
them to better understand themselves (Cohen and Gainer, 1977).

Kraus (1975), argues that for students to acquire a rich understanding of history, they must be able to comprehend the feelings of the people of the time; their fears, anxieties, indecisions, and values. This learning can best be taught through drama experiences.

The literature in this review seems to indicate that an art based program lends itself nicely to a multicultural curriculum. A multicultural art curriculum would allow educators to touch on all learning styles of students and produce students who are culturally aware and accepting of others.
Chapter III
Goals, Objectives, and Limitations

The objectives of this multicultural art curriculum will enable all students to acquire knowledge of cultures through art. The activities will expand the students' creative potentials and provide them with culturally different experiences.

The multicultural art curriculum will include dance, drama/theater, visual arts, and music. It will address the broad range of developmental levels, individual differences, talents and interests, and learning styles of all students. It will be a balanced program that can be integrated into any preexisting primary curriculum.

It is the intent of this project that the information presented will assist all educators in multicultural art, even those who do not have any art background or familiarity with specific art techniques.

The rationale for this project is that creating such a resource will provide teachers with a curriculum that will enhance their multicultural teachings, and in turn help address the needs of our nation's
increasing multicultural population.

Students are living in a world that is rich in diversity. Educators need to build children's self-awareness and an appreciation and acceptance of those culturally different. In doing so, people of all cultures can work and live together in a nation without harmful racial tensions. The development and implementation of this project work towards achieving this goal.

There are three limitations to consider for this project. The first concern is that this project is intended to be used in a kindergarten classroom. However, many of these lessons can be used with older students with some modifications.

The second concern is that this project is intended to be used with other materials related to multiculturalism, and not taught in isolation. Educators will need to incorporate multicultural literature and other materials in conjunction with the art program.

The third concern may be the lack of participation and willingness to implement the project into existing curriculum. Educators will need to have knowledge of
how to incorporate the project and be willing to try new approaches to the teaching of multiculturalism.
Chapter IV
Project Design

The form of this project will be a multicultural arts curriculum guide. It will provide general background, as well as distinct suggestions for classroom activities. Each activity can easily be modified to meet the needs of all learners.

The history, culture, and customs of five different cultures will be presented. The cultures included are from these areas: Brazil, Germany, Japan, Kenya, and Mexico.

The introduction to each culture is presented in Big Ideas. Big Ideas are general notes that highlight important information pertaining to each particular culture. Big Ideas can be used by teachers and students alike, but are not meant to be all-inclusive.

Each culture will have multiple activities based on the four aspects of the Arts curriculum: dance, drama/theater, visual arts and music. Each activity or project will include a cultural clue which will provide both the students, as well as the teacher with information on the culture and why that culture uses that particular
activity or project. The cultural clue will give students a general understanding of the culture and help the students to develop an appreciation for the culture.

Each activity will include detailed instructions in this format:

1. Activity Name
2. Curriculum Area
3. Cultural Clues
4. Materials
5. Step By Step Procedures for the Art Projects

Project Evaluation

The evaluation of the project will be completed by the author, as well as other kindergarten teachers. The evaluation will be in the form of a survey (see Appendix A) which will ask for opinions on how effective the curriculum guide is in raising cultural awareness among students. It will also ask if there is a heightened awareness, acceptance, and interest in other cultures, if the activities were interesting and appropriate, and if the teacher intends to use the curriculum in the future. The
recommendations and suggestions made by other primary teachers will help with making necessary changes to the curriculum in areas which may be lacking.
Appendix A

Teacher Evaluation Survey

1. How often do you use the materials in your classroom?

2. Did you find it easy to implement the material into your existing curriculum?

3. Are there any cultural areas you feel that are missing or would like to see included?

4. Are there any particular art activities missing that you feel are vital to better understand a particular culture?

5. Do you intend to use these materials in the upcoming year?

6. Comment on how these materials have heightened awareness, acceptance, and interest in other cultures.
Appendix B

A Teacher Resource Guide
Castles. ........................................... 60
Polka. ............................................ 61
Martinmas. ....................................... 62
Japan. ............................................. 63
Big Ideas for Japan. ............................... 64
Flag of Japan. .................................... 67
Japanese Kite. .................................... 68
Design a Room. ................................... 69
Daruma Doll. ..................................... 70
Japanese Kimono. ................................. 71
Population Game. ................................. 73
Cherry Blossom Song. ............................ 74
Origami Bookmark. ................................. 75
Picture Cards. .................................. 76
Japanese Dance. .................................. 77
Kenya. ............................................ 78
Big Ideas for Kenya. ............................... 79
Flag of Kenya. .................................... 82
Thatched Roof House. ............................. 83
Tie-Dye a Skafu. .................................. 84
Beaded Jewelry. .................................. 85
Rhythm Instruments. ............................... 86
Masks. ............................................ 87
Umbrella Dance (Mwamvuli) ................. .88
Basket Weaving ................................ 89
Act Out a Story .................................. .90
Safari Shoe Box ................................. .91
Mexico ............................................. .92
Big Ideas for Mexico ........................... 93
Flag of Mexico ................................... 96
Make a Serape .................................... .97
Build an Adobe .................................. 98
Mexican Hat Dance (El jarabe tapatio) ....... .99
Piñata ............................................. .100
Egg Cup Maracas ............................... 101
Trickster Tales .................................. 102
Mexican Amigo Bracelet ....................... 103
Volcano .......................................... 104
Butterflies ...................................... 105
Brazil
Big Ideas for Brazil

Culture

• The national language of Brazil is Portuguese.

• Indian groups lived in Brazil long before the Portuguese colonists came.

Time, Continuity, and Change

• Brazil became a Portuguese colony from 1500-1822, when it achieved independence.

• Portuguese colonists brought slaves over from Angola in West Africa.

People, Places, and Environment

• Brazil, the largest country in South America, takes up almost half the continent.

• Portuguese explorers named Brazil for a wood that produces a dye red as "hot coals" (brasas).

• The population of Brazil is approximately 158 million.
Individual Development and Identity

• Brazil boasts the world's most famous soccer player, Pele.

• Emerson Fittipaldi and Ayrton Senna, are Brazil's most popular motor racing champions.

Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

• The family is a crucial social unit extending to distant relatives and even family servants.

• The Native American population has been in Brazil the longest, but is now the smallest group.

Power, Authority, and Governance

• The Brazilian government pays for children ages 7 to 14 to have a compulsory elementary education.

• Slavery was outlawed in 1850.

Production, Distribution, and Consumption

• Brazil is an important producer of tropical crops.

• The forests of Brazil are important resources of timber, rubber, and palm oil.
Science, Technology, and Society

- Brazil has taken some tentative steps in the production of nuclear power.
- Telecommunications is a growing sector, with rapid expansion of cellular phones and cable subscriptions.

Global Connections

- Despite its abundance, Brazil’s animal and plant life are threatened by human activity.
- Brazil’s advance into the Amazon basin drew national and international attention over possible damage to the rain forests.

Civic Ideals and Practices

- The Portuguese colonists who settled Brazil had a more relaxed attitude toward interracial relationships.
- The gap between rich and poor is among the most substantial in the world.
Activity: Flag of Brazil

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: The flag of Brazil is green with a centered yellow diamond. Inside the diamond is a blue sphere with a white banner which reads: Ordern E Progresso (Order and Process). The stars of the sphere represent the 23 states of Brazil. The green and the yellow represent the colors of the forests and minerals of Brazil. The blue and white refer to the Portuguese colonization of Brazil.

Materials:
diamond patterns with 8" sides
sphere patterns with 6" diameters
12" x 18" green construction paper
yellow and blue construction paper
white tempura paint
scissors
glue
paintbrushes
black marker

Directions:

1. Use the yellow diamond pattern to cut a diamond out of yellow construction paper. Center and glue the diamond onto green construction paper.

2. Use the sphere pattern to cut a sphere out of the blue construction paper. Glue sphere onto the center of the diamond.

3. Paint a one-inch band across the top of the blue sphere. Paint the stars.

4. Let dry. Write Ordern E Progresso across the white banner on the blue sphere.
Activity: Chapeu Hat

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: In the central of southern plateaus of Brazil, ranchers or gauchos, wear cowboy clothing that benefit their work and lifestyle. Chapeu hats are broad-rimmed, felt hats that keep the sun out of their eyes, and are used to carry water and fan fires.

Materials:

newspaper
masking tape
brown tempura paint

Directions:

1. Mold two or three large sheets of newspaper around your partners head.

2. Use masking tape to bind the correct size and shape.

3. Take the hat off and trim the brim to about 4” from the masking tape.

4. Paint the hat brown.
Activity: Amazon River House

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: Brazilians are faced with a serious housing shortage. More than 20% of the people live in slums on the outskirts of major cities. On farms, people live in small houses made of stone, stucco, or woven branches. In the Amazon, people live in thatched palm leaf houses on wooden stilts to protect them from seasonal flood waters.

Materials:

- shoe box
- craft sticks
- clay
- cardboard
- glue

Directions:

1. Have students construct a house out of the shoe box by gluing craft sticks around the outside and top for a roof.

2. Poke craft sticks through the bottom of the box to make the stilts.

3. Spread clay onto a piece of cardboard and stick the other end of the craft sticks into the clay.
Activity: Bark Cloth Painting

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: Bark cloth is made and used in several parts of the world. To make the cloth, the bark is peeled from the tree, soaked, and pounded until smooth. Bark cloth is light brown in color and is often painted with pictures of flowers and birds.

Materials:

brown paper bag
markers
crayons
pencil
scissors
paper towels
large bowl of water

Directions:

1. Crumple the paper bag and soak it in water for about 10 minutes. Squeeze out the excess water. Flatten the bag and let it dry on paper towels.

2. Measure and cut a piece about 12" x 18" from the paper bag.

3. With your pencil, draw a picture of a flower or animal. Outline the shapes with a black marker.

4. Color the pictures with markers.
Activity: Tambourine

Curriculum Area: Music

Culture Clue: Brazil has music made up of many musical sounds. Every city and village has its samba schools where people meet to sing and dance. At carnival time, the streets are filled with samba musicians and dancers. A tambourine is often used to keep the beat of a piece of music, a dance, or a song.

Materials:

- aluminum pie plate
- 18 bottle caps
- hammer
- 2-3 yards different colored ribbon
- 1 large nail
- ruler
- scissors

Directions:

1. Use the hammer and nail to make 18 holes close to the rim of the pie plate.

2. Use the hammer and nail to make a hole in the center of each bottle cap.

3. Cut 16 pieces of ribbon that are each 6" long.

4. Tie the bottle caps to the pie plate, using the pieces of ribbon.

5. Tie two long pieces of ribbon onto a hole in the pie plate. Then tie two more long pieces of ribbon onto a hole on the opposite side of the pie plate.

6. Hold your tambourine in one hand and tap it against the palm of your other hand.
Activity: Carnival Masks

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: Carnival celebrations occur throughout Brazil from Christmas to Ash Wednesday. Rio de Janeiro is the most famous and elaborate carnival. An exotic variety of masks add to the fun of carnival celebrations. Harlequin masks are held on by a string or with a decorated straw.

Materials:

- light-weight cardboard
- glue
- colored construction paper
- paints
- feathers
- scissors
- elastic or straws
- glitter
- sequins
- ribbons

Directions:

1. Cut out a mask with eye holes out of cardboard.

2. Paint the mask or decorate with feathers, sequins, or glitter.

3. Glue on ribbons and construction paper animal ears and noses.

4. Place two holes at either end of the mask.

5. Measure elastic for head size. Lace through the two holes. Tie elastic into knots.

6. Glue a ribbon at the top of the straw, wrap the ribbon around the straw, and glue the bottom. Glue straw to the side of the mask.
Activity: Dance the Samba

Curriculum Area: Dance and Music

Culture Clue: The rhythm and movements from the samba evolved from the batuque, an African dance to the beat of drums. The dances often tell a story about the history or legends of Brazil.

Materials:

samba music
tambourines previously made
masks previously made

Directions:

1. Clear a large space in your classroom.

2. Play samba music.

3. Invite children to shake their tambourines and wear their masks.

4. Ask questions such as: Is the music fast or slow? How does the music make you feel? Do you think samba music is fun.
Activity: Trickster Tales

Curriculum Area: Drama

Culture Clue: The folktales of Jaboti were adapted by the Africans who were brought to Brazil as slaves. They told and retold the antics of this clever little trickster who uses his wit to overcome problems with big and powerful Amazon animals.

Materials:

book – Adventures of Jaboti on the Amazon by Lena Hurlong

Directions:

1. Read and discuss a few of the stories together.

2. Groups choose a tale to dramatize for the class.

3. Discuss how stories can change when told orally.

4. Challenge students to create an adaptation of the Jaboti tales.
Activity: Sculpted Animals

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: Brazil's distinctive wildlife inspires artists to sculpt animal images out of wood and clay.

Materials:

- playdough
- tempura paint
- toothpicks

Directions:

1. Sculpt animals. Use toothpicks to help attach body parts.
2. Leave animals out to dry and harden.
3. Color with tempura paint.
Activity: Mosaics

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: Brazilian artists use mosaics to decorate buildings, walls, and sidewalks throughout Brazil.

Materials:

dyed noodles
egg shells
dried rice
bird seed
dried beans
glue construction paper
3-oz. paper cups
rubbing alcohol
food coloring
resealable bags
newspaper

Directions:

1. Dye the noodles, rice, egg shells, and beans.

2. Put 1/4 teaspoon of rubbing alcohol in the corner of a resealable plastic bag. Add a few drops of food coloring and a handful of pasta and beans. Seal the bag and shake until the color is absorbed. Dry on newspaper.

3. On construction paper, make an outline design of something from the study of Brazil, such as a tropical bird or the Jaboti.

4. Take cups with different mosaic materials.

5. Glue pastas and beans to your design.
Germany
Big Ideas for Germany

Culture

• The principal and official language of Germany is German, an Indo-European language.

• Religion in Germany plays a fairly small role in society.

Time, Continuity, and Change

• A wall was built in 1961 to divide the city of Berlin.

• On October 3, 1990, East and West Germany reunited to become the Federal Republic of Germany.

People, Places, and Environment

• The capital of Germany is Berlin.

• The population is approximately 80 million.

Individual Development and Identity

• German printer, Johannes Gutenberg, invented movable type in 1445.

• The Grimm brothers were leaders in the study of philosophy and folktales.
Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

- About 70 percent of the people are either Roman Catholic or Protestant.
- Full-time school attendance in Germany is free and mandatory from ages 6-11.

Power, Authority, and Governance

- Germany does not have large pockets of poverty or great economic disparity.
- Under German law, all churches are supported by a modest church tax that is collected by the state.

Production, Distribution, and Consumption

- Germany is a leading producer of such products as iron and steel, machinery and machine tools, and automobiles.
- The availability of inexpensive transport by water, and later by land, facilitated the growth of manufacturing and encouraged exports.

Science, Technology, and Society

- The presence of certain minerals in great quantity, such as potash and salt, permitted the development of a
chemical industry, including the production of fertilizers and pharmaceuticals.

- The baroque style of architecture flourished in Germany in the 18th century.

Global Connections

- Germany is an economic powerhouse in the European Union.
- Germany received some nuclear fallout at the time of the 1986 Chernobyl reactor meltdown in Ukraine.

Civic Ideals and Practices

- Forest conservation since the 18th century has preserved large areas of oak, ash, elm, beech, birch, pine, fir, and larch.
- Ethnic German "resettlers" and East German migrants still encounter prejudice even though they are German citizens.
Activity: Flag of Germany

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: The German national colors — black, red, and gold, are displayed as three equal horizontal stripes on the flag.

Materials:
black, red, gold, and white construction paper
glue
scissors

Directions:
1. Cut black, red, and gold construction paper into 3 equal stripes.
2. Glue stripes onto white construction paper. Black on top, red in the middle, and gold on the bottom.
Activity: Sing Down the Wall

Curriculum Area: Music

Culture Clue: As a result of World War II, Germany was divided into two countries, East Germany and West Germany. In 1961, a wall was built to divide the city of Berlin. East Germans could not immigrate to the West. In 1989, peaceful demonstrators tore down the wall. On October 3, 1990, East and West Germany were united.

Materials:

Song - The Berlin Wall

Directions:

1. Have students sing The Berlin Wall.

2. While singing, encourage them to heave their arms like imaginary axes.

The Berlin Song
(Sung to the tune of London Bridge)

The Berlin Wall came tumbling down,
Tumbling down, tumbling down.
The Berlin Wall came tumbling down
In 1989.
East and West were one again,
One again, one again.
East and West were one again
In 1990.
Activity: Paper Cuts

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: Many people are fascinated by works of art with paper. The heart is the traditional motif of the German scherenschnitte. In Germany, bakers use paper doilies when decorating cakes by sprinkling powder sugar through the integrate paper designs.

Materials:

- lightweight colored paper
- pencil
- small sharp scissors (embroidery scissors)
- hole punch
- glue

Directions:

1. Fold the paper doily, begin with a circle of paper. Fold the paper in half three times.

2. Cut an interesting edging for your doily.

3. Open the doily carefully and flatten it between heavy books.
Activity: Schultute

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: When children enter school for the first time, they receive large cones filled with small gifts, sweets, and supplies. The schultute is made and given to them by their parents to make the first day of school more special.

Materials:

9" x 12" piece of construction paper
tissue paper
scissors
 glue
markers
gifts (candies, balloons, pencils, stickers)
15" piece of yarn or ribbon

Directions:

1. Fold the construction paper in half and cut off the corners.

2. Unfold and decorate the paper with markers.

3. Slightly pleat a 6" wide strip of tissue paper and glue it to the rounded edge of the construction paper.

4. Shape the construction paper into a cone and secure the side with glue. Do not glue the tissue paper.

5. Fill the cone with small gifts and tie the tissue paper closed with a ribbon.
Activity: Lederhosen

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: Lederhosen are a well-known folk costume from the Bavarian Alps in southeast Germany. The short pants and braces (suspenders) are usually made of leather, decorated with embroidery.

Materials:
- tape measure
- butcher paper
- safety pins
- glue
- scissors
- shorts that have cuffs at the bottom

Directions:

1. Put on the shorts. Use a tape to measure to see how long it is from the front of your waist over your shoulder to the back of your waist. Then add 2 inches to that measurement.

2. Measure two stripes of butcher paper that are 1½ inches wide and the final length you got in step 1.

3. Cut out an oval approximately 8 inches wide. Color a design.

4. Use the safety pins to connect the suspenders to the waistband of your shorts.

5. Carefully staple the oval onto the suspenders so that it is over the middle of your chest.

6. Encourage students to wear long-sleeved shirts, and knee-high socks.
Activity: Festive Aprons

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Cultural Clue: In many regions, the traditional costume of women and girls includes an apron. The aprons are usually white cloth decorated with embroidery and/or lace.

Materials:

white cloth
white crepe paper
crayons
stapler

Directions:

1. Cut a 16” x 16” piece of white cloth.

2. Cut a 3’ piece of crepe paper.

3. Have students use crayons to create a look of embroidery.

4. Staple crepe paper onto top of white cloth.

5. Encourage girls to wear the aprons over full-skirted dresses or skirts with white blouses.
Activity: Number Rhyme

Curriculum Area: Music

Culture Clue: Throughout Germany people speak High German (Hochdeutsch) with a crisp, clear, and distinct pronunciation. The German language is written using the same alphabet as English. All nouns are capitalized no matter where they appear in a sentence.

Materials:

book - Count Your Way through Germany by Jim Haskins

Directions:

1. Read the book Count You Way through Germany to students.

2. Practice counting together.

3. Introduce number rhyme to students.

Use the rhythm of One, Two Buckle My Shoe to teach counting in German.

Eins, zwei,
Look at the sky.

Drei, vier,
Touch you ear.

Funf, sechs,
Bend your necks.

Sieben, acht,
Fly like hawks.

Neun, zehn,
Let’s count again.

Eins, zwei, drei, vier,
Funf, sechs, sieben,
Acht, neun, zehn.
Activity: Castles

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts and Drama

Culture Clue: Along the Rhine River, you can see many of the famed castles of Germany. In medieval times a wall and sometimes a moat surrounded the castle to protect people from their enemies. Inside the castle was a small town with lords, ladies, knights and servants.

Materials:

- water
- buckets
- shovels
- books on German castles
- castles play figures

Directions:

1. Have students research castles out of books.

2. Have students work together on making castles in sand box.

3. Encourage students to role play with castle figures about what it might have been like back then.
Activity: Polka

Curriculum Area: Dance and Music

Culture Clue: Germans enjoy traditional folk dances at festivals and celebrations. The polka is a popular and easy-to-learn folk dance.

Materials:

polka music

Directions:

1. Practice the three basic steps of left, right/left, then right, left/right.
Activity: Martinmas

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts and Drama

Culture Clue: On St. Martin’s Day, children carry lanterns and go house to house for treats.

Materials:

12” x 18” construction paper
colored tissue paper
scissors
tape
stapler
glue
rulers or dowels
string hole punch

Directions:

1. Fold paper in fourths horizontally.

2. Cut shapes from folded edges to make windows. Be careful not to cut too close to the top or to the bottom.

3. Open up and glue colored tissue over each window.

4. Tape edges together to form a four-sided lantern.

5. Punch two holes across from each other and attach string.

6. Tape string to dowel or ruler.

7. Have students parade around the school grounds carrying their lanterns.
Japan
Big Ideas for Japan

Culture

• The Japanese people show respect and love for nature in their art, music, and literature.

• The oldest race living in Japan is the Ainu.

Time, Continuity, and Change

• Historians believe that the first settlers in Japan came in boats from China, Korea, and Manchuria.

• Life in Japan was changed forever in 1543 when Portuguese traders arrived and introduced firearms to Japan.

People, Places, and Environment

• There are over 124 million people living in Japan.

• The country of Japan includes thousands of small islands.

• Tokyo is the capital of Japan.

Individual Development and Identity

• Yasunari Kawabata won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1968.
• Saint Francis Xavier, the Jesuit missionary, had brought Christianity to Japan in 1549.

Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
• Samurai warriors were organized around A.D. 1000.
• Education is a high priority in Japan.

Power, Authority, and Governance
• Japan is a democracy, but also has an emperor.
• By A.D. 400, the Yamoto clan had become the rulers on Kyushu and had begun the dynasty that still reigns in Japan today.

Production, Distribution, and Consumption
• Japan is the world’s largest producer of automobiles, televisions, and video cassette recorders.
• In 1853, Commander Matthew Perry of the United States convinced the Japanese government to allow trade between the two nations.

Science, Technology, and Society
• Japan has a low unemployment rate.
• Japan is among the world’s largest and technology advanced producers of steel, textiles, and telecommunication equipment.

Global Connections

• Japan fought in World War II from 1940 - 1945.

• In 1964, Japan hosts the Summer Games of the International Olympic Games.

Civic Ideals and Practices

• Samurai warriors followed the Bushido Code of Loyalty and Service.

• Japanese people have learned to be disciplined, flexible, and ready to adapt to new changes due to their physical environment.
Activity: Flag of Japan

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: The Japanese flag has a red sun on a white background to depict its official name, Nippon, which means "source of the sun". Japan is known as the "The Land of the Sun because it is located just west of the International Date Line. Japanese are the first to see the sun rise everyday.

Materials:
red tissue paper
12" x 18" white construction paper
glue
pencil

Directions:
1. Cut red tissue paper into small squares.
2. Trace a circle in the middle of the white construction paper.
3. Glue red tissue paper squares into circle using the eraser of the pencil.
Activity: Japanese Kite

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: In Japan, kites are flown on May 5th for a celebration called Children's Day. The kites are shaped like a carp, which is a type of fish. The Japanese admire the carp because it must swim upstream. They believe this fish is strong and determined.

Materials:

two sheets of white construction paper 12” x 18”
markers or crayons
wire 12” in length
masking tape
white glue
36” of string, cut into thirds

Directions:

1. Cut two identical long, thin fish shapes from the papers.

2. Decorate them with the markers.

3. Glue the two fish together along the top edge.

4. Fold about 1” of paper at the mouth into the fish.

5. Insert the wire into the fold. Glue or tape it firmly in place, leaving an end of the wire hanging out each side.

6. Fold the wire and glue the bottom edge of the fish closed, leaving the tail open.

7. Allow the glue to dry.

8. Twist the wire ends together and form the mouth into a circle.

9. Tie the three pieces of string to the mouth, pull the strings together and tie a knot.
Activity: Design a Room

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: Traditional Japanese homes, made of wood, can be found throughout the country, especially in the rural areas. It rains a lot in Japan. Most roofs on houses feature very low eaves that extend far out beyond the outside wall to offer protection from rain and wind. Japanese homes are very versatile. Sliding doors (shoji) can be opened to let in breezes or create bigger spaces.

Materials:

9" x 12" construction paper  
(2) 2" x 9" brown construction paper stripes  
(2) 4" x 6" index cards or white construction paper  
crayons  
glue

Directions:

1. Fold brown construction paper stripes in half lengthwise to form runners. Glue bottom runner onto the 9" x 12" paper.

2. Put index cards vertically in the bottom runner. Place the top runner over the cards and then glue it down. Glue ends of runners shut.

3. Use crayons to create panels on the sliding doors and to draw people and objects both in and outside the room.
Activity: Daruma Doll

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue:

Materials:

half of a sponge ball 1-2 inches in diameter
(2) 4” x 6” construction paper
masking tape, ¼ inch wide
glue
paint or markers

Directions:

1. Cut out a cone pattern.

2. Trace the cone pattern onto the pieces of construction paper. Cut the patterns out of the construction paper.

3. Roll the pieces of construction paper together to form a cone and glue them in place.

4. Use the masking tape to hold the cone onto the ball.

5. Draw or paint a face on the ball.

6. Place your doll on a table or desk. Turn the point of the cone to spin the doll, or try to push it over to one side, and then let go.
Activity: Japanese Kimono

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: Most Japanese people dress the same as people in the United States. For special occasions, such as weddings and funerals, Japanese people traditionally wear a silk kimono. During the summer, a simpler cotton version of the kimono (yukata) is worn at home.

Materials:
clean flat sheet
tape measure
4" wide and 3-4 long, rectangular, colorful piece of material
straight pins
chalk

Directions:
1. Fold the sheet in half. Holding the two sides of the sheet together, cut a line that is 10" long in the middle of the fold. Then put the sheet over your head so it is inside out.

2. Use straight pins to show where the sheet touches the floor. Cut off the extra part of the sheet in the front and in the back.

3. Turn up the bottom of the sheet and staple to make a hem.

4. Hold your arms straight out. Use chalk to draw a line from each wrist to the bottom of the sheet. Be sure to mark the front and the back on each side.

5. Cut along the chalk marks on each side.

6. Hold the front and back of the sheet together on one side. Pull some of the sheet away from the body and staple a seam up the waist.

7. Hold your arms out straight and staple a seam to make a loose fitting sleeve on each sleeve and staple.
8. Cut an opening down the front. Turn up the sheet on each side of the opening and staple.

9. Take off the kimono and turn it right side out. Then put it back on. Wrap the piece of colorful material around your waist as a sash. Tie it in the back.
Activity: Population Game

Curriculum Area: Drama

Culture Clue: Japan’s land size compares to that of California. But Japan is a very crowded place with over 126 million people, six times more people than in California. Approximately 70% of Japan is mountainous terrain so most of the people live on the remaining 30% of the land. There are serious housing shortage problems.

Materials:

masking tape

Directions:

1. Use masking tape to create a 3’ x 6’ area to represent the land size of Japan/California.

2. Have 2 students stand in the area to represent the population of California. They may walk around or sit.

3. Add 10 more students to join the first 2, so that the total is now 12, six times that of California’s population.

4. Have students compare the two experiences.

5. Section off 70% of the area so students can attempt to stand in the remaining 30%. Discuss how a large population on limited land might affect the lives of the people.
Activity: Cherry Blossom Song

Curriculum Area: Music

Culture Clue: When Japanese people have free time, they enjoy listening to music. The music in Japan ranges from very traditional to classical to Western. Cherry blossoms (sakura) are the national flower of Japan. The blossoming of the cherry trees is cause for celebration throughout the country. Japanese school children sing this song during cherry blossom time.

Materials:
piano
lyrics to The Cherry Blossom Song

Directions:

1. Play any minor scale on the piano to introduce students to what traditional Japanese music sounds like.

2. Have students sing the lyrics to the song.
**Activity:** Origami Bookmark

**Curriculum Area:** Visual Arts

**Culture Clue:** Origami, or paper folding, is one type of activity Japanese children enjoy. By folding a single piece of paper, Japanese artists can make animals, plants, and many other objects.

**Materials:**

square pattern  
crayons  
scissors

**Directions:**

1. Use crayons to decorate the square pattern.
2. Fold the square in half from corner to corner.
3. Fold down the top triangle.
4. Flip over the paper. Fold down the middle flap.
5. Fold three corners as shown here.
6. Turn the bookmark over and place it in a book.

![Origami Diagram](image)
Activity: Picture Cards (Kamishibai)

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts and Drama

Culture Clue: Kamishibai are part of the centuries-old Asian tradition of picture-storytelling. The picture cards depict the main events of the story while the story-teller describes the events.

Materials:

12” x 18” pieces of white construction paper
crayons
markers
Japanese literature students can retell

Directions:

1. Immerse students in a wealth of Japanese literature.

2. Have students pair up and pick a favorite story they would like to retell.

3. Have students make picture cards (kamishibai) depicting the main events in their story.

4. Students take turns holding the cards and retelling the story to other students.
Activity: Japanese Dance

Curriculum Area: Dance

Culture Clue: Bugaku is a style of dance that is an abstract representation of the climatic part of a story. The dancers do not utter any words. In this respect, bugaku is to be regarded as a mime. Symmetry is also strongly emphasized in bugaku. The two sides of the dancer’s body are frequently in exact symmetry.

Materials:

kimonos – previously made

Directions:

1. Have students practice movements with both sides of their bodies simultaneously.

2. Discuss how a bugaku dancer must be very talented and focused when dancing.
Kenya
Big Ideas for Kenya

Culture

- The national language of Kenya is Swahili.
- Nearly all of the African ethnic groups in Kenya also have their own languages, making for considerable linguistic diversity within the country.

Time, Continuity, and Change

- Kenya has been a republic since 1964.

People, Places, and Environment

- The population of Kenya is 25 million people.
- Kenya has a varied landscape of plateaus and high mountains and is home to many different ethnic groups.

Individual Development and Identity

- Jomo Kenyatta was the first prime minister (1963 - 1964) and then the first president (1964 - 1978) of Kenya.
- Isak Dinesen is Kenya’s most famous post-independence writer.
Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

- There are more than 40 different ethnic groups in Kenya.
- Over 80 percent of the children attend primary school for 8 years.

Power, Authority, and Governance

- Hunting has been legally banned since 1976.
- After Kenya gained independence in 1963, race ceased to be an important indicator of social status, but wealth and ethnic identity remain significant.

Production, Distribution, and Consumption

- Kenya’s rivers provide hydroelectricity.
- Kenya’s main natural resource is its land, of which 8 percent is currently cultivated.

Science, Technology, and Society

- Kenya has the most industrially developed economy in East Africa.
- Kenya has a geothermal station and an oil-burning facility that produces electricity.
Global Connections

- Kenya is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations.
- Tourism in Kenya has expanded dramatically since 1963, mainly from Europe and North America.

Civic Ideals and Practices

- Marriages are often arranged, and polygamy is practice.
- Kenyatta appointed members of many different ethnic groups to government and encouraged the people of Kenya to come together as Kenyans.
Activity: Flag of Kenya

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: The flag of Kenya features three wide stripes. The black represents the people. The red represents the blood shed during their struggle. The green represents agriculture, their economic mainstay. The three wide stripes are separated by two narrow white stripes symbolizing peace and unity. In the center of the flag is the Masai shield with two crossed spears which represents the defense of freedom.

Materials:

12" x 18" white construction paper
4" x 9" red construction paper
black, red, and green tempera paint
scrapes of black and white construction paper
scissors
glue
paintbrushes

Directions:

1. Paint 3-inch black, red, and green horizontal stripes on the white construction paper, leaving 1½ white stripes in between the colors.

2. Let dry.

3. Cut a football-shaped shield from the 4" x 9" red construction paper.

4. Add details with black and white construction paper scraps.
Activity: Thatched Roof House

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: Nyumbani (home) has a different meaning to a Kenyan than to an American. Home is the actual piece of land where they were born and to which they'll likely return to before they die. The various ethnic groups have different types of homes which reflect the materials available in their environment. The most common structure is the grass-thatched roof which keeps it cool. Some ethnic groups enhance their homes by decorating the walls with geometric shapes inside and out.

Materials:

round oatmeal, salt, or breadcrumb boxes
tag square, 6" x 6"
dried grass, raffia, or straw
paint
brushes
glue, scissors
crayons

Directions:

1. Cut the box down to 3\(\frac{1}{2}\)" or 4".

2. Cut out a door from the open side.

3. Paint the box light brown.

4. When paint is dry, design outer wall with crayons or paints.

5. Round the corners of the tag square to form a circle. Make a cut into the center and overlap to form a cone. Secure with glue.

6. Glue on grass, raffia, or straw to make a thatched roof.

7. Put a of glue ring around the top of the box and attach the roof.

8. Group houses together to form a small village.
Activity: Tie-Dye a Skafu

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: Bright colors and bold designs distinguish Kenyan dress. Headscarves are worn both at home and at the marketplace.

Materials:
24" square of material (cloth that absorbs dye quickly)
household packaged dye
saucepan
sticks for stirring dye
hot plate
iron
string
glass jar

Directions:
1. Tie clean cloth into tight knots or use string to tie tightly, randomly or at set intervals.
2. Mix dye as directed on box.
3. Dip cloth in warm water before dying. Wring out excess water.
4. Dip cloth in dye and stir with stick to color evenly. Leave cloth in dye for about two minutes so color will not penetrate tied places.
5. Remove cloth from dye and rinse in cold water.
7. Let skafu drip-dry.
8. Press with hot iron while cloth is damp to set color.
Activity: Beaded Jewelry

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: Kenyans are very artful especially when making jewelry. They use glass, clay, wood, stones, shells, metals, and bones to make jewelry. They create various strands of jewelry that decorate the neck, arm, ankle, waist, and head.

Materials:

- salad macaroni
- rubbing alcohol
- food coloring
- resealable plastic bags
- twine or elastic thread
- masking tape

Directions:

1. Mix ½ teaspoon rubbing alcohol and several drops of food coloring in a plastic bag.

2. Add macaroni and shake.

3. Spread the freshly dyed macaroni on newspaper to dry.

4. Thread the macaroni on twine or elastic thread and secure the ends.

5. Make several strands to wear.
Activity: Rhythm Instruments

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts and Music

Culture Clue: In traditional African music, the rhythm of the drum predominates while string, wind, and shake instruments accompany. Not only are natural objects used as instruments, but the body itself can also become a music maker as well. The people of Kenya utilize recycled materials as well as natural objects to create musical instruments.

Materials:

Objects around the room:

- plastic cups
- beans
- rice
- coffee cans
- pencils
- tissue boxes
- rubber bands
- tape
- crayons
- paint

Directions:

1. Have students search for inanimate objects around the room that hold the possibility for music.

2. Have students create their own instruments and music.

3. Gather students in small groups to make music, playing different rhythms simultaneously.
Activity: Masks

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: Dancers wear masks in traditional ceremonies and in performances to entertain tourists. The masks worn may be very elaborate. They may be decorated with features and painted very bright colors. Many look like birds, animals, or fish. Some masks cover the face or even the entire head, while others are worn on the top of the head.

Materials:

12" x 18" tan, brown, or black construction paper
construction paper scraps in assorted colors
scissors
glue
lightweight decorative materials (feathers, raffia, etc.)

Directions:

1. Cut a large face shape from the 12" x 18" construction paper.

2. Use construction paper scraps to create large eyes, a nose, and a mouth. You may want to use geometric shapes for the facial features.

3. Add geometric designs to the empty spaces of the mask.

4. Embellish with feathers, raffia, or other decorative items.
Activity: Umbrella Dance (Mwamvuli)

Curriculum Area: Dance and Music

Culture Clue: Dance is considered a very important form of expression in Kenya. Dances usually have a religious meaning. Young women may dance to ask the spirits to give them many healthy children. A farming village may perform a special dance before planting new crops and ask for a bountiful harvest. The Umbrella Dance (Mwamvuli) is a popular dance of Kenya. People open umbrellas and move in a line down the street to create an impromptu umbrella dance. Participants march to the music, lifting their umbrellas up and down, creating a beautiful sight.

Materials:

umbrellas
rhythm instruments

Directions:

1. Have students bring umbrellas to school.

2. Go out to the playground and have students make music with their handmade instruments while others spontaneously create the umbrella dance.
Activity: Basket Weaving

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: Handwoven baskets are used in everyday life in Kenya. A tea-picker gathers leaves in a basket on his back. A shopper in the marketplace carries fresh fruits and vegetables in a basket on her head. In Kenya, fiber from homegrown sisal plants is one of the most commonly used materials for basket weaving. The sisal fiber is hand-dyed and then woven into baskets.

Materials:

5 or 7-ounce paper cups
yarn
scissors
glue

Directions:

1. Cut the cup into an odd number of spokes (5, 7, or 9).

2. Tie the yarn at the base of one spoke, then alternate going under and over the spokes. Push the yarn tightly toward the base of the cup after each row is complete.

3. When the last row is complete, secure the yarn by gluing it around the top.
Activity: Act Out a Story

Curriculum Area: Drama

Culture Clue: Reading gives students background about customs, traditions, history, and information about everyday life in Kenya. The art of storytelling is part of the Kenyan culture. For generations, folktales were handed down orally and performed with expressive gestures. The audience also joined in by answering riddles, chanting, and singing in response to the storyteller.

Materials:

book - The Crocodile and the Ostrich by Verna Aardema
book - Who’s in Rabbits’ House by Leo and Diane Dillon

Directions:

1. Invite students to participate in the telling of these tales.

2. Students can wear their masks and pantomime the actions of the characters.
Activity: Safari Shoe Box

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: Kenya is a very popular tourist spot. There are many game parks where visitors can photograph lions, tigers, and herds of elephants. Hunting has been legally banned since 1976, but poachers still illegally kill elephants for their ivory tusks and rhinoceroses for their horns.

Materials:

- shoe box
- butcher paper
- crayons
- 2 toilet tissue tubes

Directions:

1. Cut a window in the bottom of a shoe box and slits in the sides.

2. Cut butcher paper so it can pulled through the slits.

3. On the paper, draw pictures of the wildlife of Africa.

4. Thread the filmstrip through the slits and secure each end to an empty toilet tissue tube.

5. Show off your "Safari" show.
Mexico
Big Ideas for Mexico

Culture

• Mexicans place high value on family and traditional values.

• The official language of Mexico is Spanish.

Time, Continuity, and Change

• By the end of the 19th century, mestizos—people of mixed Spanish and Native American decent—populated most of Mexico.

• As many as 100 Native American languages are still spoken in Mexico.

People, Places, and Environment

• The population of Mexico is 86 million.

• The nation’s capital, Mexico City, is one of the largest cities in the world.

Individual Development and Identity

• Diego Rivera, is the most prolific and best-known of the Mexican muralists.
• Octavio Paz, was the first Mexican to win the Nobel Prize in 1990 in literature.

Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

• The vast majority of Mexicans, about 90 percent, are Catholic and speak Spanish.

• The government provides a free education for every child ages 6 – 14.

Power, Authority, and Governance

• Mexico’s political system emerged from the Mexican Revolution Era and has provided political continuity from 1929 --to the present.

• The government is controlled by a single party, the Institutional Revolutionary party.

Production, Distribution, and Consumption

• The country’s enormous petroleum reserves rank it among the top ten countries in the world.

• Manufacturing, tourism, and assembly industries in Northern Mexico are now important sectors of the economy.
Science, Technology, and Society

- Most of the leading museums, prestigious educational institutions, publishing firms, and newspapers are located in the capital.
- In the 17th and 18th centuries, architecture in Mexico was highly decorative and elaborate.

Global Connections

- Mexico has been internationally recognized for the contributions of its 20th-century mural artists.
- Mexico is the third largest trading partner of the United States.

Civic Ideals and Practices

- Many community groups, as well as local governments, have worked together to improve environmental conditions.
- The government has begun providing family planning information and education due to the increasing population.
- Mexico's 1917 constitution guarantees freedom of religion.
**Activity:** Flag of Mexico

**Curriculum Area:** Visual Arts

**Culture Clue:** The national flag of Mexico has three vertical stripes. From left to right they are green, which stands for independence; white, which stands for religion; and red, which stands for union. The center band contains Mexico's coat of arms. It represents an eagle with a snake in its beak sitting on a cactus. This emblem is based on the ancient Aztec legend about the founding of Mexico City.

**Materials:**

- 12” x 18” white construction paper
- 6” x 12” green and red construction paper (one of each)
- Reproducible Coat of Arms
- Markers
- Crayons
- Glue

**Directions:**

1. Glue the green and red construction paper to the left and right of the white paper.

2. Color the Coat of Arms and glue it in the center.
Activity: Make a Serape

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: In rural areas of Mexico, the traditional clothing is usually worn. Men wear shirts and pants, and women wear blouses and long full skirts. In hot weather, loose, free flowing cotton clothing is worn. In cold weather, shawls and serapes are worn for added warmth. The Mexican people love bright colors which can be seen by the clothing they wear. Mayan and Aztec designs are very popular.

Materials:

brown paper grocery bag
bright paints

Directions:

1. In paper bag, bottom side-up, cut a hole big enough for your head.

2. Cut out each side of the bag.

3. Fringe the bottom.

4. Paint a colorful design.
Activity: Build an Adobe

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: Adobes are homes built in rural areas of Mexico. Homes are kept very neat and clean, which shows the importance they give to it. Color and beauty are given to homes with pots and gardens of flowers.

Materials:
- cardboard
- clay
- dirt
- grass or raffia
- glue
- tag board
- tissue paper (assorted colors)

Directions:
1. Sprinkle dirt on cardboard.
2. Make small clay bricks (uniform in size) and construct an adobe house on the earthen floor.
3. Add a roof made of grass or raffia glued to tag board.
4. Make small gardens of flowers by using small pieces of different colored tissue paper.
Activity: Mexican Hat Dance (El jarabe tapatio)

Curriculum Area: Music and Dance

Culture Clue: Music and dance play an important part in parties (fiestas) and other gatherings of family of friends in Mexico. The Mexican Hat Dance is a favorite at celebrations for all occasions in Mexico. The Spanish name, El jarabe tapatio, translates: the dance of the people from Jalisco, a region where the dance is commonly performed.

Materials:

music
sombrero

Directions:

1. Students circle around the sombrero.

2. Alternating feet, children jump, putting one heel forward and then the other back.

3. When the music changes, children join hands, move to the center with hands raised, and then lower hands as they move back out.

4. Repeat until the music ends.
Activity: Piñata

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: Piñatas are popular decorations that are displayed during Christmas and at birthday parties. Originally they were made out of a clay pot cover with fringe. Today, piñatas are made from cardboard or paper-mache covered with tissue paper. A piñata comes in many designs, such as a star, donkey, or a bird. During the celebration, blindfolded children try to hit the piñata and break it open so that the treats can be shared by all.

Materials:

- two brown paper grocery bags
- scissors
- glue
- tape
- stapler
- yellow tissue paper
- black marker
- wrapped hard candy
- 15” length of strong cord

Directions:

1. Cut two identical circles from the paper grocery bag.
2. Cut the tissue paper into flower petals.
3. Glue the petals around the edge of one paper circle, overlapping them if necessary.
4. Use a marker to draw seeds on the other paper circle.
5. Glue and staple the edge of the seed circle onto the circle with petals, leaving an opening at the top.
6. Fill the piñata with hard candy. Tape the hanging cord firmly in place at the top. Staple the piñata closed.
Activity: Egg Cup Maracas

Curriculum Area: Music

Culture Clue: In the early days of Mexico, Indians would use guards with pebbles inside during their celebrations to make music by shaking them. Today, Mexican musicians use maracas.

Materials:

2 egg “cups”
craft sticks
dry beans
masking tape
newspaper strips
liquid starch
tempura paint

Directions:

1. Place beans in one cup.

2. Use masking tape to hold the two cups together.

3. Cut a slit in one end and slide a craft stick in for a handle.

4. Cover egg cups with several layers of newspaper strips dipped in liquid starch. Be sure to extend the newspaper to the handle to secure it.

5. After newspaper dries, paint it with colorful designs.
Activity: Trickster Tale

Curriculum Area: Drama

Culture Clue: Every culture has folktales that boast the heroics of the small and tricky. In the Mexican folktale Borreguita and the Coyote, the little lamb outsmarts the coyote.

Materials:

book - Borreguita and the Coyote by Verna Aardema
lamb mask
coyote mask

Directions:

1. Read the folktale to students.

2. Choose a different pair of actors for each encounter.

3. Act out the story a number of times so that each student can have a turn.
Activity: Mexican Amigo Bracelet

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: In Mexico, amigo bracelets are a popular way to tell other people that you want to be their friend. The people who get an amigo bracelet wear it with pride. Someone who wears a large number of amigo bracelets probably has many friends.

Materials:

- colored string
- ruler
- scissors
- tape

Directions:

1. Cut three pieces of different colored string that are about 20" each in length.

2. Knot the pieces of string together at one end.

3. Tape the knot to a flat surface, such as a table or desk.

4. Begin braiding the three pieces of string. Cross the left string over the one in the center and then the right string over the one that is now in the center.

5. When finished braiding, tie a knot with the loose ends. Remove the tape.

6. Give your amigo bracelet to a friend.
Activity: Volcano

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: Volcanoes have had a major impact on the lives in Mexico. Two dormant volcanoes, Popocatepeti and Ixtacehuati, are near Mexico City.

Materials:

- paper-mache volcano
- film canister
- teaspoon
- backing soda
- vinegar
- red food coloring

Directions:

1. Create a volcano out of paper-mache.

2. Place an empty film canister inside the volcano.

3. Put 1 or 2 teaspoons of baking soda inside the canister.

4. Add 1 or 2 drops of vinegar and food coloring.

5. Watch the volcano erupt.
Activity: Butterflies

Curriculum Area: Visual Arts

Culture Clue: In early autumn, huge swarms of monarch butterflies migrate south from the United States to Mexico.

Materials:

waxed paper
iron
ends of old crayons
scissors
yarn
newspaper

Directions:

1. Grate the crayons into small pieces.

2. Arrange the shavings into the shape of a butterfly onto the wax paper.

3. Cover the shavings with another piece of wax paper.

4. Place the wax paper between two pieces of newspaper. Carefully press the paper with a medium hot iron until the shavings have melted together.

5. Cut around the shape of the butterfly, attach the yarn, and hang.
References


