



Grade Level: K-5

Time Needed: Two to four class periods

Lesson Plan:

Culture Quilt

SUMMARY

The concept of culture may be new, or difficult, for some students to understand. Although students may be aware that some of their friends practice a different religion, have skin of a different color, or have different family traditions, they may not be aware that those things make up a person's culture—or of the importance of acknowledging that we all come from different cultures.

In this lesson, students will explore their own culture and make connections to other cultures—exploring the similarities and differences among cultures and developing an appreciation for cultural diversity in our global community.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to define themselves in terms of their own culture by illustrating a Culture Quilt square (see reproducible below).
- Students will be able to discuss similarities and differences among cultures within their own class.
- Students will research the culture and customs of children in Afghanistan, Pakistan, or Tajikistan by viewing the videos and photos provided and using additional resources (located in the Pennies for Peace Toolkit section).
- Students will be able to compare and contrast their culture with Central Asian cultures.
- Students will be able to identify and discuss problems that arise from cultural differences and determine steps to overcome them.

SUBJECTS

- Language Arts
- Social Studies
- Art



CULTURE QUILT *continued*

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What is culture? *Culture is the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, and social habits to music and arts.*
Source: <http://www.livescience.com/21478-what-is-culture-definition-of-culture.html>
 - What is your culture?
 - How do cultures differ within our community?
 - How do cultures differ from city to city within the United States, or the world?
 - How do multiple cultures contribute to the richness of a community?
 - How might cultural differences cause problems in our local community, or the global community?
How might those problems be overcome?
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RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

- Culture Quilt square reproducible (see reproducible below)
- Crayons, markers, magazine clippings, glue
- Fact sheets (located in the Pennies for Peace Toolkit section)
- Printable Map (located in the Pennies for Peace Toolkit section)
- Videos (located in the Pennies for Peace Toolkit section)
- Photos (located in the Pennies for Peace Toolkit section)
- Research tools such as newspapers, news magazines, and, if appropriate, the Internet
- Central Asia Institute blog, which can be found at <http://centralasiainstitute.org/field-notes/>
- Additional References (located in the Pennies for Peace Toolkit section)

**CULTURE QUILT continued****LESSON**

1. Conduct a whole-class discussion about culture. We are all part of a culture. Many of us come from families that are made up of more than one culture. Culture can be defined as the traditions, knowledge, and beliefs passed down from one generation to the next. For example, the foods we eat, the way we dress, the holidays we celebrate, and what we do for fun are all things that make up our culture.
2. Have students brainstorm the various parts of their culture. Record student responses on the board. What do children in our region of the United States do for fun (e.g., play soccer, watch cartoons)? What foods do we eat? What holidays do we celebrate? What social habits do we practice (e.g., handshake, table manners, respectful habits of speech)?
3. Facilitate a discussion of similarities as well as differences among students in the same class. For example, some students celebrate Christmas, while others celebrate Hanukkah. Discuss similarities and differences without judgment.
4. Explain the Culture Quilt activity: Students will complete their own Culture Quilt square by filling in each of the smaller squares (see printable below). Depending on grade level, students may illustrate with crayons, markers, collages made from magazine clippings, etc.
5. Once the quilt squares are complete, staple or pin them together on a bulletin board to create a Class Culture Quilt.
6. Have a whole-class discussion about the “quilt,” or ask students to journal or write an essay based on these questions:
 - How are the quilt squares similar?
 - How are they different?
 - If all of the squares were the same, might the quilt be a bit boring?
 - Is it important to be accepting of cultural differences? Why?
 - How might acceptance of differences translate into actions in the classroom?
 - Why are some people not accepting of cultural differences? Can you think of three ways to overcome those barriers to acceptance?
7. Depending on the amount of time that you have to teach this lesson, you may opt to have students research Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Tajikistan using the resources listed above, plus other resources at your disposal. If you have students or teachers at your school from one of these countries, invite them to speak to your class about their experiences. Then have students work together to complete a Culture Quilt square for the speakers’ countries. Once those squares have been created, have a class discussion or prompt students to journal about these questions:
 - What is similar about your quilt squares and those of the Afghani/Pakistani/Tajikistani cultures?
 - What are the differences?
 - Why do cultures differ from place to place? (Facilitate student discovery of some of the



CULTURE QUILT continued

reasons for cultural differences. For example, clothing standards may vary because of climate and/or because of religious beliefs. Traditional foods may vary based on what resources are available in the region, etc.)

- Display your quilt in a prominent area of your school so that other teachers, students, and parents can admire the work of your class!

IDEAS TO ENCOURAGE ALL LEARNERS

- English Language Learners
 - Give students a Word Bank with vocabulary that will help them with the discussion.
 - Encourage students to share with the class a bit about their native culture and/or the culture(s) in the country where they lived prior to moving to the United States. Students might bring in traditional clothes, music or songs, or food to help educate their peers about their culture.
- Special Education
 - Ensure that students understand each of the four quadrants in the Culture Quilt square, and allow them to verbally “fill in” each quadrant if necessary.
- Gifted and Talented
 - Have students journal or write an essay based on these questions:
 1. My favorite thing about my culture is...
 2. My least favorite thing about my culture is...
 3. One thing I would like to learn more about regarding another culture is...
 - Have students write an essay reflecting on this quote from Cesar Chavez: “We need to help students and parents cherish and preserve the ethnic and cultural diversity that nourishes and strengthens this community—and this nation.”

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- If you have access to students, teachers, or parents who have lived outside the United States, invite one or more of them to speak to the class about their experiences and that culture.
- Have a Cultural Day where students wear an article of clothing, bring in food, or teach a song or dance that is specific to their culture.
- Celebrate “World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development” on May 21! The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) adopted Diversity Day in 2001, following the September 11 terrorist attacks. As Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, says: “It is our responsibility to develop education and intercultural skills in young people to sustain the diversity of our world and to learn to live together in the diversity of our languages, cultures, and religions, to bring about change.” This is a fantastic opportunity to launch, or celebrate the end of, your class’s Pennies for Peace campaign.



CULTURE QUILT continued

- Have students write an essay or create a piece of art, a poem, or a song reflecting on cultural diversity.
 - How does having a variety of cultures make our world more interesting?
 - How might cultural differences cause problems in our global community? How might those problems be solved?

DIGITAL ACTIVITIES

- Using familiar classroom digital tools, encourage students to make digital culture collages. Each collage should have a unifying cultural theme such as weddings, parades, clothing, religion, children, games, or food. Students can upload their images to a common location, creating a virtual gallery of collages. Consider using a free online program or app to produce a digital webpage or wiki for displaying the collages.
- Use Internet resources to put together an audio playlist of music from each of the countries studied. Older students can create their own lists and share them. Select specific categories of music to feature on the playlists, such as pop, national anthem, classical, or dance music. Discuss similarities and differences in style and instrumentation.
- Have students search online using classroom Internet resources to select video clips of folk dances from each country studied. Discuss elements of tradition and culture evident in the clips.
- Create a video playlist for students, or have older students search for their own video clips of television ads from each of the countries studied. Encourage students to list elements of culture evident in the television clips.

Tell us about your project! We'd love to see samples of your Culture Quilt or hear about how your class celebrated culture or Diversity Day. Send photos and/or descriptions to info@penniesforpeace.org.



Culture Quilt Square

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. List the elements of your culture in each small square and use crayons, pencils, or markers to illustrate them. Or make a collage in each small square using magazine photos.
2. When you have completed all four items, cut on the dotted lines below.

<p>MY FAVORITE CLOTHES:</p>	<p>MY FAVORITE FOODS TO EAT:</p> 
<p>SOMETHING I DO FOR FUN:</p>	<p>A FAMILY TRADITION:</p>