

Subjects: History/Social Science (Geography, Economics)
Grade levels: 6-7
Unit time: 3-4 weeks

Curriculum Unit

Theme: Cultural Diversity in the Classroom **(Society, Diversity, Commonality, and the Individual)**

by Arlene Kowal

Themes Asians are now the largest immigrant group in our nation. Since 1975, nearly one-half of all immigrants have come from Asia. Our state of Massachusetts currently ranks seventh in the nation with its population of Southeast Asian immigrants. Newcomers from these and other parts of the world have dramatically altered the demographics of our state and country and our western ideas continue to influence other nations. Our ability to function as a country successfully in the global world depends on how well our citizens understand and respect their own culture and the cultures of other nations. Students need to understand the changing economics of a global world and how they can influence societies of the future. Themes of **culture, cultural diversity, diaspora, transnationalism, globalization** are addressed in this unit.

Overarching Goals The overarching goals of this unit are for students:
To develop an understanding of culture and all of its components;
To understand how culture is transmitted and the resulting changes in societies;
To recognize and appreciate the multicultural and multiethnic dimensions of our society;
To develop a sense of their own cultural identity;
To increase their knowledge of world geography and how it affects societies;
To develop an understanding of basic economics; and
To develop an understanding of globalization.

Massachusetts History/Social Science Curriculum Framework standards:
Learning Strand for History, #4 (Society, Diversity, Commonality, and the Individual);
Learning Strands for Geography, #7 (Physical Spaces of the Earth), **#8** (Places and Regions of the World), **#9** (The Effects of Geography), and
Learning Strands for Economics: #11 (Fundamental Economic Concepts), **#12** (Economic Reasoning).

Specific Objectives

Module I. CULTURE

The students will develop an understanding of culture, its components and interrelatedness, and the resultant influences both here and abroad. The students will recognize and appreciate the multicultural and multiethnic dimensions of our society and will develop a sense of their own cultural identity as they:

- Examine the diversity of our community and nation due to increasing migration and immigration.
- Identify contributions and problems of diverse communities (diaspora, transnationalism).
- Learn a concept of culture, how it is learned, and how it changes.
- Identify and research their cultural heritage.
- Share cultural diversity.

Module II. GEOGRAPHY

The students will increase their knowledge of world geography relative to other countries, especially Southeast Asia: the natural features (e.g., the rivers, plateaus, deltas, forests); trade routes; and physical environments influencing cultures as they:

- Find and answer questions about location and physical features of Southeast Asia.
- Predict the living styles of Southeast Asia based on geography studies.
- Predict and discuss how the geography of Southeast Asia affects the lifestyle and economics after viewing slides and pictures, and completing map studies.

Module III. ECONOMICS

The students will develop an understanding of fundamental economic concepts in relation to globalization in other countries especially Southeast Asia (with regard to resources available to people, amount of capital and labor, constraints of the environment, effects of laws and governments, supply and demand, competition in the global market, and currencies) as they:

- Research and map where clothing and products we use are made.
- Examine different currencies, exchange rates, and denominations.
- Develop and understand of the meaning of living wage, per capita income, and gross domestic product.
- Research and compare labor markets in our country and in Southeast Asia.
- Reflect upon and define globalization.

Learning Activities Activities will include specific skills in reading for understanding, writing, organization, research, communication, thinking and reasoning, map work, co-operative learning, and presentations in daily class and homework lessons some of which are entitled:

Hi Neighbor
My Culture
Absolutely

My Cultural Tree
Cultural Sharing
Where Am I?

Geography and People of SEAsia Who Made It?
Let's Go Shopping Mapping It
What's In a Picture?

Resources and Materials

Photographs and videos taken on Fulbright-Hays Southeast Asia Tour (by Arlene Kowal and other participants) as well as a Power Point presentation by Arlene Kowal

Posters of Angkor, Animals, Fruits and Vegetables of Thailand

Daily newspapers, travel brochures, postcards, baskets, textiles, silk paintings, wood carved animals and miscellaneous items from above named tour

Currency: coins and paper money

Maps of Southeast Asia (from the Asian perspective)

Angkor. Hong Kong: Asian Books, Twin Age Limited. ISBN 9748303098

(Other books by the same company in series: *Thailand, Vietnam, Temples of Thailand, Hilltribes of Thailand, Festivals of Thailand*)

Children's Atlas of the World. Rand McNally, 1998.

History of Cambodia. David P. Chandler. Harper Collins Publishers, ISBN 006121130-X

Geography, Tools and Concepts. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Publishing Co., Inc. c. 2001.

Kids Discover, "Immigration." New York, NY: Kids Discover.

Scholastic World Cultures, Southeast Asia. Matthew Mestrovic, Ph.D. Scholastic Inc., c. 1974.

A Survey of World Cultures, Asia and the Middle East. Jane W. Smith and Carol Sullivan. Baltimore, MD: Media Materials, Inc. c. 1990.

Time for Kids. "The Changing Face of America," New York, NY: Time, Inc. Vol. 6, No. 21.

Time for Kids. "Coming to America," New York, NY: Time, Inc., vol. 2, No. 16.

National Geographic Magazine. "Temples of Angkor," Wilbur E. Garrett. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society. Vol. 161, No. 5.

National Geographic Magazine. "Temples of Angkor," Douglas Preston. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society. Vol. 198, No. 2.

Assessment Methods & Procedures.

Informal teacher observations and recordings of student participation in daily discussion groups, lesson activities, and from homework assignments.

Formal student evaluations from written quizzes, tests (on basic definitions or concepts), and essays.

Performance assessment checklists for oral presentations and hands-on projects (maps, ancestry charts, cultural graphic organizers).

Interdisciplinary Connections.

Reading and Language Arts: Teaching module--Folk tales of Southeast Asia (Example: Compare and contrast stories from different cultures).

Science: Teaching module—Characteristics of Organisms Unit (Example: Changes in the environment due to human alterations) and Ecosystems and Organisms Unit (Example: Biomes of the earth).

Mathematics: Teaching module—Patterns, relations and functions Unit (Sub topic lesson examples: currency, graphing of the changing populations, market products, languages, and religions, and the changing economics due to globalization of Southeast Asia).

Art and Music: Teaching module—Cultural Heritage of Southeast Asian (Example of topics: traditional songs, dance, and instruments, mosaic and figures from temples, textiles, pottery, wood carvings, basket weaving, puppets, paintings, traditional costumes).

Time: 2 class periods
Materials: *Time for Kids* readings, “Coming to America” and “Changing Face of America.” *Kids Discover*, “Immigration.” Teacher created questionnaire. Social Studies student journals.

“Hi Neighbor”

Procedure

Introduce students to the *Time for Kids* articles and the *Kids Discover* issue. After their reading, ask them to reflect upon what the articles have to say in relation to their own lives, their own families, and their communities. In small groups, they should discuss the following questions and then present their ideas to the whole class.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of diversity in communities?
What contributions have people from other cultures brought to our country?
What are some of the difficulties faced by immigrants or refugees when they come to a new community? What might they have to deal with when they return to their native land?

Discuss the concepts of diaspora and transnationalism as some of the problems facing people in a new country.

Give students a writing assignment (in their Social Studies Journal) to reflect upon their readings, discussion, and their lives. Write about any kind of diaspora they have think they have seen or experienced.

Students are given the “Hi Neighbor” page with directions to find one other person in the room who can answer yes to each question. The person who answers yes must sign his or her name after the question. Upon completion, questions are asked to bring out the commonalities and the differences amongst students.

(This questionnaire is devised by the teacher after she becomes familiar with the cultural makeup of the students within the classroom.)

Hi Neighbor

Do you play soccer?
Were you or a parent born in another country?
Do you attend a synagogue?
Do you eat pizza?
Are you 12 years old?
Do you eat food with chopsticks?
Does your family have a garden?
Have you been to a temple?
Were you born on an island?
Do you play football?
Do you like to dance?
Have you read Harry Potter?
Do your grandparents live with you?
Have you been an alter boy or girl?
Is your birthday in September or October?
Have you ever been to New York City?
Do you eat rice or noodles?
Will you make your bar mitzvah this year?
Do you know how to swim?
Are you new to this city?
Do you eat tortillas?
Were you or your parents born in Puerto Rico?
Have you ever flown in an airplane?
Do you drink Coca-Cola?
Do you wear a good luck charm?

Upon completion, questions are asked to bring out the commonalities and the differences amongst students.

How many of you found someone in the class who shares something you like to do?
How many of you were surprised to find so many differences in our classroom?
Do you think we are a diverse community as the *TFK* article suggests?

Assessment

Students are informally evaluated on their class participation in written and oral activities.

Time: 5-7 periods
Materials: Geography, Tools and Concepts, Social Studies student journals

“Cultural Family Tree” “My Culture” “Cultural Sharing”

Procedure

Students will be introduced to formal definitions of culture, theories of how culture is learned, and how cultures change with assigned readings from the textbook, *Geography, Tools and Concepts*.

Working with a partner, they are then asked to think about the readings discuss them and give examples of each concept (by writing in their journals) to share with the class.

Students are given a **homework assignment**:

Make a family tree going back three generations.
 Beside each name they must research the birthplace of each family member.
 Talk to parents or guardians about what elements of those cultures remains in your family today. Make a graphic organizer to show your cultural background. Draw connecting lines to match the origin country or culture. Make it colorful.

Sample graphic organizer:

| | | | |
|---------|--------------------|---------|----------|
| | MY CULTURE | | |
| COUNTRY | What we do now: | | |
| COUNTRY | Religion | Food | Religion |
| COUNTRY | Clothing | Customs | Language |
| COUNTRY | Customs | | |
| | Name, date, period | | |

Share your culture with the class.

Long-term homework is then assigned to students. Select one country and culture that you are most interested in from your family tree. Research that country and the culture. Complete a graphic organizer to share with the class.

COUNTRY/CULTURE

| | | | |
|----------|------------|----------|----------|
| LOCATION | GOVERNMENT | RELIGION | LANGUAGE |
| FOOD | CLOTHING | CUSTOMS | Other |

Extra credit homework is suggested. Students may plan a lesson to teach us something about their chosen culture. Examples: How to write in Japanese, how to do an Irish jig, how to speak Khmer.

Assessment

Students are assessed on their daily class participation, their completion of homework in a timely fashion, their following directions in completion of graphic organizers. Oral presentations are scored with a performance assessment checklist. Teacher and students determine ahead of time the possible points assigned to each attribute.

| Oral Presentations | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| <u>Posture/voice</u> | <u>Points possible</u> |
| Stands upright, maintains posture | |
| Maintains good eye contact | |
| Enunciates words, rate, volume | |
| <u>Content</u> | |
| Introduces self and subject | |
| Knows the material being presented | |
| Material presented is organized | |
| Summary to close | |
| Visuals are easy to read, neat, and colorful | |
| Total points earned: 100 | |

For samples of student work, see **Attachments**.

Time: 5-7 days
Materials: Student atlas copies, wall maps, slides, pictures and postcards of Southeast Asia (Power Point CD), teacher created worksheets, Social Studies student journals

“ABSOLUTELY”

Procedure

Teacher reviews the following concepts: absolute and relative location, lines of latitude and longitude, degrees, climate and weather, and the five themes of geography.

Vocabulary words on board: delta, monsoon, cyclone, plateau, peninsula, humid, tropics, rainforest, ocean and wind currents.

Using copies of student atlas and working in pairs, students are directed to examine a map of Southeast Asian countries and answer any of the following questions:

What countries are located between 10 and 20 degrees north of the equator?
What bodies of water are located around these countries?
Which country has a peninsula?
Where are the cities located in relation to the rivers? Are there any deltas?
What are the rivers? Are there any major mountain ranges?
What are their capital cities? What are their absolute locations?
What other cities in the world are located at the same absolute location as Bangkok? As Phnom Penh? As Ho Chi Minh?
What are the elevations of those countries?
What are the major physical features?
What do we know about the climate of countries near the equator? What do we know about ocean and wind currents?
What do you predict the climate to be? What do you think the country has for natural resources? How do you think the people move goods and themselves?
How would you describe this land? What effect might the geography of the land have on how the people live and work?

Students are directed to write a summary of their answers in their journals including as many vocabulary words as possible and using the five themes of geography.

Students share their writings with the class.

Assessment

Students are informally evaluated on their group and individual participation in written and oral tasks.

Time: 2 periods
Materials: slides, pictures from *National Geographic Magazine*, and postcards of Southeast Asian people living and working, student journals

“Geography and People of Southeast Asia”

Procedure

Teacher reviews with class, the predictions students made about the geography and how it influences the daily living of the people of Southeast Asia.

Students view slides and pictures to validate their predictions.

Afterwards, students work in small groups to reflect and discuss what they predicted and what they saw including answering the following questions:

Are there both rural and urban living areas? Describe the dwellings in both. How big do you think the city of Bangkok is? What do you think the population is? What about Phnom Penh? Ho Chi Minh? About how many people do you think live in the silk making village? What do you think happens when they receive monsoon rains? What are the crops grown? What technology are the people using? What animals are they using? How do you think people in rural areas obtain water? What products are marketed? How are the products marketed? Do they use the resource of the rivers for anything? Compare the living and working styles to those in the United States. List difficulties we have and list difficulties you believe they may have.

Each group presents a summary of their findings to the class.

Assessment

Students will be evaluated informally on their small group participation, their written answers and their oral summaries.

Time: 2 periods
Materials: Pictures and/or postcards of Southeast Asian and the local state or city showing typical daily scenes, student journals

“What’s In a Picture?”

Procedure: Students are placed in cooperative groups and given a set of postcards and/or pictures from two different cultures to examine and discuss. Students are then asked to present the group’s summary answering the following questions:

Who is in your picture? What are they doing and why? Where in the world is this? What can you tell about the environment? Does the environment have anything to do with the activity? What time period do you think the picture is of? What questions do you have about the picture? Are there any similarities or differences?

The groups then present orally to the class, showing their pictures and their answers and stating any further questions they might have.

After the groups’ presentations the teacher confirms the postcard/picture information.

Students are encouraged to bring in other postcards and pictures or places they have been to around the globe to examine in groups or to present themselves.

Assessment

Students will be evaluated informally on their small group participation and their oral summaries.

Time: 1 period (preceded by a homework assignment)
Materials: Students' own clothing, products, wall map of world, post-it notes, graph paper, colored pencils

“Mapping It”

Procedure

Homework assignment: Teacher asks students to check the labels of a daily set of clothing and products (book bag, binder, pencil case) as to where they are made. They are then told they will draw a picture of themselves labeling their clothes and products with where they are made.

The next day, students then map where their items are made with post-it notes on the wall map.

Students working in small groups, complete the tasks and answer the following questions:

Looking at the map, in which hemisphere are most of the items made?
Why do you think this is so?
What do you know about the average wage earner in those countries?
How many hours a day do you think they work in other countries?
Looking at the post-it notes, count the largest number of items made in any one country. Which country is it?
Now count the least number of items made in any one country. Which country is it?
Select the top 3 item producing countries, the bottom three, and the middle three. Make a graph to show the differences.

Each group will present a summary of their findings and graphs to the class.

Introduce the concept of globalization. Have students suggest definitions of globalization. Ask the students how the origin of their items might be an example of globalization.

Assessment

Students will be evaluated informally on their small group participation, their graph work and their oral summaries.

See **Attachment** for sample student drawings.

Time: 1 period
Materials: TFK article, “Too Hard At Work Too Soon,” student journals

“Who Made It?”

Procedure

Teacher reviews the fact that so many of the items we use are made in the eastern hemisphere. But who makes them? Teacher introduces the *TFK* article and asks students to read about children working in the world. Students are asked to reflect and discuss why child labor is allowed to happen. Teacher should be sure that the list (on the board) includes laws and enforcement, the need to make money, lack of education.

Brainstorming of what should be done should follow with students working in groups making up a set of world guidelines for child labor. They should also make up a list of what can they do about the causes of child labor. These are then presented to the class orally.

Students reflect and write about their readings and discussions in their journals.

Extra Credit Homework. Research and present an oral report to the class on any of the following: Child Labor Coalition, United Nations efforts to regulate child laborers, the average hourly wages, the number of hours worked and working conditions in factories around the world, where most of the items you use on a daily basis are made and by whom.

Assessment

Students will be evaluated informally on their small group participation, on their oral presentations, and their journal reflections.

Time: 1-2 periods
Materials: Currency, daily newspapers from Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, a U.S. city, selected readings on economics

“Let’s Go Shopping”

Procedure

Vocabulary on board—economy, goods, producers, consumers, services, currency, exchange rate, denomination, per capita income, gross domestic product, living wage

Day 1--Students are introduced to currencies of other countries. They have practice identifying coins and bills and understanding their value relative to each other with a teacher made worksheet.

Teacher promotes discussion of why there are different currencies for other nations and the history behind them, asking some of the following questions:

What was bartering? What was first used for money? Why do you think most nations have kept their own types of coins and bills?
What is the Euro? Why do you think it is now being used?
What is meant by the exchange rate? Why and when would you exchange your currency?

Homework Students are then given readings on basic economic concepts.

Day 2—Students discuss what they have read about economic concepts.

Students are put into small working groups and are given four bags of currency equal to one week’s wages for each of the countries listed along with a newspaper with ads and prices of items to be purchased. Students are asked to “go shopping” with their bag and the newspaper.

Students are directed to start by making a shopping list of items needed for a week. These might be groceries, clothing, or personal articles such as a car. Based on your weekly salary, list what you are able to purchase and when you predict you can purchase other items.

Students then present and share their shopping lists in each country.

Students reflect on their learning and write in their journals.

Assessment

Students will be evaluated informally on their small group participation, their class discussion (of homework) and their produced shopping lists.

FINAL ASSESSMENT on Unit:

Students will be asked to reflect and write an essay on at least one of the following. It is recommended that they reread their journal entries and review any worksheets completed. Be sure they understand the meaning of any vocabulary words introduced. A draft, self-editing, and final format are required. A written performance assessment checklist is reviewed prior to the test day for agreement on points earned and to review the writing process. Essay choices:

Our country was once called a “melting pot” but now some call it a “salad bowl.” Explain this reference considering difficulties faced by our diverse societies.

Globalization is good. Agree or disagree? Write a persuasive essay explaining your opinion.

SAMPLE STUDENT WORK

Lesson 1 Module III

ATTACHMENTS

