



CultureGrams[™] Teaching Activities

**A collection of 78 activities for educators
using CultureGrams in the classroom**



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Index of Activity Types

A teaching activity may belong to multiple categories, which include:

Creative Project	Students are asked to design or construct an item.
Discussion	The activity presents questions or issues to be discussed in groups or as a class.
Game	The activity involves a game in which groups or individual students compete.
Presentation	Students are asked to prepare a presentation for the class.
Problem Solving	The activity presents information that students must analyze.
Research	Students read assigned material and summarize their findings.
Writing	Students write an essay or creative work.

Creative Project

- A Postcard from Canada (K-5)
- Collaborative CultureGram (K-5)
- Designing Olympic Medals (6-8)
- Flag Creation (K-5)
- Food Fair (6-8)
- How Communities Change (K-5)
- Moveable Timeline (K-5)
- My House (6-8)
- Olympic Opening Ceremony (K-5)
- Oral Literature (6-8)
- Travel Expo (6-8)
- Video Comparison (9-12)
- Where Should We Go on Vacation? (K-5)

Discussion

- A Kid's Life (K-5)
- A Look at Haiti (K-5)
- A Snapshot of Brazil (6-8)
- A Visit to China (6-8)
- Africa's Borders (6-8)
- AIDS in Africa (9-12)
- Colonization of Africa (6-8)
- Comparing Living Conditions (K-5)

Discussion (continued)

- Cricket and Colonization (6-8)
- Cultures in Conflict (K-5)
- Day in the Life (6-8)
- Defining a Region (9-12)
- Defining Culture (9-12)
- Effects of World War II (9-12)
- Favorites Poll (K-5)
- How Communities Change (K-5)
- Mexico: NAFTA and Immigration (9-12)
- National Symbols (K-5)
- Oral Literature (6-8)
- Ruler of a New Country (9-12)
- Tanzanian Life (K-5)
- The Dating Game (6-8)
- Tracing the Effects of Slavery (9-12)
- Understanding Election Results (K-5)
- What Is the American West? (K-5)

Game

Country Bingo (K-5)
Geography Bee (K-5)
Moveable Timeline (K-5)
Race Around the World (K-5)
The World Game (K-5)
Twenty Questions: United States (K-5)

Presentation

Campaign for the Olympics (6-8)
Comparing Communication Styles (6-8)
Cultural Sensitivity Training (6-8)
Film Festival (9-12)
Getting Around (6-8)
Health Influences (9-12)
Hosting the Olympic Games (K-5)
I'm Famous! (K-5)
Interpreting Data (K-5)
Languages of the G8 (6-8)
Make a Meal (6-8)
Model European Union (9-12)
National Symbols (K-5)
Olympic Boycotts (9-12)
Reporter Role-play (6-8)
South Africa Today (9-12)
Tracing the Effects of Slavery (9-12)
Travel Expo (6-8)
Turkey: Europe or Asia? (9-12)
Video Comparison (9-12)
World Religions (K-5)

Problem Solving

A Snapshot of Brazil (6-8)
Cricket and Colonization (6-8)
Defining Culture (9-12)
Explaining Performance Gaps (9-12)
Fractions and Food (K-5)
Graphing Regional Statistics (6-8)

Problem Solving (continued)

How Far? How Fast? (K-5)
How's the Weather? (K-5)
Life Cycle (9-12)
Hosting the Olympic Games (K-5)

Research

A Postcard from Canada (K-5)
A Visit to China (6-8)
AIDS in Africa (9-12)
Australian Comparison (6-8)
Citizenship Contrast (9-12)
Colonization of Africa (6-8)
Country Bingo (K-5)
Culture Charting (9-12)
Cultures in Conflict (K-5)
Day in the Life (6-8)
Defining a Region (9-12)
Doing Business in Japan (6-8)
Effects of World War II (9-12)
Favorites Poll (K-5)
Film Festival (9-12)
Germany's East and West (9-12)
Global Aspirations (9-12)
Government Comparison (9-12)
Health Influences (9-12)
How's the Weather? (K-5)
I'm Famous! (K-5)
Interpreting Data (K-5)
Interview Comparison (9-12)
Make a Meal (6-8)
Malian Fashions (6-8)
Mexico: NAFTA and Immigration (9-12)
Model European Union (9-12)
National Identity (9-12)
Olympic Opening Ceremony (K-5)

Research (continued)

One Religion, Many Practices (6-8)
Race Around the World (K-5)
Regional Food Tour (9-12)
Reporter Role-play (6-8)
South Africa Today (9-12)
The Dating Game (6-8)
The World Game (K-5)
Travel Guide (6-8)
Understanding Election Results (K-5)
Unification Challenge (9-12)
What Is the American West? (K-5)
Where Should We Go on Vacation? (K-5)
World Religions (K-5)

Writing

A Kid's Life (K-5)
A Look at Haiti (K-5)

Writing (continued)

Citizenship Contrast (9-12)
Collaborative CultureGram (K-5)
Comparing Living Conditions (K-5)
Culture Charting (9-12)
Germany's East and West (9-12)
Getting Around (6-8)
Global Aspirations (9-12)
Government Comparison (9-12)
Interview Comparison (9-12)
Life Cycle (9-12)
Malian Fashions (6-8)
My House (6-8)
National Identity (9-12)
One Religion, Many Practices (6-8)
Regional Food Tour (9-12)
Ruler of a New Country (9-12)
Tanzanian Life (K-5)
Travel Guide (6-8)
Unification Challenge (9-12)

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will learn that all cultures have value while learning to write an imaginative narrative.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.6* Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

National curriculum standard(s)**Standards for the English Language Arts**

- Standard 1: Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and non-fiction, classic and contemporary works.
- Standard 8: Students use a variety of technological and informational resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.
- Standard 12: Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g. for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

Developed by the National Council of Teachers of English and International Reading Association

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, less if writing is done at home.

Materials

CultureGrams Kids Edition:

- [Haiti](#)
- [Mexico](#)
- [Hungary](#)
- [Senegal](#)
- [Tanzania](#)
- [China](#)
- [Singapore](#)

CultureGrams—[Photo Gallery](#), [Slideshows](#), [Interviews](#)

Instructions

1. Assign each student to read a selected Kids Edition CultureGrams report from one of the above countries. The students should pay particular attention to categories dealing with daily life in another country—Land and Climate, Games and Sports, Food, Life as a Kid, Schools, Getting Around, etc.
2. Have each student browse through his or her assigned country's photo album and slideshows. Instruct students to focus especially on those pictures that display people, activities, food, and living conditions. Students should also be encouraged to browse through any relevant interviews for their assigned country, particularly the interviews of children.
3. Assign students to write a short story in which they imagine what their life might be like if they lived in their assigned country. They could write about an ordinary day, a holiday, or a social event of some kind. Some of the information for their stories may be taken from the CultureGrams report and the pictures, but students should also be encouraged to use their imaginations in deciding what life in the foreign country might be like.
4. Put the students in groups according to country. Have them read their stories to each other and talk about the similarities and differences they notice.

Questions for further discussion

1. In what ways would the students' lives be similar or different if they lived somewhere else? What aspects of the country they read about seemed most appealing and which seemed the most challenging?
2. Are there similarities that all cultures share? (i.e., basic human needs, such as food, shelter, clothing, etc.; holiday celebrations; importance of familial relationships; etc.)
3. In which ways do factors such as geography, climate, economy, language, and history shape how people see the world?

Extension activity

Using one of the many online sources available, find pen pals for your students, preferably from the country they wrote their story on. In one of their letters or emails, have students ask their pen pals what a typical day is like where they live and share what their days are like in the United States.

A Look at Haiti

Writing and Discussion

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students use text and photos to identify cultural characteristics of Haiti.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard E [Early Grades]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity, so that the learner can give examples and describe the importance of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time requirement

Preparation: 40 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams Kids Edition–[Haiti](#)

CultureGrams–[Photo Gallery \(Haiti\)](#)

Instructions

1. Have students read the [Kids Edition report for Haiti](#). As they read, they should create a list of five characteristics of Haitians (e.g., speak Creole, eat a lot of beans and rice, may practice voodoo, enjoy storytelling, etc.). As a class, discuss some of these findings.
2. Have students access the [Haiti photos](#) in the CultureGrams Photo Gallery. Each of these photos portrays Haitians doing everyday things. Have each student pick a photo and write a short paragraph about the person pictured. (You may choose to have all the students write about the same photo.) Have the students describe what the person is doing in the photo, but also have them imagine what isn't pictured—the other activities the person might carry out in a typical day. Encourage them to use their list of five cultural characteristics as background.
3. Form the students into groups so that all of the students that commented on a particular photo are together. Have the students compare their paragraphs. Did some students have a different idea of what the pictured person's day might be like?

Extension activity

Based on the photos and their reading, have the students write a short essay about what challenges their pictured Haitian might have if he or she moved to the students' hometown? Also, what challenges would the student have if he or she moved to Haiti?

A Postcard from Canada

Creative Project and Research

Grade Level

K-5

Objective

Research a Canadian province and create a postcard depicting the highlights of the area.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

People, Places, and Environments

- Standard H [Early Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *people, places, and environments*, so that the learner can examine the interaction of human beings and their physical environment, the used of land, building of cities, and ecosystem changes in selected locales and regions.
- Standard G [Early Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *people, places, and environments*, so that the learner can describe how people create places that reflect ideas, personality, culture, and wants and needs as they design homes, playgrounds, classrooms, and the like.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time Requirement

Preparation: 15 minutes

In-class: 1 hour

Materials

CultureGrams [Provinces Edition](#)

Instructions

1. Have students choose a Canadian province they would most like to visit. Each student should read their province's CultureGrams report, making notes about things that are unique to the province and things that attract visitors. They should also pay special attention to the Official Emblems section.
2. On 4x6 index cards, have students design postcards showing some of the highlights and unique traits of the province. Students may also want to incorporate one or more of the provinces' official emblems, or they may do research to find some unofficial emblems.
3. On the back of the postcard, have students write a message as though they were visiting the province and writing home. They should think about what they would want to do while in Canada, what difficulties they might run into, and what differences they would expect to find between their home and the province they are visiting.

Extension Activity

Have students pretend that they are from the province they researched. If they were visiting the area in which the students live, what kind of post card would they send home? What would they want to be featured on the front? What would they write on the back? Have students design a postcard for their area and write a message on the back to their family at home in Canada.

Collaborative CultureGram

Writing and Creative Project

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will practice collaborative study skills while learning more about their home state or city.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

National curriculum standard(s)

IRA and NCTE Standards for the English Language Arts

- Standard 6: Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.
- Standard 12: Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g. for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

Developed by the National Council of Teachers of English and International Reading Association

Time requirement

Preparation: 40 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days

Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

Painting/drawing materials

Instructions

1. Organize students into groups of four to five members. Assign each group to collaboratively write a CultureGrams report for the students' home state or city, depending on the emphasis of your class. The groups should use the same categories as in the Kids Edition texts, though the categories can be modified depending on the students' interests and abilities. The students may draw on information you have presented in class, on their own experience, or on research.
2. Group members will be responsible for dividing up tasks, gathering information, writing the text, revising the initial drafts, and compiling the finished project into a unified whole.

3. Once the text portions are finished, assign the students to illustrate the texts with pictures that they draw or paint.
4. Have groups show their CultureGrams reports to the rest of the class. Or post the student-created CultureGrams reports for everyone to see.

Questions for further discussion

1. What was the hardest category for students to write and why?
2. Ask the students what they learned about their state or city in the process of making this CultureGrams report. Did they have to leave out some information due to space constraints? If so, how did they decide on which information to include?
3. How difficult was it for students to come up with generalizations about the diverse people and cultures where they live? Are there important perspectives, attitudes, or behaviors that they've overlooked in their reports?

Extension activity

Discuss the collaborative process with students. For example, talk about the experience of writing a paper as a group, how they made decisions, how they dealt with differences of opinion, etc.

Comparing Living Conditions

Discussion and Writing

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students use photos and statistical graphs and tables to compare living conditions among Burundi, India, Malawi, and the United States.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3* Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.3* Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.7* Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9* Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 40 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams:

- [Concepts and Terminology](#)
- [Comparison Table](#)
- [Comparison Graphs](#)
- [Photo Gallery](#)

Instructions

1. Explain the concept of life expectancy to the students. An overview is provided on the CultureGrams [Concepts and Terminology](#) page. Emphasize that life expectancy figures indicate the overall health of a population and whether the people have access to nutritious food, clean water, health care, and proper sanitation.
2. Have students access the Kids Edition [Comparison Tables](#) in the Graphs and Tables section. Instruct the student to select Malawi, Burundi, and India, as well as the United States (or their home country if not the United States) for the countries. For the categories, have students select “Life expectancy (male),” “Life expectancy (female),” and “Doctors.”
3. Alternatively, have students access the Kids Edition [Comparison Graphs](#). Instruct the students to select the same countries and generate graphs for life expectancy and the other statistics under the “Health” category.
4. Lead a discussion on what these figures reveal. Which country has the highest life expectancy? Which has the lowest? What factors could cause people in Burundi to die nearly 30 years earlier than in the United States?
5. Have students access the CultureGrams [Photo Gallery](#) with photos of the Malawi, Burundi, and India that relate to health and living conditions in those countries. For example:

Malawi:

- “Cooking *Nsima*”
- “Preparing Goat Stew”
- “Carrying Water”
- “Women Washing Clothes”
- “Woman Carrying Water”

Burundi:

- “Collecting Water”
- “Water Source”
- “Heavy Rains”
- “Thatch-roofed Kitchen”
- “Typical House”

India:

- “Shower Sink”
- “Purification”
- “Drying Clothes”

6. Lead a discussion about what the photos reveal. Where are people doing their washing? What does their drinking water look like? What does their housing look like? How are these things different in the

United States? How might they impact the life expectancy figures? Do people have access to good medical care? Have student write a short paper on what they discovered.

Country Bingo

Research and Game

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will identify specific characteristics of a country and use them in a bingo game.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7*** Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7*** Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9*** Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Reading Informational Text (Grade 4): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9*** Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 15 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days

Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

CultureGrams—[Interviews](#)

Instructions

1. Assign each student a country to research for which there is both a Kids Edition report and a corresponding interview. (In the Kids Edition, use the drop-down menu in the upper-left corner as an index of available reports. Access the main Interviews page for an index of all available interviews.)
2. Provide each student with the bingo sheet on the following page. In class or as a homework assignment, have them answer the questions using the Kids Edition report and their assigned interview.
3. To prepare for the bingo game, distribute chips (such as small squares of colored paper) for the students' bingo sheets.
4. To increase the likelihood of matches (and eventual winners), ask questions that incorporate a broader range of answers. For example, students would mark a square if they answer "yes" to questions such as these:
 - Does your country's flag have the color blue?
 - Is your country's national image an animal or have an animal in or on it?
 - Does your country have a population above 15 million?
 - Is your country's most common religion Islam?
 - Did you name soccer as a popular sport?
 - Does the holiday you named begin with a letter between A and K?
 - Does the food you named have meat in it?
 - Does the currency name have more than seven letters?
 - Is a bus the means of transport you named?
 - Was your interviewee's favorite game or sport different than the one you named in question 5?
 - Was your interviewee's favorite food different than the one you named in question 7?
 - Was your interviewee's favorite school subject also your favorite subject?

Note that you may not want to read the questions in this order, as it follows the order of questions on the sheet.

5. Distribute prizes to the winner (or winners).

CultureGrams Country Bingo Sheet

Answer the questions on the bingo board below.

Answers to questions 1 through 9 are found in the Kids Edition report for your assigned country:_____.

After each of these questions is a hint (the section of the report in which the answer can be found).

Answers to questions 10 through 12 are found in your assigned interview:_____.

1) What are the colors of the country's flag? <i>(Hint: main page)</i>	2) What is the national image? <i>(Hint: Main page)</i>	3) How many people live in this country? <i>(Hint: Population)</i>
4) What is the most common religion? <i>(Hint: Religion)</i>	5) Name a popular sport. <i>(Hint: Games and Sports)</i>	6) Name a popular holiday. <i>(Hint: Holidays)</i>
7) Name a popular food. <i>(Hint: Food)</i>	8) What is the currency? <i>(Hint: Money and Economy)</i>	9) What is a common means of transport? <i>(Hint: Getting Around)</i>
10) Name an interviewee's favorite game or sport.	11) Name an interviewee's favorite holiday.	12) Name an interviewee's favorite school subject.

Cultures in Conflict

Research and Discussion

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will learn about historical interactions between Native Americans and European settlers, as well as contemporary cultural clashes.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2* Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.2* Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3* Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.3* Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.3* Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.6* Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.

- **Anchor Standards for Reading: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7*** Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.7*** Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9*** Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Reading Informational Text (Grade 4): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9*** Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9*** Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for U.S. History

Era 1: Three Worlds Meet (Beginnings to 1620)

- Standard 1: Comparative characteristics of societies in the Americas, Western Europe, and Western Africa that increasingly interacted after 1450.
 - The student understands the differences and similarities among Africans, Europeans, and Native Americans who converged in the western hemisphere after 1492.
 - [Grade 5-12]: Therefore, the student is able to compare social organizations, including population levels, urbanization, family structure, and modes of communication.
 - [Grade 5-12]: The student is also able to compare dominant ideas and values including religious belief and practice, gender roles, and attitudes toward nature.

Developed by the National Center for History in the Schools

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams States Edition:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Arizona | • Iowa |
| • Colorado | • Massachusetts |
| • Delaware | • Montana |
| • Florida | • New Mexico |
| • Idaho | • Oregon |
| • Illinois | • Tennessee |
| • Indiana | • Utah |

Instructions

1. Divide students into groups of four to five people. Assign each group to survey the Native America category and the early history sections of some of the above reports in the States Edition. Instruct the students to look for patterns in the development of the “New World.” The groups should focus on the sections dealing with Native American inhabitants, the interaction between Native Americans and whites, the exploration of the American frontier, etc.
2. As they are reading, ask the groups to compile a list of the factors that generally led to conflict between Native American inhabitants and white explorers and settlers. These could include cultural and religious differences, common threats to survival, competing interests in land and natural resources, etc.
3. Lead a class discussion about the relationships generally between Native Americans and white settlers in U.S. history. Was conflict inevitable? Why do people have trouble accepting others who are different? What could have been done to reduce the negative effects of conflict?

Discussion questions

1. Ask students if they saw any application from this lesson in their lives today. What are some of the things that cause conflicts between students and their friends or family members?
2. How has the United States tried to be a home for many different groups of people, including Native Americans and immigrants from different countries? How well do you think it has succeeded?

Extension activity

Assign students to write a paper describing what factors generally led to conflict between Native American inhabitants and white settlers.

Favorites Poll

Research and Discussion

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will take a poll of their classmates and compare their answers to those found in interviews with people from different countries.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.6* Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7* Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Reading Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9* Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9* Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 15 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days

Materials

CultureGrams—[Interviews](#)

Instructions

1. Distribute a copy of the polling sheet on the following page to each student. Using “Polling Sheet 1: Classmates,” students should poll 10 of their classmates to find out what their preferences are in three categories: game or sport, holiday, and school subject. Their classmates’ answers should be marked down on the sheet.
2. Have each student find 10 kids around their same age (or at least younger than age 18) on the image gallery in the Interviews feature and scan through the interviews to determine interviewees’ preferences in each of the categories. Using “Polling Sheet 2: CultureGrams Interviewees,” they should list the names of the 10 interviewees and record their preferences. Let the students know that sometimes interviewees may identify multiple preferences.
3. Each student should tally the results of their two polls. What were the most common answers in each category among their classmates? Were there common answers in the polling sheet for the interviewees?
4. As a class, have students discuss their findings. How did the results from the classmates’ poll differ from the results of the interviewees’ poll? Why might this be?
5. Have the students make a graphical representation of their findings (bar graph, pie chart, etc.) with different colors to represent their classmates’ answers and the interviewees’ answers to each question.

Extension activity

Assign students to draft their own poll questions based on what they would like to know about the culture and daily life of their peers. Combine the answers into a single survey and have students respond to the questions.

Polling Sheet 1: Classmates

Name	Favorite Game or Sport	Favorite Holiday	Favorite School Subject
Most Popular Response			

Polling Sheet 2: CultureGrams Interviewees

Name	Favorite Game or Sport	Favorite Holiday	Favorite School Subject
Most Popular Response			

Flag Creation

Creative Project

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students discuss the symbolism and meaning of various national flags and then create flags to represent themselves.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Core Arts Anchor Standards

- **Anchor Standard #1:** Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work

Developed by the National Art Education Association

Time requirement

Preparation: 40 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

Art materials—construction paper, scissors, glue, pens, etc.

Instructions

1. Introduce the concept of flags as works of art that use color, design, and symbols to convey meaning. Refer to some of the flags on the landing page for each country. The accompanying descriptions offer interpretations for the flag's symbols. For example, in the [flag of South Africa](#), the colors symbolize the unity of the nation's races. In the [flag of the United Kingdom](#), the crosses represent England, Scotland, and Ireland. In the [flag of Greece](#), the cross symbolizes the Greek Orthodox Church.
2. Using the [Flag Gallery](#), print a flag outline for each student. Have students color their flags and then present the flags to the class, drawing on information from the flag descriptions found on each country's landing page.
3. Assign students to create a unique flag representing themselves, their family, or their city, state, or country of birth. Encourage them to find colors and symbols that stand for something important to them.

4. Have students display their flags for the class and explain their use of color, symbolism, and design.

Extension Activity

Have the students work together to design a flag that represents their class. Place it prominently in the classroom.

Fractions and Food

Problem Solving

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will practice multiplying and dividing fractions in a real-world context.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.7* Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

National curriculum standard(s)

Principles and Standards for School Mathematics

- Problem Solving Standard [Grade 3-5]: Instructional programs from prekindergarten through grade 12 should enable all students to solve problems that arise in mathematics and in other contexts.
- Number and Operations Standard: Instructional programs from prekindergarten through grade 12 should enable all students to understand numbers, ways of representing numbers, relationships among numbers, and number systems.
 - [Grade 3-5]: All students should develop an understanding of fractions as parts of unit wholes, as parts of a collection, as locations on number lines, and as divisions of whole numbers.

Developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

Time requirement

Preparation: 20 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes

Materials

Instructions

1. Tell your students that they are chefs for the president of the United States. They are in charge of preparing the menu for an upcoming dinner, which will be attended by diplomats from all over the world. The president would like to serve all the diplomats dishes from their own countries.
2. Assign each student to pick a different country to be in charge of. Each student should read the Food section in the [Kids Edition](#) report for the assigned country and look up the country's recipes in the [Recipe Collection](#).
3. Inform the students that they will need to double the recipes for the main and side dishes in order to feed all of the diplomats. Explain to the students that they will need to triple the dessert recipes, though, because the diplomats have a sweet tooth. They should pay special attention to doubling and tripling the fractions in the recipes.
4. When the students are done with their calculations, tell them that you have just received a memo from the White House saying that due to unexpected events, the dinner has been postponed and as a result several diplomats will not be able to attend. The students now need to halve the original recipes for main and side dishes and—as several diplomats have lately decided to go on a diet—quarter the dessert recipes.
5. Have students check their fractions against each other's recipes to make sure their calculations are correct and that they will turn out delicious on the big night!

Extension activity

Being able to multiply and divide fractions is not the only math skill good cooks need. They also need to know how to convert metric measurements to English ones, especially if they're making international recipes. After teaching the students a few conversion formulas, have them practice converting a series of measurements.

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will learn state or country locations, capitals, and physical features.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.6* Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7* Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9* Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Places and Regions

- Standard 4: The geographically informed person knows and understands the physical and human characteristics of places.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 15 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days; less if part is assigned as homework.

Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#) or [States Edition](#)

Instructions

1. Divide the class into several groups. Give each group a list of countries/states they are to study. (You may split up the world/United States however you wish.)
2. Assign students to read and take notes on the Land and Climate sections and the maps of their assigned countries in the CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#). Or, if your class is focusing on states, assign students to read and take notes on the Climate and Geography sections and the detail maps in the CultureGrams [States Edition](#). Instruct students to pay particular attention to the:
 - Location (borders)
 - Capital city
 - Major physical features (e.g., lakes, mountains, etc.)
3. Compile the notes the class has taken into one master list. Include only the most significant physical features. Have the students memorize this list, using group work, flashcards, etc.
4. After the students have had a chance to memorize elements from the list, test their knowledge by playing “Around the World.” To play, Student A stands next to the desk behind him or her. A geographic question is posed to both Student A and Student B. If Student A answers the question correctly before student B, he or she moves on to the next desk, where another question is posed to student A and student C. If, however, Student B beats Student A, Student A sits down in Student B’s desk and Student B moves on to challenge Student C. This process continues until one student is able to move throughout all of the desks in the classroom—that is, “around the world.”

Extension activity

Discuss with the students the various elements that make up a map, including a key and typical symbols used to denote mountain ranges, bodies of water, capitals, etc. Then, using printouts of either the political map of the United States from the [States Edition](#) or maps of world regions from the [World Edition](#) (both in PDF formats), have students fill in capitals and significant physical features using the symbols you have discussed. You may have students do this from memory or using reference materials.

Hosting the Olympic Games

Problem Solving and Presentation

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students explore and familiarize themselves with the host city for the upcoming Olympic Games.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Geography

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

In-class: 50 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

Instructions

1. Introduce the activity by discussing the process that takes place in selecting a host city for the Olympic Games. If students don't know already, explain where the next Olympic Games (Summer or Winter) will be held. Spend some time discussing with the class what qualities and conditions a city or country must meet in order to be chosen to host the Olympic Games.
2. Break students up into groups and have each group read through the Kids Edition report for where the next Games will be held, paying particular attention to the sections that describe the factors that make

it a good home for the Games (e.g., the Land and Climate section) as well as the country's unique cultural and historical aspects that might play a role during the Olympic Games. You might ask students to do additional online research to supplement their findings.

3. Have each group summarize and present their findings. As a class, discuss what they have learned about the host country where the Games will be held and why the selected city was chosen to host the upcoming Games.

Extension Activity

Have students discuss whether or not they think their state has a suitable city to host the Olympics. What would make it a good place? What would be some of its drawbacks? Have students write a letter to the International Olympic Committee, explaining why their state should or should not host the Olympic Games.

How Communities Change

Discussion and Creative Project

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will look at several countries to see factors that shape how a community begins and changes.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.2* Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Reading Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9* Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Human Systems

- Standard 9: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface.
- Standard 12: The geographically informed person knows and understands the process, patterns, and functions of human settlement.

Environment and Society

- Standard 15: The geographically informed person knows and understands how physical systems affect human systems.
- Standard 16: The geographically informed person knows and understands the changes that occur in the meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 40 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

Butcher paper

Instructions

1. In preparation, read through three or four country reports in the CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#) (choose countries from different regions and climates), noting factors like location (e.g., island, land-locked, region, etc.), climate (Mediterranean, tropical, desert), history (native inhabitants, colonization, migration, etc.), culture (religion, customs), and natural resources (forests, water, agriculture) that shape how a community begins and develops.
2. Have students read the CultureGrams reports you have chosen. Ask students to think, as they read, about why people might have wanted to settle in those particular places.
3. As a class or in groups, make a list of the factors (for each country) that contributed to the establishment of the early communities in those countries. Discuss the differences. What factors seem the most important?
4. As a means of discussing what factors make communities grow and change, have students draw a map of their own community on butcher paper. Instruct each student or group of students to identify important features (land, bodies of water, other communities or cities nearby, schools, business and agricultural districts, etc.). Display the completed map and its features, and discuss what factors influence how or whether a community grows. Compare what students learn about influences on their community with influences in other communities. What factors are the same? What factors are different?

Extension activity

Have students listen to the news or get help looking through a newspaper to find examples of events that are changing their community. Assign the students to prepare a short presentation to share their events with the class.

How Far? How Fast?

Problem Solving

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will compare the distances between various national capitals and a single destination. Students will also calculate approximate travel times to the destination, depending on the mode of travel.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7* Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

National curriculum standard(s)

Principles & Standards for School Mathematics

Grades 3-5 Expectations: Compute fluently and make reasonable estimates

- develop fluency with basic number combinations for multiplication and division and use these combinations to mentally compute related problems;
- develop fluency in adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing whole numbers;
- develop and use strategies to estimate computations involving fractions and decimals in situations relevant to students' experience;
- select appropriate methods and tools for computing with whole numbers from among mental computation, estimation, calculators, and paper and pencil according to the context and nature of the computation and use the selected method or tools.

Developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

Time requirement

Preparation: 5 minutes

In-class: 30 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams—[Distance Calculator](#)

Calculator

Instructions

1. Have the students go to the landing page for any country in the [World Edition](#) or the [Kids Edition](#) and then click on the [Distance Calculator](#) in the right-hand column, under the Tools category.
2. Tell students to pretend that they are responsible for organizing travel to a conference on world hunger in Paris, France, and they need to get a rough idea of how far the international participants will have to travel to the conference and how long it will take them to get there.
3. Each student should create a table to track the results of their investigation. The table should include four columns and five rows. In the first column, the student should pick five countries from different parts the world and record a country name in each row in the column. In the second column, the students should list the corresponding capital city for each country. The remaining two columns will be filled out in the succeeding steps.
4. Have each student use the [Distance Calculator](#) to determine how far a conference participant would have to travel from each of the five country capitals to get to Paris. Record those results in the third column. Students could list miles or kilometers.
5. Have students calculate how long (in hours) it would take the participants to travel to Paris by plane or by car. To do this, students must take the total distance and divide it by the average speed per hour in order to figure out the total travel time in hours. Assume the journey can be made in a straight line (unhindered by bodies of water or other geographical features) and that the average speed for a plane is 540 miles (869 kilometers) per hour and the average speed for a car is 60 miles (97 kilometers) per hour. Students should record the respective times for travel by plane and automobile in the fourth column of the table.
6. Have students exchange their tables with their classmates so that class members can check the accuracy of the calculations. (Optional.)

How's the Weather?

Research and Problem Solving

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Research and explore the variation in climate among different Canadian provinces.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.6* Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Reading Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9* Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9* Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

People, Places, and Environments

- Standard F [Early Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *people, places, and environments*, so that the learner can describe and speculate about physical system changes, such as seasons, climate and weather, and the water cycle.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 2 hours, over the course of a month.

Materials

CultureGrams [Provinces Edition](#)

Instructions

1. Divide the class into groups and have each group choose a Canadian province whose weather they will research. To start, have each group read the Climate section of the CultureGrams report for their selected province.
2. Have groups make predictions about the average temperature for a selected city in their province for the next month.
3. Have each group use a reliable online weather source to research the average daily temperature and rainfall for their selected city and record the findings. After one month, the groups will make a graph to represent the temperature and rainfall in the city for the month. Each group should also calculate the average temperature and rainfall for the month.
4. In front of the class, on a large map of Canada, record the class's findings for each province.
5. Discuss their findings. How close were the predictions from the beginning of the month? Where is it the hottest? Where is it the coldest? Which part of the country had the most rainfall? Why do you think this is?

Extension Activity

Obtain a map that shows the [population distribution](#) in Canada. Compare this map with the map showing the class's findings in terms of temperature and rainfall. Discuss the two maps as a class. Do you see any correlations? Why do you think this is?

I'm Famous!

Research and Presentation

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will learn about prominent people from around the world while practicing research and presentation skills.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Reading Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9* Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9* Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

National curriculum standard(s)

Standards for the English Language Arts

- Standard 8: Students use a variety of technological and informational resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

Developed by the National Council of Teachers of English and International Reading Association

Time requirement

Preparation: 15 minutes

In-class: 3 hours, over the course of several days

Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Famous People](#)

Outside research sources

Instructions

1. Using the online version of the CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#), allow students to pick a country they are interested in. Then have them access the Famous People section for that country and choose a person they'd like to do more research on.
2. Using the Famous People entry as a starting point, have the students carry out further research on their selected person. Students may be required to use online sources to find out more about their famous person.
3. Assign students to put together a presentation for the class. Have them also dress up as their famous person and, if possible, share a sample of the music, writing, art, etc. that made that person famous.
4. During these presentations (which might span a few days), have students take notes and quiz them at the end on some of the most important points presented.

Questions for further discussion

1. Ask students how many of these famous people they had heard of before. Why do they think so many of them were new names for them? How familiar do they think students in other countries are with U.S. American celebrities?
2. What types of problems did students run into during the research process? What sources did they find the most helpful? What are the characteristics of a reliable online source?

Extension activity

Assign students to write a short paragraph about the famous person they researched. When the papers are completed, combine them in a class book to display.

I'm Famous!

Research and Presentation

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will learn about regional differences and similarities in the United States by examining statistical data and interpreting the information in a broader context.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2* Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.2* Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.7* Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7* Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Places and Regions

- Standard 4: The physical and human characteristics of places.
- Standard 5: That people create regions to interpret Earth's complexity.
- Standard 6: How culture and experience influence people's perception of places and regions.

Human Systems

- Standard 9: The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface.

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams [States Edition](#)

Instructions

1. Divide students into groups of three to four members. Assign each group to pick two states from different regions of the country for purposes of comparison.
2. Have students access the CultureGrams [States Edition](#) to find out more on the states they've chosen. Assign groups to read the reports on the states they've selected. They should look for information about what life is like in the two states currently. Students should pay particular attention to categories such as Climate, Geography, Resources and Economy, and Population.
3. Also, have the groups access the [Create-Your-Own Tables](#) feature in the State Edition in order to compare statistical data on the two states they have selected. After looking at comparative data across a variety of categories, and using the state reports to provide context, students should identify some of the most significant similarities and differences between how people live in one state compared to the other. Encourage the groups to discuss why some of these major similarities and differences are present.
4. Have the groups summarize their findings in front of the class. The groups should create and print out customized data tables that highlight the major points they want to make in their presentations.

Questions for further discussion

1. How do factors such as climate, geography, natural resources, population, and education affect daily life?
2. What are some of the common characteristics associated with various regions of the United States (the Northeast, the Southeast, the Midwest, the Southwest, and the West)? Why do you suppose that regions often share at least some common characteristics?

Moveable Timeline

Creative Project and Game

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will be able to place important events and periods from their state's history in chronological order.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3* Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.7* Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for History (K-4)

The History of Students' Own State or Region

- Standard 3: The people, events, problems, and ideas that created the history of their state.
 - D. The student understands the interactions among [various] groups throughout the history of his or her state.
 - [Grade 3-4]: Therefore, the student is able to list in chronological order the major historical events that are part of the state's history.

Developed by the National Center for History in the Schools

Time requirement

Preparation: 20 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams [States Edition](#)

Posters

Drawing utensils

Instructions

1. Have the students study their state's timeline, available from the [States Edition](#).
2. Divide the students into groups according to the number of entries on the timeline. Give each group a small blank poster, and instruct students to make a creative representation of their assigned event from the timeline by drawing illustrations on the poster. They may write down the name of the event, but *not* the date itself.
3. On the chalkboard, draw a horizontal line that has all of the dates indicated from the States Edition timeline, but none of the events. Collect all the posters and mix them up.
4. Divide the class into two groups, Group A and Group B. Hold up two posters and ask the Group A to place them in chronological order in relation to each other. (Note that they don't need to know the exact date of the event, just which event occurred prior to the other.) If they do so correctly, they get a point. Attach the posters to the correct dates on the board. Move on to Group B, this time holding up one poster. In order to get a point, Group B must correctly place the poster in relation to the two posters on the board. The teacher continues to hold up posters, with each team taking turns trying to place it on the timeline in the correct order. Continue until all of the posters are placed correctly on the timeline. The group with the most points wins.

Questions for further discussion

1. If the students had to characterize each century on the state's timeline, how would they do it? (i.e. centuries of exploration, settlement, development, etc.)
2. Which events do the students think were the most important in forming the state that they live in today and why? Which ones have they heard of before or celebrate in some way?

Extension activity

Outside of class, have each group research their timeline event in more depth, so that they are able to write at least a couple of paragraphs about it. Include these paragraphs on their posters, and hang them in the classroom as a permanent display on one of the walls.

National Symbols

Discussion and Presentation

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will compare national symbols from different countries and discuss how these symbols reflect the nations' values.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1*** Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1*** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1*** Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2*** Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 40 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

Instructions

1. Introduce the concept of national symbols. Ask students to name several U.S. national symbols (e.g., U.S. flag, the bald eagle, U.S. coins or currency, the White House, famous presidents such as

Washington or Lincoln, etc.). Discuss what each U.S. symbol means and why the things it represents are important (give short historical background, as necessary). Ask students what they value personally and what people in the United States value as a society.

2. Discuss why national symbols, and traditions that include national symbols, should be given respect. Mention specific ways respect can be shown (removing a hat during a flag ceremony, not hurting a bald eagle, etc.).
3. Using the CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#), show or describe some examples of other nations' national symbols. These are located on the top right of the main landing page for each country. For example:
 - a.the kiwi of [New Zealand](#)
 - b.the gaucho of [Argentina](#)
 - c.the panda of [China](#)
 - d.the *dharma chakra* of [India](#)
 - e.the Parthenon of [Greece](#)

You may also want to refer to the symbols in the different nations' flags.

4. Assign each student a country in the Kids Edition. Have each student read that nation's report and give a short presentation to the class on their country's national symbol. Have them explain what the symbol says about what the nation values.

Extension Activity

Have each student draw a symbol (or symbols) to represent themselves and what they value. Have them describe their selections to the class.

Olympic Opening Ceremony

Research and Creative Project

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will learn about the cultural traits of a selected host country for the Olympic Games and another chosen country by participating in a mock Olympic Opening Ceremony.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2* Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.2* Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [Early Grades]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can describe ways in which language, stories, folktales, music, and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture and influence behavior of people living in a particular culture.
- Standard E [Early Grades]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can give examples and describe the importance of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time requirement

Preparation: 40 minutes

In-class: 2 hours

Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

Art materials—construction paper, scissors, glue, pens, etc.

Instructions

1. Designate a country to be the host for an upcoming Olympic Games (it could be an actual host country, such as South Korea, Japan, or China, or a hypothetical one). Have students prepare to hold a mock Olympic Opening Ceremony. Begin by having them learn more about the selected host country. Each student should access the [Kids Edition](#) and read through the relevant report. Have students write down the most interesting things they discovered about the country as they read. Have them share their findings in a classroom discussion. Also, ask them what preparations they would make if they were a nation planning to host the Olympics.
2. Assign each student (or have each student select) another country in the Kids Edition series. Have them prepare to represent their country in the Opening Ceremony by reading that country's report. Students should prepare a short (one minute) presentation highlighting the country.
3. Using the [Flag Gallery](#), print the flag outline for each student's country. Have the students color in the flag. Alternatively, have them create their nation's flag out of art materials, using the flag image in the Kids Edition as a model.
4. Begin the Opening Ceremony by having one student or group of students act as a representative of the host country (in addition to their assignment for another country) to welcome the visiting nations. Then have each student present his or her assigned nation's flag (all of which should then be posted together in a prominent spot in the classroom) and give the short presentation. End the Opening Ceremony by "lighting the cauldron" (using orange tissue paper or other art materials).

Extension Activity

Have students research the past success of the Olympic athletes from the country they chose to research. By looking at the medal count from the last two to three Olympic Games, students should make projections about how well the countries will do in the upcoming games. If possible, have students follow their country during the Games to see how close their projections were.

Race Around the World

Game and Research

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will learn about three to five selected countries in preparation for a class “race.”

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

The World in Spatial Terms

- Standard 2: The geographically informed person knows and understands how to use mental maps to organize information about people, places, and environments.

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard E [Early Grades]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can give examples and describe the importance of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time requirement

Preparation: 40 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes, if reading is done as homework

Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

Instructions

1. Select four or five countries you would like the students to study as a class and divide them among your students. Then have the students read the [Kids Edition](#) reports for those countries. This may be done during class time or as homework assignments, spread out over several days.
2. Have each student create quiz questions about his or her country based on the reading. The students should not make the questions too difficult, as the questions may be asked of members of their own team during the upcoming Race Around the World activity.
3. Compile the questions together and distribute them to the class to allow students to prepare. You may wish to have some as “questions of the day” in the lead-up to the activity.
4. Mark a number of cities as “pit stops” on a world map. The students’ hometown should be the first and final pit stop.
5. For the Race Around the World, divide the students into teams. Each team should be represented by a symbol on the world map (e.g., different-colored airplanes). In turn, ask each team a question from those the class has submitted. With each correct answer, the team’s marker should be moved to the next “pit stop” on the map. The first team to travel around the globe to the original destination wins the game.

Extension activity

Compare the “route” the students traveled in their Race Around the World to some of the routes taken by early explorers around the globe (e.g., Magellan, Drake, Cook). How long did it take these explorers to complete their routes? How long would the students’ route take by airplane?

Tanzanian Life

Discussion and Writing

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will analyze photographs to identify differences between Tanzanian and North American cultures.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2* Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.2* Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.7* Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7* Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [Early Grades]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can describe ways in which language, stories, folktales, music, and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture and influence behavior of people living in a particular culture.
- Standard E [Early Grades]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can give examples and describe the importance of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time requirement

Preparation: 40 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams Kids Edition—[Tanzania](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Photo Gallery \(Tanzania\)](#)

Instructions

1. Have the students access the [photos of Tanzania](#) in the Photo Gallery. Ask the students to write down their responses to the following questions about some of the photos. Have them identify some of the differences between life in Tanzania and North America. How do shopping, weddings, clothing, food, and work in Tanzania contrast with those aspects of their own families' lives?
 - a. "Fish Market" - How does this market differ from the places most North Americans buy their meat? Why do think this is?
 - b. "Maternity Ward" - In what ways do you think health care differs in Tanzania and North America? What do you think brings Tanzanians to the hospital? How often do you think most Tanzanians go to the doctor? Why do North Americans usually go to the hospital? How often do most North Americans visit a doctor? Compare the number of doctors per 10,000 people in Tanzania and a country in North America in the CultureGrams data tables. How would that affect access to medical care?
 - c. "Music Festival" - What kind of music do you think these women perform? How are their costumes different from those of many popular North American performers?
 - d. "Stone Town" - How much older do you think Stone Town is than the community you live in? What clues do you see that can help you guess at the age of this town? Why do you think the street is so narrow?
2. As a class, discuss some of the students' findings. What did they find surprising about Tanzania?
3. Then, have the students read the Lifestyle section of the [Tanzania report](#) in the CultureGrams Kids Edition. This section includes information on Games and Sports, Holidays, Food, Schools, and Life as a Kid. From their reading, have students identify at least three aspects of life in Tanzania that are

different from their own life. Also have them identify three similarities. Ask the students if they can find in the text any of the characteristics of Tanzania they identified in the photos.

Extension Activity

Based on the photos and their reading, have the students write a short essay about whether they would like to live in Tanzania. Why or why not? What aspects of Tanzanian culture would they find most difficult getting used to? What would they enjoy the most?

The World Game

Research and Game

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will develop basic map skills and learn about the worldwide appeal of soccer.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Reading Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9* Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9* Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Human Systems

- Standard 2: The geographically informed person knows and understands how to use mental maps to organize information about people, places, and environments.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 40 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

CultureGrams Online World Edition regional maps:

- [North America](#)
- [South America](#)
- [Europe](#)
- [Africa](#)
- [Asia](#)
- [Oceania](#)

Instructions

1. Divide the class into four groups, and assign each group one of four regions:
 - 1) North and South America
 - 2) Europe
 - 3) Africa
 - 4) Asia and Oceania
2. For each region, compile and print out a list of the countries available in the Kids Edition. Have each group locate these countries on the regional maps (listed above).
3. Have students access the “Games and Sports” page for each country on their list. Have them determine in which countries soccer is popular and highlight these countries on their regional maps. What number or percentage of the countries on their lists play soccer?
4. As a class, discuss their findings. Explore some reasons why soccer is such a popular sport around the globe (inexpensive to play, introduced by colonial powers, etc.).
5. During an international soccer competition (e.g., World Cup, UEFA European Championship, Africa’s Cup of Nations) assign each student a country to follow during the competition. Use the success of particular teams to launch a discussion about those countries. Internet sites that may be useful include:
 - [International Football Federation](#) (FIFA)
 - [Union of European Football Associations](#)
 - [U.S. Soccer Federation](#)

Twenty Questions: United States

Game

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students learn about the states by playing a game of Twenty Questions. Each student represents one of the fifty states and the rest of the class tries to guess which state their classmate is “thinking of.”

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Places and Regions

- Standard 4: The physical and human characteristics of places.
- Standard 5: That people create regions to interpret Earth’s complexity.
- Standard 6: How culture and experience influence people’s perception of places and regions.

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 150 minutes, spread over three class periods

Materials

CultureGrams [States Edition](#)

Instructions

1. Assign each student in the class to learn about one of the fifty states. The various assignments should be given in secret so that no one knows which students are assigned to which states. Students should not reveal to their classmates which state they are working on.

2. For a homework assignment, have each student carefully review the relevant report from the CultureGrams [States Edition](#) and become familiar enough with the content that they can answer yes/no questions about the state.
3. On the assigned days, have students get up in front of the class, one at a time, and say, "I am thinking of a state." The student then responds to yes/no questions from the rest of his or her classmates as they try to guess the state that the student represents. The class can ask about such things as climate, geography, resources and economy, population, historical events, etc. Once the class guesses the student's state, then that student sits down and the process begins with another student.
4. After all of the students have participated in this activity, lead a discussion about which questions were most successful in helping students come up with the correct answers.

Understanding Election Results

Discussion and Research

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will learn about the Electoral College while understanding the numerical basis for election results and practicing various computations.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.7* Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

National curriculum standard(s)

Principles and Standards for School Mathematics

- **Data Analysis and Probability Standard:** Instructional programs from prekindergarten through grade 12 should enable all students to formulate questions that can be addressed with data and collect, organize, and display relevant data to answer them.
 - [Grade 3-5]: All students should design investigations to address a question and consider how data-collection methods affect the nature of the data set.
- **Number and Operations Standard:** Instructional programs from prekindergarten through grade 12 should enable all students to compute fluently and make reasonable estimates.
 - [Grade 3-5]: All students should develop and use strategies to estimate the results of whole-number computations and to judge the reasonableness of such results
- **Connections Standard [Grade 3-5]:** instructional programs from prekindergarten through grade 12 should enable all students to recognize and apply mathematics in contexts outside of mathematics.

Developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

Time requirement

Preparation: 40 minutes

In-class: 2 hours, two different days; less, if some is done as homework.

Materials

Instructions

1. Begin by handing out a printout of the PDF outline map of the U.S. from the [States Edition](#) landing page to each student, along with coloring utensils. Give the students a list of which states voted for George W. Bush (color red) in the 2004 presidential election and which states voted for John Kerry (color blue) and have them color in the map accordingly.
2. When the students are done, tell them that the country was split fairly evenly in this election, with 51% of the nation voting for Bush and 48% voting for Kerry. Yet, from looking at the amount of red on the election map, they might think that far more people voted for Bush. Talk about how the Electoral College works, explaining that each state gets a number of electoral votes based on its total number of senators and representatives, the latter of which is based on population.
3. Using this formula (senators + representatives = electoral votes), have the students use the information in the Government section of the CultureGrams States Edition to fill in their map with the numbers of electoral votes each state has. Compare the sum of the blue states' electoral votes and those of the red states. Are they closer than the map makes them appear?
4. Explain to students that, typically, it is thought that states that are home to large urban populations (and are therefore more densely populated) tend to be democrat, while those home to rural populations (and therefore more sparsely populated) tend to be republican. Have students test this assumption using the [Create-Your-Own Tables](#) function in the States Edition. Have students create tables that display the population densities (population per sq. mi.) for both red and blue states. Using this data, have them create and compare averages for each group. What do their findings prove?

Questions for further discussion

1. Why might more densely populated states vote democratic, while more sparsely populated ones vote republican?
2. The Electoral College has come under fire as being out of date and unfair. Do the students agree? Why or why not?

Extension activity

Provide electoral maps for several past presidential elections. As they compare the maps, they should note which states should be classified as “swing states”; that is, which states alternate between voting for republican and democratic candidates.

What Is the American West?

Discussion and Research

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will learn about the geographic similarities and differences among the western states of the United States and draw a physical map of the region.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2* Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.2* Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.6* Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Reading Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9* Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9* Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

The World in Spatial Terms

- Standard 1: The geographically informed person knows and understands how to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information.

Places and Regions

- Standard 4: The geographically informed person knows and understands the physical and human characteristics of places.

Environment and Society

- Standard 15: The geographically informed person knows and understands how physical systems affect human systems.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 1 hour and 30 minutes

In-class: Up to 1 hour and 30 minutes, depending on the number of passages read and clips shown

Materials

CultureGrams [States Edition](#):

- [Arizona](#)
- [California](#)
- [Colorado](#)
- [Idaho](#)
- [Oregon](#)
- [Montana](#)
- [New Mexico](#)
- [Nevada](#)
- [Texas](#)
- [Utah](#)
- [Washington](#)
- [Wyoming](#)
- [United States](#) (outline map found under USA Maps)

Instructions

1. Assign students to read the CultureGrams reports for the western states listed above.
2. In class, read passages from novels and/or show clips from films that portray the West in stereotypical ways—such as depictions of cowboys, Native Americans, gunfights, mountain men, cattle drives, saloons, etc. There are several books and movies you could use (many are both), including *Shane*, *Riders of the Purple Sage*, *Lonesome Dove*, *O Pioneers*, *The Shootist!*, *High Noon*, *The Virginian*, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, *Lone Ranger*, *Gunsmoke*, etc.
3. Lead a discussion prompting the students to compare and contrast the West as it is commonly portrayed in literature and film with the West as it is portrayed in history and the present-day reality, which they read about in the CultureGrams reports. What similarities do the Western states share? How are they different?
4. Talk with the students about the importance of Western geography—the rugged frontier, wide open spaces, the climate, natural resources, limited water, etc. Using the outline map of the [United States](#), have the students create their own physical maps of the West.

Questions for further discussion

1. When Europeans first arrived in the United States, they considered anything west of the Mississippi to be part of the frontier that was the “West.” As settlers spread out across the United States, the boundary of that frontier changed. What does this history tell the class about the way the West has been classified? Is it more than a geographic location?
2. Since the majority of the western United States is composed of desert, water is scarce in most western states. Do the students think that fewer people should live in these states or that water should be shipped in from other regions of the country? Should the amount of water the inhabitants of these states use be limited?

Extension activity

Hawaii and Alaska aren't typically thought of as being part of the West, even though they are both west of California. Have a class debate in which one half argues that Alaska should be classified as part of the West and the other half argues that Hawaii should be. Students may justify their reasons by drawing upon the stereotypes discussed or the historical and current-day information they read about in the CultureGrams reports.

Where Should We Go on Vacation?

Research and Creative Project

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will gain a better sense of audience, visual rhetoric, and persuasive strategies, while comparing and contrasting South American countries.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7* Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

National curriculum standard(s)

Standards for the English Language Arts

- Standard 1: Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and non-fiction, classic and contemporary works.
- Standard 8: Students use a variety of technological and informational resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.
- Standard 12: Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g. for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

Developed by the National Council of Teachers of English and International Reading Association

Time requirement

Preparation: 20 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 40 minutes, two different days (making the brochure would require additional time or could be assigned as homework)

Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#):

- [Argentina](#)
- [Brazil](#)
- [Chile](#)
- [Peru](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Photo Gallery](#)

Instructions

1. Introduce the lesson by explaining that countries try to attract tourists due to the money they bring in. Discuss the different ways a country might sell itself (i.e., beautiful beaches, friendly people, economic lodging, famous landmarks, unique cuisine, etc.).
2. Divide students into four groups and assign each group to represent a tourist board of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Peru (this lesson can be adapted to work for any region of the world).
3. Have each group read the CultureGrams report for their respective country and prepare a travel brochure in which they try to persuade tourists to come to their country for a visit. They may use the pictures from the CultureGrams online photo gallery and find other online sources to get more information on their country. Encourage students to follow the links in the Learn More section to find the official tourism sites for each country.
4. Give the groups of students time in class to make their brochures. The brochures should contain information that would bring tourists to the country and should be specifically aimed at others their age. The groups should prepare a short presentation to give in class on each country.
5. The groups can then share their brochures with the class, along with brief oral presentations.

Questions for further discussion

1. Which group's presentation was the most convincing to each student and why? Do some countries have more challenges to attract visitors than others?
2. How did each group's visual (brochure or presentation) target a specific audience?

Extension activity

Lead a follow-up discussion on how these four South American countries are similar and how they are different. The class can also explore some of the reasons for these similarities and differences—geography, history, economy, government, etc.

World Religions

Research and Presentation

Grade level

K-5

Objective

Students will learn about three of the world's major religions as practiced in India, Saudi Arabia, and Thailand.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Reading Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9* Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9* Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard E [Early Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can give examples and describe the importance of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time requirement

Preparation: 40 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#):

- [India](#)
- [Saudi Arabia](#)
- [Thailand](#)

Instructions

1. Divide the class into three groups. Assign each group to research one of the following religions and have them read the appropriate CultureGrams Kids report for that religion:

Religion	Country report	Section
Islam	Saudi Arabia	Religion
Hinduism	India	Hinduism, Religion
Buddhism	Thailand	Buddhism, Religion

2. As they read, students should take notes, listing the major aspects of the assigned religion. You could also encourage students to do further research, depending on their age and reading level. Group members should prepare a brief presentation on the religion to give to the class. Each student in the group should present one aspect of the religion they researched.
3. After all of the groups have presented, discuss with the class similarities and differences between the religions. How do the religions affect the lives of citizens of each country? What differences might exist between countries in which most people share a religion and countries in which many religions are found?

Grades 6-8

A Snapshot of Brazil

Problem Solving and Discussion

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will learn to critically analyze photographs, making deductions from them about Brazil's culture.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6-8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7* Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

National curriculum standard(s)

Standards for the English Language Arts

- Standard 11: Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.
- Standard 12: Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g. for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

Developed by the National Council of Teachers of English and International Reading Association

Time requirement

Preparation: 40 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams World Edition—[Brazil](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Photo Gallery \(Brazil\)](#)

Instructions

1. Introduce the lesson by discussing the importance of visual literacy. Talk about “reading” a picture as students would a text.

2. Create a slide show with the following pictures, but leave the captions off. As you go through the slide show as a class, ask the students to make deductions about Brazil based on each picture. Use the following prompts if needed:
 - a. "Selling Bananas" - What do you learn from this photo about the socioeconomic circumstances in this part of Brazil?
 - b. "Pantanal" - Why would these houses be built on stilts? What other ways would you expect those living in the Pantanal to adjust to their surroundings?
 - c. "Rio Housing" - Why do you think the poor in Rio de Janeiro live in the hills, as opposed to the rich, as in many parts of the United States?
 - d. "Gaucho" - What is a gaucho and what do gauchos do?
 - e. "Oil Platform" - What are some of the issues that arise as countries try to balance economic development with environmental and cultural concerns?
 - f. "Afternoon Swim" - What benefits might this river provide to the residents of the small fishing village nearby? What do the trees and plants tell you about the climate?
3. Give students 10 minutes or so to record all of the things they've learned about Brazil by looking at the pictures.
4. Then, have the students read the Brazil CultureGrams report to see if they can find in the text any of the things on their list that they learned from the pictures.

Questions for further discussion

1. They say that a picture is worth a thousand words. After completing this activity, do the students agree? Why or why not?
2. After reading the Brazil CultureGrams report, what other pictures do students think should be added to the photo gallery?

Extension activity

Ask students to choose one element from the Brazil pictures they're interested in (i.e. housing, downtown, sports, church, landscape, etc.). Using the Online CultureGrams database, have the students go to the photo gallery and do a search for their term. Then, have students compare the pictures and choose a few with particularly interesting similarities or differences to focus on. Assign them to make a slideshow in which they compare and analyze their picks. Provide time in class for them to share their slideshows.

A Visit to China

Discussion and Research

Grade level

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students use text and photos to identify cultural characteristics of China.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5* Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7* Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can apply an understanding of culture as an integrated whole that explains the functions and interactions of language, literature, the arts, traditions, beliefs and values, and behavior patterns.

People, Places, and Environments

- Standard E [High School]: Social studies programs should include experience that provide for the study of *people, places, and environments*, so that the learner can describe, differentiate, and explain the relationships among various regional and global patterns of geographic phenomena such as landforms, soils, climate, vegetation, natural resources, and population.

Global Connections

- Standard B [High School]: Social studies programs should include experience that provide for the study of *global connections and interdependence*, so that the learner can explain conditions and motivations that contribute to conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among groups, societies, and nations.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time requirement

Preparation: 40 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams World Edition—[China](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Photo Gallery \(China\)](#)

Instructions

1. Give each student a copy of (or have each student access) the World Edition [report for China](#) and have him or her read it before class. Instruct the students that as they read the report, they should pay particular attention to the sections under the Customs and Courtesies heading: Greetings, Gestures, Visiting, and Eating.
2. Have each student make a list of 10 “dos and don’ts” for interacting with Chinese. Have them choose things that they think a visitor to China should know, using the information in these four sections. For example, “Do maintain a respectful distance when speaking with older people” or “Don’t place your chopsticks in the rice bowl when finished with your meal.”
3. Discuss the students’ findings as a class. How easy could it be for a North American to violate these behavioral norms? What could be the possible outcomes of violating these expectations?
4. For a second assignment, have the students read the report again before class. This time, have them pay attention to the contrasts between life in urban China and life in rural China. You may want to point out the specific sections in which contrasts are identified (e.g., General Attitudes, Personal Appearance, Housing, and Economy).
5. As a class, discuss how a visit to a rural area would be different from a visit to a major city. What challenges would a traveler face in each environment?

Extension activity

Have the students access the [China photos](#) in the CultureGrams Photo Gallery. Many of these photos portray people doing everyday things. Have each student select a photo and write a short story about a person pictured. Have the students describe what the person is doing in the photo, but also have them imagine what isn’t pictured—the other activities the person might carry out in a typical day.

Africa's Borders

Discussion

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will understand how Africa's colonial borders divided ethnic groups and what effects this has on the continent today.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Geography

The World in Spatial Terms

- Standard 3: The geographically informed person knows and understands how to analyze the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on Earth's surface.

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 10 minutes, less if students read selections at home

Materials

CultureGrams World Edition

- Reports for West African countries (See below)
- [Africa map](#) (found under Regional Content)

Instructions

1. Distribute to the students the gray-scale [PDF map of Africa](#). Explain to the students how most of the current political boundaries of African countries were drawn up by European colonial powers in the mid- to late 19th century, so many peoples found themselves divided into two or three different geographical sections, each belonging to a different colony.
2. To illustrate this point, ask the students to look on the map at Senegal, a nation that completely surrounds The Gambia. This division is due to Senegal's history as a colony of France and The Gambia's history as a colony of Britain. In an agreement between France and Britain, the two colonial powers established these borders in 1889.
3. Ask the students to read the Population sections from the CultureGrams reports of these West African nations:
 - a. [Senegal](#)
 - b. [The Gambia](#)
 - c. [Mauritania](#)
 - d. [Mali](#)
 - e. [Guinea](#)
 - f. [Guinea-Bissau](#)
 - g. [Côte d'Ivoire](#)

Have them identify which of these countries are home to the Wolof ethnic group. Which are home to the Malinke ethnic group (also spelled Malinké, Mandingo, Mandinga, or Mandinka)?

4. Lead a discussion about some of the possible effects of having ethnic groups divided by national borders. Ask students to find a news article about a current or recent conflict in Africa. Does the article identify ethnic tensions as a factor in the conflict?

Australian Comparison

Research

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will gain a greater understanding of Australian society and how it compares to the United States.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5* Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.5* Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7* Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8* Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

- **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6-8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8* Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can explain and give examples of how language, literature, the arts, architecture, other artifacts, traditions, beliefs, values, and behaviors contribute to the development and transmission of culture.
- Standard E [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can articulate the implications of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

National Standards for Geography

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes, less if students read selections at home

Materials

CultureGrams World Edition

- [Australia](#)
- [United States](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition

- [Comparison Table](#)
- [Slideshow Gallery](#)
- [Video Gallery](#)

Instructions

1. Introduce this activity by discussing some of the similarities between Australia and the United States (e.g., large areas, former British colonies, English-speaking). Then highlight a few of the differences

(population size, unique wildlife, etc.). Show [slideshows](#) or [videos](#) of Australia that portray various aspects of the country—both familiar and unfamiliar.

2. Distribute to each student a copy of the Australia report. Ask them to identify similarities and differences between Australia and the United States by highlighting passages in the Australia report with a different color for each (e.g., green for similarities, red for differences). Instruct them to make notes in the margins where appropriate. You may also want to distribute copies of the United States report to help them generate ideas. What similarities surprised them? What differences surprised them?
3. Using the build-your-own [Comparison Table](#), select Australia and the United States in the Nations field. For the categories field, select all of the categories. Then click “Create Comparison Table.”
4. To summarize their findings, have students divide a piece of paper in half by folding it lengthwise. In the left column, have them list 10 characteristics of Australian culture. In the right column, students should list the corresponding U.S. characteristics.

Campaign for the Olympics

Presentation

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students research an assigned country and develop a presentation arguing why their country should host the next Olympic Games. Students will gain a sense of audience, visual rhetoric, and persuasive strategies while presenting their argument to the class.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7* Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8* Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8* Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National Curriculum Standards

Standards for the English Language Arts

- Standard 8: Students use a variety of technological and informational resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

*Developed by the National Council of Teachers of English and
International Reading Association*

Time requirement

In-class: 50 minutes (spread over two class periods)

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition

- [Photo Gallery](#)
- [Slideshow Gallery](#)
- [Video Gallery](#)
- [Interviews](#)

Instructions

1. Introduce the concept of the Olympic Games and the process of a city and/or country campaigning for the chance to host the games. Point out that the International Olympic Committee is the governing body who votes on and decides which city and/or country will host the games.
2. Assign several students to serve on the International Olympic Committee. These students will decide which country will host the Olympics based on the cases presented. Assign the remaining students to each pick a different country. Then give them time to read through their country's CultureGrams report.
3. Assign students to create a presentation, outlining the reasons their country should be chosen to host the next Olympic Games. Encourage them to use the Interview, Photo, Video, and Slideshow Galleries to find quotes, images and/or footage to incorporate into their presentations.
4. Have students present their country's cases to the class and have the committee vote for the most successful and/or persuasive presentation and explain their reasons for their decision.

Colonization of Africa

Research and Discussion

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will learn about and understand patterns and effects of European colonization in Africa.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5* Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.5* Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7* Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8* Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

- **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6-8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8* Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Geography

The World in Spatial Terms

- Standard 3: The geographically informed person knows and understands how to analyze the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on Earth's surface.

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes (two class periods), less if students read selections at home

Materials

CultureGrams World Edition

- West African countries (See below)
- [Map of Africa](#) (found under Regional Content)

Instructions

1. Throughout history, powerful nations and empires have set out to explore and settle in new parts of the world. Some of the most notable exploration and colonization were carried out by the Roman and Ottoman empires, whose territory covered much of Europe and parts of Asia and North Africa. Beginning in the 1500s, European nations began exploring and claiming parts of Africa. In the late 1800s, the colonization became a “scramble for Africa” as the European powers hastened to secure African territory ahead of their rivals.
2. Distribute to each student the CultureGrams printable [map of Africa](#). Ask students to color on the map former colonies of France (using the list below).

● Algeria	● Comoros	● Morocco
● Benin	● Gabon	● Niger
● Burkina Faso	● Guinea	● Senegal
● Cameroon	● Côte d'Ivoire	● Togo
● Central African Republic	● Madagascar	● Tunisia
● Chad	● Mali	
3. As a class, discuss what the completed maps reveal about French influence in Africa.

4. Ask the students to read a CultureGrams report from one of these countries. Have them list some of the effects of colonization on the country and what effects are still felt today.

Comparing Communication Styles

Presentation

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will use CultureGrams to compare the communication styles of Sub-Saharan African countries with communication styles in the U.S. or Canada.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5* Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.5* Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8* Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8* Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Other curriculum standard(s)

McREL Behavioral Studies Standards

- Standard 1: Understands that group and cultural influences contribute to human development, identity, and behavior.
 - Level III [Grade 6-8] Benchmark 1: Understands that each culture has distinctive patterns of behavior that are usually practiced by most of the people who grow up in it.

Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)—Sub-Saharan [African](#) countries

Instructions

Explain to the class that the ability to communicate effectively across cultures can be vital—it can prevent war, make or break a business deal, and keep a traveler safe. What might be a harmless gesture or word in one region of the world can be offensive in another. Other aspects of communication, including personal space, level of formality, and directness, also vary from country to country, and culturally savvy students know how to modify their communication styles according to their audiences.

1. Divide students into groups of three to four and assign each group to read a CultureGrams report for a different Sub-Saharan African country.
2. While reading the CultureGrams reports, students should focus on the categories of Greetings, Gestures, and Visiting to identify the countries' communication styles, both verbal and nonverbal. (Consider level of formality, gender, situational context, personal space, gestures, etc.)
3. Have students consider the following questions: What communication practices are common in the country? What practices are taboo? How do people in the country regard body language, personal space, and eye contact? How might these communication styles be a product of other aspects of the culture (e.g., religion, family)? How are communication styles different from those in the United States or Canada?
4. Have each group give a short presentation comparing communication styles in the United States with those in their assigned African country. The presentations might include skits that represent encounters between someone from the United States or Canada and someone from the assigned African countries. These skits could depict both verbal and nonverbal communication, showing what misunderstandings might arise.
5. Talk with the students about how communication styles differ between cultures. In what ways are they similar? Why is it important to be aware of these similarities and differences?

Questions for further discussion

1. Acceptable communication styles not only differ from culture to culture but also from family to family. Ask students what types of communication rules are stressed in their families. What might account for the differences they notice? Which similarities do most of them share?
2. There are also generational differences in communication etiquette. What types of things do the students' grandparents consider rude that is acceptable among today's young people?

Cricket and Colonization

Problem Solving and Discussion

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will understand the long-lasting effects of colonization.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7* Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8* Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8* Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

The World in Spatial Terms

- Standard 1: The geographically informed person knows and understands how to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Curriculum Standards for Social Studies

Individuals, Groups and Institutions

- Standard B [Middle Grades]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions*, so that the learner can analyze group and institutional influences on people, events, and elements of culture.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes, less if students read sections at home.

Materials

Blank world maps

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)—Countries with international test cricket teams (See below)

CultureGrams Online Edition

- [Slideshows](#)
- [Video Gallery](#)

Instructions

1. Explain how identifying popular sports can tell a lot about a country. For example, the country's environment clearly plays a role: skiing is popular in snowy Sweden, sailing is popular in The Bahamas since it's sunny, etc. Some popular sports have deep cultural roots, like karate or sumo wrestling in Japan, while others are evidence of global connectivity, such as the spread of baseball and basketball from the United States. A country's popular sports can also say something about its colonial past.
2. Introduce the sport of cricket by showing the [UK Cricket video](#) and the [Australian Cricket Matches slideshow](#). Divide the class into a few groups, giving each of them a copy of a blank world map. Using markers, have each group mark with one color the location of the world's international test cricket teams:
 - a. [Australia](#)
 - b. [Bangladesh](#)
 - c. [United Kingdom](#)
 - d. [India](#)
 - e. [New Zealand](#)
 - f. [Pakistan](#)
 - g. [South Africa](#)
 - h. [Sri Lanka](#)
 - i. [Zimbabwe](#)

The West Indies also has a team, so have students mark [Barbados](#), [Jamaica](#), [Antigua and Barbuda](#), and [St. Lucia](#) as a few representatives.

3. Assign each group to read the History sections of the above CultureGrams from the World Edition, noting each country's relationship with colonialism. Groups can read these together or, to save time, the countries can be divided among group members.
4. With a different color, have the groups indicate which of the countries are former colonies of Great Britain.
5. Compare the two colors, noting the strong relationship between colonialism and the spread of cricket. Are there any countries where cricket is popular that are not former British colonies?
6. Have the students scan the Recreation, Diet, Art, and Language sections of the CultureGrams that they marked on the map as former British colonies. Instruct them to look for further influences Great Britain had on these countries. Discuss the long-lasting cultural effects of colonization.

Questions for further discussion

1. The cultural impact of colonialism goes two ways. Talk about the ways in which Great Britain has been influenced by its colonies, including the languages spoken there and the types of ethnic food that are popular.
2. Some citizens of postcolonial countries advocate a rejection of all things colonial, while others would like to maintain those colonial influences they think have bettered the country. What are the pros and cons of both views? What do the students think and why?

Extension activity

Since the United States is a nation of immigrants, it's likely that some of your students' hobbies, games, and favorite sports originated in a country other than the U.S. Have them do some research and complete a short write-up on the origins, history, and evolution of one of their pastimes. Share these with the class, noting how many cultures have contributed to the way they spend leisure time.

Cultural Sensitivity Training

Presentation

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will assume the role of cultural trainers whose responsibility it is to prepare U.S. musicians for their world-wide tours. Either individually or in groups, students will prepare short oral presentations that are intended to sensitize the musicians to the importance of recognizing and adapting to cultural differences.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8* Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8* Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Global Connections

- Standard A [Middle Grades]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *global connections and interdependence*, so that the learner can describe instances in which language, art, music, belief systems, and other cultural elements can facilitate global understanding or cause misunderstanding.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time requirement

Preparation: 15 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, spread over two class periods

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

Instructions

1. Assign students, either individually or in groups, countries on which to prepare presentations. Making assignments will insure a greater variety of countries and cultures, and it will help avoid duplication.
2. Each student or group of students should review the CultureGrams report for their assigned country. As they read the text, they should identify concepts that would be important for a musician to know if they were to meet and associate with someone from that country. Students may make note of where a country is located, what the land and climate is like, what type of government the country has, etc. But most importantly, they should focus on matters of culture that might be important in everyday interactions. What information would be critical for a person to have in order to understand someone from the assigned country? Some questions to consider:
 - a. What ethnic groups are there?
 - b. What languages do people speak?
 - c. What are the most prominent religions? And how might someone's religious belief affect their daily behavior?
 - d. What common attitudes and values are shared by people in the country?
 - e. What do people in the country commonly wear?
 - f. How do people greet each other?
 - g. Are there gestures a person needs to know or should avoid using because they are potentially offensive?
 - h. What foods are typically eaten in the country? What customs are there that accompany eating?
 - i. What aspects of the lifestyle in the country are important to be aware of when you meet a person from the country?
 - j. What games and sports are popular?
3. After gathering information from the CultureGrams report, students should prepare a five-minute presentation in which they organize and highlight the most important points for a musician from the United States to know when meeting a person from their assigned country.

Questions for further discussion

1. Would it be especially difficult for U.S. musicians to interact with people from particular countries?
Why?
2. Why is it important to recognize the cultural similarities and differences that exist among human beings?

Extension Activity

Assign students to make a poster of critical “dos and don’ts” when encountering someone from their assigned country.

Day in the Life

Research and Discussion

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will conduct a self-evaluation and compare their answers to those of people from different parts of the world.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8* Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8* Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can explain and give examples of how language, literature, the arts, architecture, other artifacts, traditions, beliefs, values, and behaviors contribute to the development and transmission of culture.
- Standard E [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can articulate the implications of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

National Standards for Geography

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 15 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days

Materials

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Interviews](#)

Instructions

1. Ask students to write a short essay in which they describe what a typical day of the week is like for them:
 - What time do they wake up/go to bed?
 - What daily responsibilities do they have at home and elsewhere?
 - What do they do with their free time?
2. Using the Interviews feature, ask each student to access 10 different interviews. In each interview, have the students find the response to the typical day question.
3. As students read the responses, have them note similarities and differences between the answers.
4. Once the students have gathered this information, then bring the class together and lead a discussion on what factors shape a person's daily life. For example, discuss how climate, geography, economy, family responsibilities, religion, gender, age, and other influences can affect a person's employment, food consumption, leisure time, community involvement, etc.

Designing Olympic Medals

Creative Project

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will design an Olympic medal based on what they learn about the culture of a country.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7* Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8* Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8* Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Places and Regions

- Standard 6: The geographically informed person knows and understands how culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can explain and give examples of how language, literature, the arts, architecture, other artifacts, traditions, beliefs, values, and behaviors contribute to the development of culture.

People, Places, and Environments

- Standard E [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *people, places, and environments*, so that the learner can describe ways that historical events have been influenced by, and have influenced, physical and human geographic factors in local, regional, national, and global settings.

Global Connections

- Standard A [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *global connections and interdependence*, so that the learner can describe instances in which language, art, music, belief systems, and other cultural elements can facilitate global understanding or cause misunderstanding.
- Standard B [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *global connections and interdependence*, so that the learner can analyze examples of conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among groups, societies, and nations.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time requirement

Preparation: 15 minutes

In-class: 60 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

Art materials—construction paper, scissors, glue, pens, etc.

Instructions

1. Ask each student to choose a country and read its CultureGrams report. Students should make note of things that set the country apart and that citizens of the country would be especially proud of.
2. Explain to the students that the design of the Olympic medals combines the history of the Olympic Games with the culture of the host country. Each host country designs the medal that hundreds of athletes will compete for that year. Have students look at the design and background information for medals from some past Winter or Summer Olympic Games. Hold a class discussion about which elements of culture the designs incorporate and why.
3. Ask students to design an Olympic medal for the country they researched. They must incorporate aspects of the country's culture as well as images from ancient Greek culture and the history of the

Olympic Games. You may wish to determine the format (paper, poster, digital design, etc.) or leave it open to the students.

4. In small groups or in front of the class, have students explain why they chose to include each element of their medal.

Extension activity

Each country that hosts the Olympics designs a logo for the games. The logo may feature a symbol of the country or it may simply try to capture the excitement of the games. While each country adds their own elements to the logo, almost all logos incorporate the Olympic rings, one of the most recognizable symbols of the games. Have the students research past Olympic logos on the Internet and choose the one they think reflects the best blend of Olympic history and the host country's culture, according to that country's CultureGrams report. Students should be prepared to defend their choices with specific details.

Doing Business in Japan

Research

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will understand the differences between business customs in Japan and North America.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5* Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.5* Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8* Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Geography

Human Systems

- Standard 11: The geographically informed person knows and understands the patterns and networks of economic interdependence on Earth's surface.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, less if students read selections at home

Materials

CultureGrams World Edition—[Japan](#)

Articles from a reputable news web site, such as the BBC

[Japan National Tourist Organization web site](#)

Instructions

1. Introduce this activity by discussing Japan's role as a major contributor to the world economy. Have students access a reputable news web site to find an article related to the Japanese economy. (For example, they can type "Japan" and "economy" into the Search field.)
2. Ask students to read the CultureGrams Japan report, focusing on the question "What would a North American need to know to make a good impression in Japan?" Have them pay particular attention to the Greetings and Gestures section.
3. Ask students to create a bullet-point list of what they feel are the "top-ten" most important things a North American business traveler should know before going to Japan. Lead a discussion on what the consequences might be if a business traveler failed to follow these customs.

Extension activity

Have students access the web site for the [Japan National Tourist Organization](#). Ask students to find recommendations for tourist sites a business traveler could visit while in Japan.

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will practice conversation skills while learning about culture in countries where Russian is spoken.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7* Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8* Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8* Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Foreign Language Education

Communication; Communicate in Languages Other Than English

- Standard 1.1: Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.

Comparisons: Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture

- Standard 4.2: Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

Developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

Time requirement

Preparation: 20 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days.

Materials

CultureGrams World Edition (Sections: Eating and Diet)

- [Armenia](#)
- [Azerbaijan](#)
- [Belarus](#)
- [Estonia](#)
- [Georgia](#)
- [Kazakhstan](#)
- [Kyrgyzstan](#)
- [Latvia](#)
- [Lithuania](#)
- [Moldova](#)
- [Russia](#)
- [Tajikistan](#)
- [Turkmenistan](#)
- [Ukraine](#)
- [Uzbekistan](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Recipes](#)

Instructions (Note: This assignment is for a Russian language class.)

1. Organize the class into groups of two or three students. Assign each group one of the above countries.
2. Instruct the students to read the Eating and Diet sections of their country's CultureGrams report.
3. Using the Online Edition, have the groups look up recipes from their countries. Have students prepare a brief introduction—in Russian—to the country (i.e., where it is, whether Russian is the official language, etc.) and to the food they will make (describing ingredients, flavor, etc.). They should also prepare to demonstrate basic dining etiquette as found in the Eating section of the CultureGrams report they read. As homework, assign the students to prepare one or two dishes and to make a poster with the name of their country displayed.
4. In class the next day, arrange the desks around the classroom so they make small booths. Have students set up their poster and dish(es).
5. Then, have group members take turns touring their classmates' booths and trying small portions of food. Students manning the booth should give their introduction to the country, food, and dining etiquette. After sampling the food, visitors to the booth should offer reactions to the food in Russian.

6. After all students have had time to visit each booth, meet back together as a class and discuss similarities and differences they noticed in regard to ingredients and etiquette. Have students either respond in a discussion or in a brief write-up.

Questions for further discussion

1. To what extent does geography influence a country's common dishes?
2. There is a lot more to food than the actual ingredients used to make it. Cultural traditions often surround how dishes are prepared, when they are eaten, how they're served, etc. What traditions surround some of the students' favorite dishes? Are the traditions unique to their families or representative of U.S. culture as a whole?

Vocabulary

Borsch: Vegetable soup.

Golubtsy: Stuffed cabbage leaves baked with tomato sauce and eaten with sour cream.

Pelmeni: A pasta dish.

Pirozhki: A stuffed pastry.

Shi: Soup with sour cabbage.

Zakuski: Russian word meaning "appetizers."

Extension Activity

For homework, assign the students to select a favorite recipe from home and find out which ingredients are native to the U.S. (or their region of the U.S. specifically). If the recipe contains food products that the U.S. imports, urge the students find out which countries they're imported from, if possible. Have students share their findings in class, and discuss what the ingredients in a culture's food can say about that country's wealth.

Note: This lesson plan can be adapted for any language group. For a list of countries in which different languages are spoken, see the [CultureGram's FAQ](#). See the [CultureGrams Video Gallery index](#) for clips that show foods from other countries being cooked: Belgian Waffles (Belgium), Making Witlof (Netherlands), Making a Spanish Tortilla (Spain). See the [CultureGrams Slideshows index](#) for photos related to various dishes: *Doner Kebabs* (Belgium), *Waffles* (Belgium), *Food* (Hong Kong), *Baking Pita Bread* (Israel), *Diet* (Mali), *Food* (Morocco), *Olliebollen* (Netherlands), *Mealtime* (Philippines), *Chestnuts* (Spain), *Chocolatería* (Spain), *La Mallorquina Pastelería* (Spain), *Tapas* (Spain), *English Fast Food* (UK), *Making Arepas* (Venezuela), *Making Empanadas* (Venezuela).

Getting Around

Writing and Presentation

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will learn about modes of transportation in different countries and how those are affected by culture and economy.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6-8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5* Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6-8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7* Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Production, Distribution, and Consumption

- Standard A [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *how people organize* for the *production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services*, so that the learner can give and explain examples of ways that economic systems structure choices about how goods and services are to be produced and distributed.

Science, Technology, and Society

- Standard A [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *relationship among science, technology, and society*, so the learner can examine and describe the influence of culture on scientific and technological choices and advancements, such as transportation, medicine, and warfare.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 1 hour, less if writing is done at home.

Materials

CultureGrams World Edition:

- [Belgium](#)
- [Colombia](#)
- [Egypt](#)
- [Mali](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition–[Slideshows](#)

Instructions

1. Divide the class into four groups, one for each country listed above. Assign each student to read through the CultureGrams report for their country and take notes on the answers to the following questions:
 - a) What sorts of transportation methods are available in the country?
 - b) What kind of transportation needs do people have in the country? Do people have to drive far away to work? Do kids go to schools nearby or do they stay at home? How often does a typical family need to go from one place to another?
 - c) In what ways is the country's transportation system dependent on its economy? How do the various means of transport help or hinder the country's economy?

To find answers, have students pay particular attention to the following sections: Transportation and Communication, Family, General Attitudes, and Economy.

2. When each student has made a few notes and had a chance to look over the CultureGrams report, have students come back to their groups. Instruct students to discuss their findings in their groups and come up with a few main answers to each question.
3. Assign each group to look through the appropriate slideshow for their country from CultureGrams [Slideshows](#):
 - a) Belgium- "Taking the Train"
 - b) Columbia- "Getting Around"
 - c) Egypt- "Transportation"
 - d) Mali- "Transportation"

4. Have each group download their slideshow into PowerPoint or other such program. Assign the students to pick out several pictures from the slideshow and write appropriate captions from the notes they took as a group on their assigned country.
5. Have students present their slideshows to the class and share what they've learned about transportation in their assigned countries.

Question for further discussion

In what ways would the students' lives change if they lived in these countries? What sorts of things would they have to do differently with that country's available transportation? Have students write a short response describing whether it would be easier or harder to get around in a week in the country they were assigned to research.

Graphing Regional Statistics

Problem Solving

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will learn statistical and graphical methods for comparing data between population groups.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5* Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.5* Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7* Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

Principles and Standards for School Mathematics

- Data Analysis and Probability Standard: Instructional programs from prekindergarten through grade 12 should enable all students to formulate questions that can be addressed with data and collect, organize, and display relevant data to answer them.
 - [Grade 6-8]: All students should formulate questions, design studies, and collect data about a characteristic shared by two populations or different characteristics within one population.
 - [Grade 6-8]: All students should select, create, and use appropriate graphical representations of data, including histograms, box plots, and scatterplots.

Developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

Time requirement

Preparation: 20 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Data Tables](#)

Instructions

Sierra Leone's GDP (PPP) per capita is a little more than \$2,000, while Luxembourg's is over \$92,000. Fewer than 10 per 1,000 infants die yearly in New Zealand compared to over 50 in Pakistan. Statistics, though they don't tell the whole story about a country, offer helpful tools for tracking demographic and economic trends while comparing countries and regions.

1. Discuss which statistics are used to measure a nation's demographics and economy and why. You might talk about infant mortality, literacy, and life expectancy rates along with Real GDP per capita. Explain the types of deductions that can be made from these statistics; for example, high infant mortality rates indicate that a country's pregnant women receive poor health care. Also mention that statistics can be misleading. For instance, some oil-rich nations have high GDPs per capita, but most of their population is poor due to grossly unequal wealth distribution. For the most part, however, these types of statistics provide a valuable way of comparing countries.
2. Choose a pair of statistics to focus on (for example, literacy and life expectancy). Have the students use the sortable data tables to look up these statistics for some of the sub-regions (i.e. Central Africa, South America, etc.) of the world.
3. Then, have students create averages from the statistics found in these regional data tables. From these averages, assign students to draw three histograms. The first should be a comparison of, for example, regional literacy rates; the second, regional life expectancy; and the third, a combination of both statistical averages.
4. Have the students compare and contrast the first two histograms they made. Do they share a similar pattern? Discuss the third histogram. Does there seem to be any correlation between the two statistics they analyzed? If so, what might be the cause of such a relationship? Might it be mostly coincidental, and if so, what other factors might affect literacy, life expectancy, or the statistics you chose?

Questions for further discussion

1. How can different graphical representations of statistics influence people's perception of data? Which type of representation would most emphasize the differences between the regional averages found? Which one would minimize that difference? (You can discuss histograms, scatterplots, graphs, pie charts, etc.)
2. Discuss regional trends noted in the activity. What types of factors might cause them? Talk about whether they are geographic, historic, political, etc.

Extension activity

For a more in-depth comparison, have the students create a scatterplot of all the country statistics, identify and eliminate countries that are extreme outliers, and recalculate the regional averages. They would turn in these averages with an explanation of how much the outliers affected the overall statistical picture.

Languages of the G8

Presentation

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will learn phrases and gestures they would use when first meeting someone from another culture.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6-8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Places and Regions

- Standard 6: The geographically informed person knows and understands how culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can explain and give examples of how language, literature, the arts, architecture, other artifacts, traditions, beliefs, values, and behaviors contribute to the development of culture.

People, Places, and Environments

- Standard E [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *people, places, and environments*, so that the learner can describe ways that historical events

have been influenced by, and have influenced, physical and human geographic factors in local, regional, national, and global settings.

Global Connections

- Standard A [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *global connections and interdependence*, so that the learner can describe instances in which language, art, music, belief systems, and other cultural elements can facilitate global understanding or cause misunderstanding.
- Standard B [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *global connections and interdependence*, so that the learner can analyze examples of conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among groups, societies, and nations.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time requirement

Preparation: 15 minutes

In-class: 45-60 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

Art materials—construction paper, scissors, glue, pens, etc. (for extension activity)

Instructions:

1. Explain to the class that the G8 is a group of some of the most powerful countries in the world: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The G8 holds an annual summit in which its members discuss global issues and problems. Have students prepare to meet and greet the members of the G8 as though they were hosts at the annual summit. Divide the students into groups of three or four. Assign each group five countries whose CultureGrams reports they will study, paying special attention to the Language and Greetings sections. The groups will then train the other summit hosts (the rest of the class) on how to interact with members from the countries they studied.
2. Each group should learn to say hello in the countries' languages and any gestures that go with a greeting. They may also learn things that people from that country might consider impolite.
3. Have each group take a turn teaching the class how to greet a person from the countries they studied. They should also explain things that hosts should be aware of when interacting with athletes from these countries. Include greetings, "dos and don'ts," and gestures.

Extension Activity:

G8 summits attract many protestors. Have students research some of the criticisms protestors have raised in the past, such as those relating to loans to developing countries, AIDS, global warming, and the like and present their findings to the class.

Make a Meal

Research and Presentation

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will learn about different cuisines across regional groups and will participate in groups to make slideshows.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6-8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6-8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7* Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard B [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so the learner can explain how information and experiences may be interpreted by people from diverse cultural perspectives and frames of reference.
- Standard E [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so the learner can articulate the implications of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time requirement

Preparation: 45 minutes

In-class: 1 hour, broken up into three class periods; 1 hour as homework

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Slideshows](#) and [Recipes](#)

Digital cameras

Instructions

1. Have all the students read the Diet section of the Venezuela CultureGrams report, and discuss the different meals Venezuelans eat. Show the class the two CultureGrams [Slideshows](#) under Venezuela that show how to make meals: “Making *Arepas*” and “Making *Empanadas*.”
2. Divide the class into six groups, one for each CultureGrams region grouping: North America, South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Oceania. Assign the students one country to research from their region grouping. (See suggestions below or choose your own.) Assign the students to read through the Eating and Diet sections of their country and discuss within their groups the food available in that country.
3. Assign the students one of the CultureGrams [Recipes](#) from their country. Have students meet outside of class to make the recipe. Instruct students to take pictures (with a digital camera) of the progress of the recipe in steps, similar to those in the Venezuelan slideshows.
4. Have students compile their pictures and create a slideshow to show to the class. As part of the presentation, have students explain what the difficult parts of making their recipe were. Was it hard to work with unfamiliar ingredients? Did the meal taste good? Why or why not?
5. In conclusion, discuss the findings with students. How is food an important part of culture? Does the region people live in influence what they will eat? What makes something tasty to one group of people and not to another?

Suggestions for CultureGrams countries:

- North America - Canada (Maple Sugar Pie) or Dominican Republic (*Mangu*)
- South America - Ecuador (Ecuadorian Rice) or Chile (*Charquicán*)
- Europe - Spain (Pa amb tomàquet) or Italy (*Bruschetta*)
- Africa - Niger (Chicken *Djerma*) or Congo-Kinshasa (*Fufu*)
- Asia - Russia (Beet Salad) or Japan (*Miso* soup or *Goma* salad)
- Oceania - Australia (Anzac *Biscuits*) or Samoa (*Pani Popo*)

Question for further discussion

What are the students' favorite foods? What sorts of things influence what the students pick to eat? Would they categorize their favorite foods as being American foods? Why or why not? Have students suggest a few meals that they consider representative of their state or region. Vote on which one the class would like to

make together and create a slideshow out of those steps. This activity can be done either as a class or in small groups.

Extension activity

Have students make another slideshow of steps to make their favorite meals. Try to get students to pick different things so that you have some variety. If students pick foods that have influence from other cultures (Mexican, Cajun, etc.), talk about how these cultures have influenced their food choices. You could also discuss other trends, such as fast food restaurants or large-portioned meals.

Malian Fashions

Research and Writing

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will identify the most common styles of clothing for men and women in Mali.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5* Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7* Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard E [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can articulate the implications of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.

Individual Development and Identity

- Standard C [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *individual development and identity*, so that the learner can describe the ways family, gender, ethnicity, nationality, and institutional affiliations contribute to personal identity.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

National Standards for Geography

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes, less if students read selections at home

Materials

CultureGrams World Edition—[Mali](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Mali Personal Appearance Slideshow](#)

Instructions

1. Ask students to read the CultureGrams Mali report, paying particular attention to the clothing described in the Personal Appearance section. Have them also identify information presented in other sections that may impact how people in Mali dress. For example, warm temperatures may contribute to clothes being loose-fitting, and the predominance of Islam may influence their modesty. After they are finished reading, lead a brief discussion on their findings.
2. Refer the students to the Mali Personal Appearance Slideshow in the CultureGrams Slideshow Gallery. The students should view each photo, taking notes what type of clothing the individuals pictured are wearing. Are the men wearing *boubous*? Are the women wearing head wraps that match their dresses? What type of clothing do children wear? Are the people wearing Western clothing young or old, male or female?
3. Have students summarize their findings in a short essay.

Extension activity

As an additional activity, you may ask students to design their own Malian fashions. Using paper and colored pencils, have the students design a pattern for a *boubou* or dress similar to those they've seen in the Mali Personal Appearance Slideshow.

My House

Writing and Creative Project

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will compare their homes to those in foreign countries.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5* Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.5* Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can explain and give examples of how language, literature, the arts, architecture, other artifacts, traditions, beliefs, values, and behaviors contribute to the development and transmission of culture.

- Standard E [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can articulate the implications of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

National Standards for Geography

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 15 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Interviews](#)

Instructions

1. Ask each student to write a short essay answering the following questions: Describe your home. How many bedrooms does it have? Where do you play or relax? Where do you do your homework?
2. Using the Interviews feature, ask each student to access one interview for a person under age 18.
3. Ask the students to identify similarities between their own homes and those of the interviewees. What did the interviewees say about their homes that was the same as described in the students' essays about their own homes? Were there significant differences?
4. Have each student find the report on the interviewee's home country in the CultureGrams World Edition. Then have them read the Housing section. Was the description in the World Edition report an accurate reflection of the interviewee's home? Were there any differences?
5. Ask the students to create a depiction of their home as well as a depiction of what they think a home might look like in the country they researched. You may want to request these in a certain style—as architectural-style design layouts, for example.
6. Have the students read other sections of the CultureGrams World Edition report for the interviewee's country, looking for clues as to why homes might be built in this design, out of these materials, etc. Aside from the Housing section, students may also find answers in the Family, Economy, and Land and Climate sections. Have students write short essays describing the factors that influence the type of housing in a country.

One Religion, Many Practices

Research and Writing

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will compare the practice of a single religion across multiple countries.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5* Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8* Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8* Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can explain and give examples of how

language, literature, the arts, architecture, other artifacts, traditions, beliefs, values, and behaviors contribute to the development and transmission of culture.

- Standard E [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can articulate the implications of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

National Standards for Geography

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 10 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Interviews](#)

Instructions

1. Have students read three interviews with people who practice the same religion. Some options are Catholicism (Javier: Bolivia, Trina: Costa Rica, and Petrosse: Mozambique), Islam (Qosimov: Uzbekistan, Djiba: Senegal, and Joud: Jordan), and Buddhism (Sai: Cambodia, Dawa: Nepal, and Chhun: Cambodia).
2. What differences do students notice in the way the interviewees practice their religion? Differences may be found in how often a person attends worship services, how important they consider religion in their life, ways they worship, and holidays they celebrate.
3. Now have students read the Religion section of each interviewee's country in the World Edition report. What do these sections say about the religion? How does the information in the report compare to the information in the interviewees' answers? How does the practice of the religion vary between countries?
4. Have students write a short essay on their observations about the ways a single religion varies in different areas and between individual observers of that religion. They may also speculate on why this could be.

Oral Literature

Discussion and Creative Project

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will understand the role of oral literature in other cultures and their own.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6-8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5* Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6-8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.5* Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [Middle Grades]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can explain and give examples of how language, literature, the arts, architecture, other artifacts, traditions, beliefs, values, and behaviors contribute to the development and transmission of culture.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, less if students read selections at home

Materials

CultureGrams World Edition

- [Senegal](#)
- [The Gambia](#)
- [Azerbaijan](#)
- [Marshall Islands](#)
- [Mongolia](#)
- [Somalia](#)
- [Yemen](#)

Instructions

1. Explain to students that literature is still transmitted orally in many cultures. For example, in West African societies, the *griot* has the respected function of maintaining and reciting histories and genealogies. But the oral tradition is not limited to that region alone.
2. Using the CultureGrams World Edition, ask students to read The Arts sections of the Senegal and The Gambia reports to learn about the role of the *griot*. Then have them compare this oral tradition to that of other countries by assigning them The Arts sections of Azerbaijan, the Marshall Islands, Mongolia, Somalia, and Yemen. Lead a class discussion about the similarities and differences between the cultures. How is the oral tradition similar? Are there notable differences? Is there an oral tradition in our own culture?
3. Have the students individually read a folktale to themselves, silently. Then, read the folktale aloud to the students. Afterwards, discuss how listening to a story provides a different experience than reading it. Have the students identify what those differences are.
4. For homework, have the students find pieces of folklore from their own families or culture. Or, have them find folklore from other sources (e.g., other families, books at the library on other countries, etc.). Ask them to bring to class examples of the folklore they learned about and talk about them or recite portions, if possible.

Extension activity

Ask the students to create their own folktale. Or have them take an existing folktale and provide an alternative ending. Students could share folktales in class.

Reporter Role-play

Research and Presentation

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will research the cultural characteristics of one country in order to play the role of a person from that country in a mock interview.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8* Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8* Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can explain and give examples of how language, literature, the arts, architecture, other artifacts, traditions, beliefs, values, and behaviors contribute to the development and transmission of culture.

- Standard E [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can articulate the implications of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

National Standards for Geography

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 15 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Interviews](#)

Instructions

1. Assign each student a country to research in the World Edition for which there is at least one corresponding interview. (Access the main Interviews page for an index of all available interviews.)
2. Have the student read the entire World Edition report and interview(s) for their assigned country. They should take notes so they can later act in a role-play as if they were a person from that country.
3. Group the students into pairs. Each student in a pair should have researched a different country.
4. In a role-play, have one student act as a reporter on assignment for a cultural magazine and the other student act as a person from their assigned country. The reporter should ask questions such as those asked in the Interviews feature:
 - Describe your home.
 - Describe a typical day.
 - What is your favorite game or sport?
 - What is your favorite holiday?
 - What is your favorite food?

The students in each pair should then swap roles and do a second role-play.

5. Have each student prepare a brief presentation highlighting the cultural characteristics of their assigned country. The final portion of the presentation should highlight at least five differences between the assigned country and the country the student learned about in the role of reporter.

Extension Activity

Have the students identify what type of information is available in an interview that isn't available in a World Edition report? Discuss their discoveries as a class.

The Dating Game

Research and Discussion

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students learn how cultural norms and personal beliefs influence relationships.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Other curriculum standard(s)

McREL Behavioral Studies Standards

- Standard 1: Understands that group and cultural influences contribute to human development, identity, and behavior.
 - Level III [Grade 6-8] Benchmark 1: Understands that each culture has distinctive patterns of behavior that are usually practiced by most of the people who grow up in it.

Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning

Time requirement

Preparation: 20 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

Instructions

1. Divide the students into groups of two. Assign one to be the group writer and one the group speaker.
2. Divide the blackboard into the following categories: religious norms, societal norms, personal choice, and family culture. Discuss how each area can impact relationship choices.
3. Assign each group in the class five different CultureGrams, each country from a different continent. Have each group scan the Dating and Marriage and Family sections of their assigned CultureGrams.
4. Have the students in each group create an informal chart organizing the information in each country report according to the categories listed on the board. Give the students 15-20 minutes to complete this in-class assignment.
5. Have each of the group speakers come up and explain a bit about their assigned countries. Have the students list their countries on the board under the category that most influences the people's dating and relationship choices.
6. Conduct an in-class discussion about aspects of U.S. American culture regarding dating, marriage, and family life. What similarities are there to the countries listed on the board? What differences?
7. As a class, have the students rank the categories according to what they feel might be most influential in their future dating, marriage, and family life decisions.

Extension activity

Have students read the Dating and Marriage section of the India CultureGram. They then write down their initial reaction to the idea of arranged marriages. Next, have them read through [this post](#) in *Psychology Today* on arranged marriage in India. After reading, they should record their thoughts and feelings on arranged marriages again. In class, they should compare their two reactions, discussing how their views changed or stayed the same. What cultural values were their initial reactions based on?

Travel Expo

Creative Project and Presentation

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will read about countries and evaluate the cultural influence that those countries have on others in their region.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5* Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.5* Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7* Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth’s cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

National Standards for Social Studies

Global Connections

- Standard E [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *global connections and interdependence*, so that the learner can describe and explain the relationships and tensions between national sovereignty and global interests, in such matters as territory, natural resources, trade, use of technology, and welfare of people.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time requirement

Preparation: 40 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, 2 different days

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)—East or Southeast Asian country

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Photo Gallery](#)

Supplies needed to make brochures (e.g., computers or papers, pens, scissors, etc.)

Instructions

1. Divide students into groups of three to four, and assign each group to read a CultureGrams report for a different East or Southeast Asian country.
2. While reading the CultureGrams reports, students should focus on these categories: History, Language, Religion, Diet, The Arts, Holidays, and Economy.
3. As students read these sections, instruct them to identify how each country’s culture, ideas, events, or people may have influenced other countries. This will help the student understand each country’s influence on the global culture and facilitate global understanding.
4. After reading the CultureGrams report and conducting additional research, assign students to prepare presentations as if they were representatives from their country’s travel bureau or embassy. Presentations should focus on two areas: a) How have the country’s culture and people influenced other countries?, and b) Why would others wish to visit the assigned country?
5. As part of the presentation, assign each student to also make a travel brochure. The brochure could include descriptions or images from the Photo Gallery of the country’s attractions and important historical figures or events.
6. Following the presentations, hold a vote to see which country the students select as a) the most culturally influential, and b) the most desirable to visit.

Questions for further discussion

1. Lead a discussion about the students' choices. What makes a culture influential? Why do people prefer visiting some countries over others?
2. Thomas Friedman, in his book *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, says that there are two ways to make people feel homeless. One is to destroy their homes and the other is to make their homes look like everyone else's. At what point does cultural influence become damaging and in what ways? Has the influence of the United States reached that point?

Extension activity

Refer students to the [BBC site on globalization](#). Have each student pick one of the main four categories to explore further: Inside the Global Giants, Fast Food Factory, Global Music Machine, or The Noisy Planet. Ask students to read through all of the articles in that section and then choose one to focus on. Assign each student to write a short essay summarizing the article. Then, have them write a couple of paragraphs on the pros and cons of this aspect of globalization, including who the winners and losers are. Have each student share their findings with the class.

Note: This activity can be adapted for any region.

Travel Guide

Research and Writing

Grade level

6-8

Objective

Students will understand differences in behavior patterns between target cultures and their own culture.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 6–8):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5* Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can explain and give examples of how language, literature, the arts, architecture, other artifacts, traditions, beliefs, values, and behaviors contribute to the development and transmission of culture.

Global Connections

- Standard B [Middle Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *global connections and interdependence*, so that the learner can analyze examples of conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among groups, societies, and nations.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

National Standards for Geography

Places and Regions

- Standard 4: The geographically informed person knows and understands the physical and human characteristics of places.
- Standard 6: The geographically informed person knows and understands how culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, less if students read selections at home

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

Instructions

1. Give each student a copy of a CultureGrams country report. Instruct students to identify behavioral patterns in the country as they read the reports. Although many sections of the reports may provide insight into behavior, students should pay particular attention to the Greetings, Gestures, and Visiting sections.
2. Have students prepare to make a list by dividing their paper in half with a pencil mark. Ask students to list 10 behavioral patterns they discovered by reading the CultureGrams reports in the left-hand column. For example, students could list how people greet and address one another, how they spend their free time, what gestures are common, etc.
3. Discuss with the students what kind of behavioral patterns exist in their own culture. In the right-hand column, for each of the 10 patterns listed, have the students briefly write a short response, detailing if the same behavioral pattern is practiced in their culture.
4. Have each student write a short paper as if he or she were a travel guide writer helping a student traveler from the assigned country prepare to visit the United States. What would the traveler need to know in order to fit in? Which of the traveler's native behavioral patterns might lead to misunderstandings in the United States? Would a visitor from the assigned country find it difficult to adapt to life in the United States?

Extension activity

Publish all of the papers in a class travel guide.

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will understand the impact of AIDS in Africa and the actions being taken to combat the pandemic.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.7* Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7* Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Health Education

- Standard 1: Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention. Performance indicators center around identifying what good health is, recognizing health problems, and ways in which lifestyle, the environment, and public policies can promote health.

Developed by the Joint Committee for National School Health Education Standards

Time requirement

Preparation: 1 hour and 30 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days; less if students read selections at home

Materials

CultureGrams Online World Edition:

- [Africa map](#) (located under Regional Content)
- [Extremes Tables: Health](#)
- [Comparison Table](#)

Instructions

1. Give an overview of HIV/AIDS. Describe the impact of the disease globally and its pervasiveness in Africa in particular. To illustrate the severity of the African AIDS pandemic, distribute or have students access the “Most adults with HIV/AIDS” table in the [Health section of the Extremes tables](#).
2. Distribute a gray-scale [map of Africa](#) (located under Regional Content) to each student. Using the HIV/AIDS table, students should identify and shade with color the countries with the world’s highest adult HIV/AIDS rates.
3. Explain the concept of life expectancy to the students. (You may want to use the definition in the [Concepts and Terminology](#) section.) Then ask the students to access the CultureGrams [Comparison Table](#). For the nations, have the students select all of the countries. For the categories, have the students select “Life Expectancy (Female)” and “Life Expectancy (Male).” Then have them create the table and sort it by either “Life Expectancy” heading so that the countries with the lowest life expectancy appear at the top.
4. Then ask the students to identify the 10 countries with the highest HIV/AIDS rates in the CultureGrams [Health Extremes table](#). How do these countries compare to other countries in terms of life expectancy? Have students access the CultureGrams [Comparison Table](#). Instruct them to select these 10 countries with the highest HIV/AIDS rates and also the United States. Then, in the categories section, select the same headings as before: “Life Expectancy (Female)” and “Life Expectancy (Male).”
5. Conclude the activity with a discussion on students’ findings. Discuss some of the social impacts of having nearly 40 percent of a country’s adult population infected with HIV/AIDS. (Young population, large number of orphans, grandparents or older children forced into role of family head, decreased economic activity, etc.)

Extension activity

1. Have the students research some of the measures organizations such as USAID have taken to fight AIDS in Africa.
2. Ask the students to create a list of some the implemented programs. As a class, discuss some of the actions being taken to combat the African AIDS pandemic.

Citizenship Contrast

Research and Writing

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will evaluate what their own national citizenship means to them and compare their answers to those of people from different parts of the world.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6* Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9* Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can apply an understanding of culture as an integrated whole that explains the functions and interactions of language, literature, the arts, traditions, beliefs and values, and behavior patterns.

- Standard E [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can demonstrate the value of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.

People, Places, & Environments

- Standard H [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *people, places, and environments*, so that the learner can examine, interpret, and analyze physical and cultural patterns and their interactions, such as land use, settlement patterns, cultural transmission of customs and ideas, and ecosystem changes.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

National Standards for Geography

Places and Regions

- Standard 4: The geographically informed person knows and understands the physical and human characteristics of places.

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 15 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days

Materials

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Interviews](#)

Instructions

1. Ask each student to write a short essay answering the following question: “What does being a citizen of your country mean to you?” You may wish to focus students’ answers with more specific questions, such as:
 - What do you like about living in your country?
 - What do you dislike?
 - If you could change one thing about your country, what would it be?
 - What aspect of your country are you most proud of?
2. Using the Interviews feature, ask each student to access 10 different interviews for people older than age 17. In each interview, have the students find the response to the question “What does being a citizen of your country mean to you?”
3. As students read each answer, have them create a list of those aspects of citizenship each interviewee identified. How did the answers differ between each country? Were there some aspects more than one person identified?

4. Ask the students to compare their findings with their own essay. Based on the responses from the 10 interviewees, are there aspects of their own essays they would change? Have them add to their original essay or create a second response to the question “What does being a citizen of your country mean to you?” to incorporate new perspectives.

Extension activity

Create a heading that says “What being a citizen of my country means to me” on a wall of the classroom. Post some of the responses from the students’ essays. Alternatively, do the same on a class web page or blog.

Culture Charting

Research and Writing

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will understand similarities and differences in human characteristics from different world regions.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.7* Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7* Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9* Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can apply an understanding of culture as an integrated whole that explains the functions and interactions of language, literature, the arts, traditions, beliefs and values, and behavior patterns.
- Standard E [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can demonstrate the value of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.

People, Places, & Environments

- Standard H [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *people, places, and environments*, so that the learner can examine, interpret, and analyze physical and cultural patterns and their interactions, such as land use, settlement patterns, cultural transmission of customs and ideas, and ecosystem changes.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

National Standards for Geography

Places and Regions

- Standard 4: The geographically informed person knows and understands the physical and human characteristics of places.

Human Systems

- Standard 9: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface.
- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different class sessions; less if students read selections at home

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

Instructions

1. Ask each student to read one CultureGrams report from each continent (or other region you designate) to identify some of each country's key characteristics. These could include climate, landscape, population size, major languages, major religions, typical clothing, common foods, type of economy (e.g., agricultural or services), and major health issues.

2. Have each student briefly summarize these characteristics in a "culture chart" to compare their findings. The nations should be listed across the top of the chart, a column for each. The characteristic categories should be listed down the left-hand side, a row for each. Have students fill out each box in the grid. For example, in the Brazil column, the box in the "Major Languages" row would say "Portuguese."
3. Have the students write a short essay outlining the conclusions they are able to draw from their culture charts. How are the countries similar? How are they different? What characteristics did they find surprising? What elements of the nations' physical characteristics may have influenced their human characteristics?

Extension activity

Have students read CultureGrams reports from two or three countries within a continent or region (such as neighboring countries) and create culture charts based on their findings.

Defining a Region

Research and Discussion

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will know which characteristics are used to classify regions and what such classifications can tell them about the world.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6* Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9* Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Places and Regions

- Standard 4: The geographically informed person knows and understands the physical and human characteristics of places.
- Standard 5: The geographically informed person knows and understands that people create regions to interpret Earth's complexity.
- Standard 6: The geographically informed person knows and understands how culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)—Scandinavian countries (See below)

Instructions

1. Organize the students into groups of five. Assign each group member to read the CultureGrams report of a different Scandinavian country:
 - a. [Norway](#)
 - b. [Sweden](#)
 - c. [Finland](#)
 - d. [Denmark](#)
 - e. [Iceland](#)
2. Have group members discuss the similarities among the countries in their region and attempt to draw conclusions about why the countries have been grouped together. Students can discuss both human characteristics as well as physical characteristics. For example, do the people in these countries speak a common language, share a common history, follow the same religion, practice similar customs, share the same level of economic development, etc.? Are there physical boundaries that group these countries together or divide them?
3. Ask the students to summarize their findings in a bullet-pointed list.
4. Have one member of each group present the group's findings to the class.
5. Lead a discussion on how grouping countries into regions helps us understand the world's peoples.

Questions for further discussion

1. What kinds of legal regional divisions exist? Discuss international treaty organizations (NATO), political unions (EU), and free trade zones (NAFTA, CARICOM, ASEAN).
2. A common phrase describing strategic regional relationships goes, "My enemy's enemy is my friend." What does this phrase mean? Ask students if they can think of any historical or current examples that

would illustrate this principle. (e.g., the alliance of the United States and the U.S.S.R. during World War II) Discuss with the students whether the United States's current alliance with Pakistan in fighting terrorism fits this maxim. Why or why not?

Extension activity

The Scandinavian countries fit neatly into a region; however, not all countries do. As a homework assignment, have students read the CultureGrams report for Turkey along with a selection of other CultureGrams reports from the Middle East (Iran, Syria, Lebanon, etc.) and Europe (Italy, Belgium, Bulgaria, Spain, etc.). Instruct them to then compare Turkey to both regions and decide whether Turkey should be classified as part of Europe or the Middle East. Have students come to class prepared to defend their choice in a class debate. After the debate, discuss why Turkey's government might want to be classified as part of Europe since the country is attempting to gain full membership in the European Union, while other elements of the population want to characterize Turkey as Middle Eastern for cultural reasons.

Defining Culture

Problem Solving and Discussion

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will understand how to define culture and how to preserve diversity while maintaining unity.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

National curriculum standard(s)

Curriculum Standards for the Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [High School]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can apply an understanding of culture as an

integrated whole that explains the functions and interactions of language, literature, the arts, traditions, beliefs and values, and behavior patterns.

- Standard E [High School]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can demonstrate the value of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days; plus time outside the classroom for research

Materials

CultureGrams World Edition—[Spain](#)

Instructions

1. Have students divide a piece of paper into two columns, one labeled “Country-wide” and the other “Regional.” As they read through the Spain CultureGrams report, instruct students to take notes on which characteristics the country shares as a whole (i.e. low birthrate, religion, personal appearance, visiting, etc.) compared to those that differ by region (language, diet, the arts, holidays, etc.).
2. Then, have students individually review their notes and star the characteristics they think are the most influential building blocks of a culture. Which column has the most stars in it? Is there a consensus on whether Spain is, for the most part, culturally unified or divided?
3. Ask for several volunteers to share their decisions. The variation in their answers can provide a segue into a discussion on the difficulty of defining culture. Talk about the political reasons for defining culture broadly in order to unite people.
4. Ask students to pick one characteristic that differs by region to do outside research on. For example, a student could research how closely related Spain’s four official languages are and find out what percentage of Spaniards speaks each one. Another student could research how festivals or food vary from region to region (Basque country, Galicia, and Catalonia), etc. Have students present their completed research to the class.
5. After briefly explaining Spain’s federalist system (see the Government section for background), lead a discussion about the languages and holidays deemed official and the amount of political autonomy each region has. Ask students if they agree with these choices. Based on their research and understanding of Spain’s culture(s), would they propose anything different?

Questions for further discussion

1. The United States is one of the most diverse countries in the world. Ask students to share about their experiences and culture(s). Which languages are spoken and what kind of dishes are served in their homes? What kind of family traditions do they have? Which culture(s) do they consider themselves a part of? Do they identify with a specific ethnic group, region, country, or all of the above? What influences this identification?

2. Lead a discussion about American culture. Which aspects of U.S. culture do students remember learning in school? Which ones did they learn in their homes or from their friends? What is the media's role in creating a national culture? How much of U.S. culture is based on consumerism?

Effects of World War II

Research and Discussion

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will understand the worldwide impact of World War II.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6* Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9* Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for World History

Era 9: The 20th Century Since 1945: Promises and Paradoxes

- Standard 1: How post-World War II reconstruction occurred, new international power relations took shape, and colonial empires broke up.
 - 1B. The student understands why global power shifts took place and the Cold War broke out in the aftermath of World War II.
 - [Grades 7-12]: The student is able to analyze major differences in the political ideologies and values of the Western democracies and the Soviet bloc.
 - 1C. The student understands how African, Asian, and Caribbean peoples achieved independence from European colonial rule.
 - [Grades 9-12]: The student is able to analyze the impact of World War II and postwar global politics on the rise of mass nationalist movements in Africa and Southeast Asia.

Developed by the National Center for History in the Schools

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days; less if students read selections at home

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#) (See below)

Instructions

1. Explain to students that World War II dramatically altered the cultural and political landscape of the world, not just in Europe, Asia, and the United States, but in many other places as well. The war touched regions as diverse as Oceania, Africa, and the Caribbean. In addition to the human casualties resulting from the war, borders were redrawn, new governments came to power, alliances shifted, and economies were destroyed and rebuilt. Many of the effects of World War II can still be seen today.
2. Using the CultureGrams World Edition, have students read the histories of the nations affected by World War II. Some options are listed below:

• American Samoa	• Germany	• Marshall Islands
• Antigua and Barbuda	• Greece	• Micronesia
• Bahamas, The	• Guyana	• North Korea
• Bosnia and Herzegovina	• Hungary	• Poland
• China	• Indonesia	• Qatar
• Congo-Brazzaville	• Israel	• Russia
• Croatia	• Italy	• Solomon Islands
• Czechia	• Japan	• Switzerland
• Estonia	• Libya	• Tunisia
• Finland	• Luxembourg	• United Kingdom
• French Polynesia	• Malaysia	• United States
3. With information from these history sections, have students compare the major combatants (e.g., the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia, Germany, Japan) as well as smaller nations (e.g., Czechia, Poland, North Korea, the Solomon Islands, and Qatar) affected by the war. Students may compare

major combatants with major combatants (the United Kingdom to Russia) or compare major combatants to smaller nations (Japan to North Korea).

4. Lead a class discussion about the scope and effects of World War II. Discuss the wide-ranging impact of the conflict, the economic devastation resulting from the war, the Holocaust, the rise of communism, colonial policy after the war, etc. What roles did various countries play in the war effort depending on their geographic location? Which countries suffered the most as a result of the war? For which countries could the war's effects be seen as positive? Are there any regional patterns? What effects of World War II can still be seen today?

Explaining Performance Gaps

Problem Solving

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will seek to explain discrepancies in performance at the summer and winter Olympic Games with reference to geographic and non-geographic factors.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.7* Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7* Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9* Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Environment and Society

- Standard 15: The geographically informed person knows and understands how physical systems affect human systems.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 60-90 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)—particularly Land and Climate sections

Instructions

1. Have the students research on the Internet and find the final medals tables from the most recent Winter Olympic Games. Ask them what they notice about the geography of the medal winners. If they don't notice anything, you could point out that very few countries from the southern hemisphere win medals in the Winter Games. You could also point out that many northern European countries with relatively small populations appear in the top 20. Discuss why that might be the case.
2. Based on further research, have students create a table/spreadsheet that compares how countries performed in the most recent Winter Games compared to how they performed in the most recent Summer Games.
 - Column 1: all countries that won medals at the most recent Winter Games
 - Column 2: give each country a total score based on the number of medals earned (three per gold medal, two per silver, one per bronze) during the Winter Olympics
 - Column 3: give each country a total score based on the number of medals earned (three per gold medal, two per silver, one per bronze) during the Summer Olympics
3. Compare the performances between the Winter and Summer Games. Keep in mind that the Summer Olympics have many more events and participants than the Winter Games. Have students identify some of the geographical reasons for the comparative performances.
4. But geography isn't the only factor. Note some northern European countries that might, based on their latitude, have been expected to perform better at the Winter Games than the Summer Games. What non-geographic factors might explain their having done better at the Summer Games? Given that many winter sports require the purchase of expensive equipment (anything from skis to bobsleds), how might economic factors play a role?

Film Festival

Research and Presentation

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will classify and contextualize cultural video clips.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6* Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7* Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

- **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9* Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can apply an understanding of culture as an integrated whole that explains the functions and interactions of language, literature, the arts, traditions, beliefs and values, and behavior patterns.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time requirement

Preparation: 20 minutes

In-class: 30 minutes, five different days

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition–[Video Player](#)

Instructions

1. Divide students into groups of three or four and assign them the task of planning an international short film festival. After screening several of the videos in the [CultureGrams Video Player](#), each group should select four “short films” (video clips) for inclusion in their program. They should be able to justify the connections between the films—whether regional, thematic, or otherwise—and the order in which they have chosen to present them.
2. Students should then read the CultureGrams reports associated with their chosen films and, using that information as background, write paragraph-long introductions for each of their films that take into account the cultures they portray. Once finished, combine these pages into a comprehensive program and distribute it to the class.
3. Have each group do further research as needed on the specific topics of their chosen films so that they will be prepared for a Question and Answer session at the end of their program.
4. Allow some time in class each day for a week to have students present their films and field questions from the class.
5. At the conclusion of the film festival week, hold an awards ceremony where you—as the keynote speaker—discuss the ways in which film (or video) can influence the way we experience culture.

Germany's East and West

Research and Writing

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will understand the reasons for the division of Germany, how it affected German society, and what effects remain today.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9* Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for World History

Era 9: The 20th Century Since 1945: Promises and Paradoxes

- Standard 1: How post-World War II reconstruction occurred, new international power relations took shape, and colonial empires broke up.
 - 1B. The student understands why global power shifts took place and the Cold War broke out in the aftermath of World War II.
 - [Grades 7-12]: The student is able to analyze major differences in the political ideologies and values of the Western democracies and the Soviet bloc.
- Standard 2: The search for community, stability, and peace in an interdependent world.
 - 2C. The student understands how liberal democracy, market economies, and human rights movements have reshaped political and social life.
 - [Grades 7-12]: The student is able to explain why the Soviet and other communist governments collapsed and the Soviet Union splintered into numerous states in the 1980s and early 1990s.

Developed by the National Center for History in the Schools

Time requirement

Preparation: 1 hour and 30 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days; less if students read or watch selections at home

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition \(Germany\)](#)

Recommended articles from the BBC and The Telegraph

Instructions

1. Ask students to read the History section of the [Germany report](#). Using this background, discuss in greater detail how the post-World War II division of Germany led to the creation of an East German socialist state and the construction of the Berlin Wall. How would people have felt when the Wall fell and Germany was reunited?
2. Ask the students to read the remainder of the CultureGrams Germany report, making note of all instances where differences between Germans from the former East and the former West are discussed (e.g., in General Attitudes, tensions between people in the west and east exist; in Family, both parents are more likely to work in the east; in Economy, living standards in the east are lower, etc.). Use this reading to underscore the concept of the *Mauer im Kopf* (wall in the head)—the idea that even though the Berlin Wall no longer exists, differences remain between the west and east.
3. Introduce the phenomenon known as *Ostalgie*, or nostalgia for the *Ost* (East), by having the students read some of the following articles and videos from the BBC, the Telegraph, PBS, and Spiegel:
 - a. "[Nostalgia grows for old East Germany](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11715906)" <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11715906>

- b. "[Berlin Wall anniversary prompts nostalgia for East German products](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/germany/6532808/Berlin-Wall-anniversary-prompts-nostalgia-for-East-German-products.html)"
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/germany/6532808/Berlin-Wall-anniversary-prompts-nostalgia-for-East-German-products.html>
 - c. "[East bloc baubles woo Germans](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6287276.stm)" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6287276.stm>
 - d. "[Old Trabants still chugging along](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6381759.stm)" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6381759.stm>
 - e. "[Trabant exhaust fumes sold online](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4694545.stm)" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4694545.stm>
 - f. "[Germans flock to nostalgia film](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/2836215.stm)" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/2836215.stm>
4. Ask students to summarize the readings in a short essay. Why would people think fondly of the former East Germany? Why is that controversial? Lead a discussion using these questions.

Global Aspirations

Research and Writing

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will conduct a self-evaluation and compare their answers to those of people from different parts of the world.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6* Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can apply an understanding of culture as an integrated whole that explains the functions and interactions of language, literature, the arts, traditions, beliefs and values, and behavior patterns.

- Standard E [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can demonstrate the value of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.

People, Places, & Environments

- Standard H [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *people, places, and environments*, so that the learner can examine, interpret, and analyze physical and cultural patterns and their interactions, such as land use, settlement patterns, cultural transmission of customs and ideas, and ecosystem changes.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

National Standards for Geography

Places and Regions

- Standard 4: The geographically informed person knows and understands the physical and human characteristics of places.

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 15 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days

Materials

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Interviews](#)

Instructions

1. Ask each student to write a short essay answering the following questions:
 - What do you worry about most?
 - What is most important to you?
 - What are your aspirations for the future?
2. Using the Interviews feature, ask each student to access 10 different interviews for people older than age 17. In each interview, have the students find the responses to the questions listed above.
3. As students read these answers, have them create a list of those items each interviewee identified. How did the answers differ between each country? Were there some items more than one person identified?
4. Ask the students to compare their findings with their own essay. Based on the responses from the 10 interviewees, are there aspects of their own essays they would change? Have them add to their original essay or create a second response to the questions to incorporate new perspectives.

5. Have the students compare the answers to these questions between different people from the same country to see how worries and aspirations change within a single culture as people grow up. Discuss their findings as a class.

Extension activity

On a wall of the classroom, post some of the responses from the students' essays (without revealing the students' identities). Alternatively, do the same on a class web page or blog.

Government Comparison

Research and Writing

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will recognize the diversity of government types and distinguishing characteristics of each.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.7* Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.

- **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7* Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Geography

Human Systems

- Standard 13: The geographically informed person knows and understands how forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of Earth's surface.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days; less if students read selections at home

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#) (See below)

[Freedom House web site](#)

Instructions

1. Governments take many different forms. Some are democratic, provide for civil liberties, and place an emphasis on individual choice. Other governments are controlled by a small group or single leader. How a country is governed affects everything from economy to religion.
2. Using the CultureGrams World Edition, ask students to identify different types of governments found across the world. Discuss possible benefits and drawbacks of each type of system. What impact does government type have on other parts of the culture? For example:

Parliamentary democracies:

- [Australia](#)
- [Belgium](#)
- [Canada](#)
- [Germany](#)
- [India](#)
- [South Africa](#)

Presidential-legislative democracies:

- [Chile](#)
- [Ecuador](#)
- [Nigeria](#)
- [Peru](#)
- [United States](#)

One-party states:

- [Cuba](#)
- [China](#)
- [Laos](#)
- [North Korea](#)
- [Vietnam](#)

Constitutional monarchies:

- [Bahrain](#)
- [Kuwait](#)
- [Jordan](#)
- [Monaco](#)
- [Morocco](#)

Monarchies:

- [Brunei](#)
- [Oman](#)
- [Eswatini](#)
- [Saudi Arabia](#)

Military regime:

- [Myanmar](#)

Have students read a report for [Belgium](#), [Laos](#), or [Myanmar](#) to see how the government influences its people in categories such as Government, General Attitudes, Religion, Economy, Communications, and Education. Have them summarize their findings in a short essay.

Extension activity

Have students access the 2017 [Country Ratings](#) section of the Freedom House web site to see how the countries they studied compare to others in terms of political rights and civil liberties.

Health Influences

Research and Presentation

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will learn how culture influences communicable and non-communicable diseases and how to present that information to a specific audience.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4* Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4* Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.7* Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7* Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9* Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Health Education Standards

- a. Standard 2: Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.
 - o [Grade 9-12] 2.12.2: Analyze how the culture supports and challenges health beliefs, practices, and behaviors.

Developed by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Time requirement

Preparation: 1 hour and 30 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days; less if students read selections at home

Materials

CultureGrams World Edition (Sections: Land and Climate, Diet, Recreation, Education, and Health)

- [Australia](#)
- [Bahamas, The](#)
- [Bangladesh](#)
- [Botswana](#)
- [Cambodia](#)
- [Canada](#)
- [China](#)
- [Comoros](#)
- [Germany](#)
- [Guyana](#)
- [Haiti](#)
- [Italy](#)
- [Malta](#)
- [Myanmar](#)
- [Netherlands](#)
- [South Africa](#)
- [United Kingdom](#)
- [United States](#)

Instructions

Health and fitness can be affected by a variety of forces, including environment, diet, living conditions, literacy, and access to health care.

1. Teach the students the difference between communicable and non-communicable diseases and which of the above forces might contribute to each. As examples of communicable diseases, give background information on AIDS and malaria. As examples of non-communicable diseases, give background information on cancer and heart disease.
2. Divide the class into four groups, each of which will focus on one of the four diseases: AIDS, malaria, cancer, and heart disease. Have students then read, at home or in class, the following sections for their group of countries: Land and Climate, Diet, Recreation, Education, and Health.
 - a. AIDS: The Bahamas, Botswana, Guyana, Haiti, South Africa
 - b. Malaria: Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Comoros, Myanmar
 - c. Cancer: Australia, Italy, Germany, Netherlands, United States
 - d. Heart disease: The Bahamas, Canada, Malta, United Kingdom, United States
3. Instruct each group to make a presentation outlining the geographic and cultural factors that have contributed to the spread of their assigned disease, while also suggesting possible ways of preventing the disease. Students should pick a specific audience (general public, health care professionals, legislators, etc.) from the affected countries and design a presentation that educates that audience about the problem while persuasively offering possible solutions.

4. Allow time in class for the presentations. After each one, have the class analyze how well the presentation targeted the desired audience.

Questions for further discussion

1. Malaria is widespread in sub-Saharan Africa. What are the factors that make malaria difficult to prevent?
2. Reported cancer rates are much higher for developed countries than for underdeveloped ones. Why might that be? (Discuss the fact that many people in underdeveloped countries die of other causes before they are old enough to develop cancer).

Extension activity

As a class, decide on one way students might be able to help fight disease in another country. Ideas might include donating money as a class to a health-related charity, collecting scarce medical supplies and sending them to a hospital in the class's country of choice, etc.

Interview Comparison

Research and Writing

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will gain a greater understanding of life abroad by comparing their answers to a series of questions with the answers from someone in another part of the world.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6* Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9* Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can apply an understanding of culture as an integrated whole that explains the functions and interactions of language, literature, the arts, traditions, beliefs and values, and behavior patterns.

- Standard E [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can demonstrate the value of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.

People, Places, & Environments

- Standard H [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *people, places, and environments*, so that the learner can examine, interpret, and analyze physical and cultural patterns and their interactions, such as land use, settlement patterns, cultural transmission of customs and ideas, and ecosystem changes.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

National Standards for Geography

Places and Regions

- Standard 4: The geographically informed person knows and understands the physical and human characteristics of places.

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 15 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days

Materials

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Interviews](#)

Instructions

1. Ask each student to write down their answers to the following questions:
 - How old are you?
 - Where do you live (city/region and country)?
 - How many brothers and sisters do you have?
 - Describe your home. (How many bedrooms does it have? Where do you play or relax? Where do you do your homework?)
 - Describe a typical day of the week for you. What are your daily responsibilities in your family? What do you do in your free time?
 - What is your favorite game or sport?
 - What is your favorite holiday? Describe what you do to celebrate the holiday.
 - What is your favorite food?
 - What subjects do you study in school? What is your favorite subject? What do you like or dislike about school?
 - What do you worry most about? Why?

- What is more important to you? Why?
 - What do you hope to be or do when you grow up?
2. Using the Interviews feature, ask each student to access one interview for a person under age 18 (and, if possible, for someone within three years of their own age).
 3. As students read their interview, have them take note of similarities and differences between the interviewee's answers and their own answers. Have them summarize their findings in a short essay or a list of similarities and differences. What similarities surprised them? What differences surprised them?
 4. As a class, discuss the students' discoveries. Did they expect to have much in common with someone from another part of the world? What aspects of life in another country did they find strange or unfamiliar? What other questions would students want to ask people from other countries that would help them learn more about them? What type of information helps define a culture?

Extension activity

On a wall in the classroom, create a class interview gallery by posting the students' photos alongside their responses to one of the interview questions, which they each select. Alternatively, post the students' photos alongside one of their responses on a class web page. Avoid posting the entire interview, as students may slant their responses if they know it will be publicly displayed.

Life Cycle

Problem Solving and Writing

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will examine the rituals and practices that mark life transitions in different countries.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2* Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9* Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can apply an understanding of culture as an integrated whole that explains the functions and interactions of language, literature, the arts, traditions, beliefs and values, and behavior patterns.
- Standard E [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can demonstrate the value of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.

People, Places, & Environments

- Standard H [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *people, places, and environments*, so that the learner can examine, interpret, and analyze physical and cultural patterns and their interactions, such as land use, settlement patterns, cultural transmission of customs and ideas, and ecosystem changes.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

National Standards for Geography

Places and Regions

- Standard 4: The geographically informed person knows and understands the physical and human characteristics of places.

Human Systems

- Standard 9: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface.
- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

National Standards for Foreign Language Education

Cultures: Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures

- Standard 2.1: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied.

Developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

Instructions

1. The Life Cycle sections in each CultureGrams World Edition report describe the rituals and practices that mark life transitions, such as birth, the transition to adulthood, and death. To begin this activity, have the students read the Life Cycle section for the [United States of America](#) report. In a short essay, have the students analyze this section. Which of these practices (e.g., baby shower, funeral) have they attended or taken part in? Are there other rites of passage to adulthood they would include?
2. Assign each student 10 different countries to research. These may be the same countries for all students or different countries for each.
3. Students should read the Life Cycle sections for each of their 10 assigned countries. As they read, they should create a list of the life cycle practices common to each country.
4. Using these notes, the students should write a short essay describing the commonalities they discovered. Which life cycle practices were most common? Were there some practices common to every country? Of the most common practices, were there elements that made them unique in particular countries? Were there any practices found only in one country?

Extension activity

Have the students write a narrative from the perspective of a fictional person living in one of their assigned countries. The narrative should be written in the first person and describe the individual's feelings as they prepare for the birth of a child into the family (e.g., a sister or brother) or the death of a family member (e.g., a grandmother or grandfather). What will be the significance of the life cycle practice (e.g., naming ceremony, funeral, etc.) in that person's life? What role could the person take in the event? For example, if one of the student's assigned countries was Cambodia, the student could write a narrative from the perspective of a Cambodian teenager taking part in the funeral of his or her grandmother.

Mexico: NAFTA and Immigration

Research and Discussion

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will better understand important issues facing Mexico and the U.S. Hispanic community, including NAFTA and immigration.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.7* Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.7* Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7* Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Human Systems

- Standard 11: The geographically informed person knows and understands the patterns and networks of economic interdependence on Earth's surface.
- Standard 12: The geographically informed person knows and understands the process, patterns, and functions of human settlement.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 50 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams World Edition—[Mexico](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Photo Gallery \(Mexico\)](#)

[Pew Hispanic Center study](#)

Questions for fishbowl (See below)

Instructions

1. Begin the lesson by discussing with students some of the ways in which the United States takes advantage of and benefits from the cheap labor that Mexico provides.
2. In order to give students an idea of what life is like for many Mexicans, display or have them access the following pictures in the [Photo Gallery \(Mexico\)](#):
 - “Cardboard Houses”
 - “Farmer”
 - “Flower Harvesting”
 - “Jumping Rope”
 - “Living Space”
 - “Praying”
 - “Rained Out”
 - “Repair Shop”
 - “Rural Child”
 - “Tortillas”
 - “Washing Clothes”
3. Discuss why Mexican people, like those from the pictures, might be attracted to work in U.S. factories on the Mexican border, even though they get paid much less than their U.S. American counterparts would for doing the same work.
4. Introduce NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) by reading the [Economy](#) section of the Mexico CultureGrams report as a class. Provide more details as you think necessary, outlining both the pros (increased jobs with higher-than-average wages for Mexicans, increased profits for U.S. companies, etc.) and the cons (U.S. jobs exported to Mexico, unsafe or unregulated working conditions in *maquiladoras*, underpaid Mexican workers, etc.).
5. U.S. companies also benefit from cheap labor of Mexican workers inside the United States. In order to offer a Hispanic perspective on immigration, discuss the findings of a [Pew Hispanic Center study](#) on Latino attitudes toward immigration reform.
6. Move the desks into a fishbowl formation (one small circle in the center of the room surrounded by a much larger one outside it). Ask for three or four volunteers to sit in the center. The rules for the fishbowl are:
 - Only the students in the center may speak.
 - Those on the outside circle must tap the shoulder of a student in the inside circle to trade places.
 - Everyone must participate.

To motivate students to join in, place a candy bowl in the center of the inner circle or award points for participation. Students in the center begin their discussion by drawing from a bowl of questions you have already prepared on the economic, cultural, and ethical ramifications of the use of cheap Mexican labor in relation to NAFTA and immigration (illegal or otherwise). When the discussion dies down, students simply pick another question out of the bowl. Continue until most, if not all, of the class has had a chance in the inner circle.

Model European Union

Research and Presentation

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will learn about the European Union and participate in a model EU to debate issues facing the organization.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.7* Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8* Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.8* Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9* Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Power, Authority, & Governance

- Standard A [High School]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of how people create and change structures of *power, authority, and governance*, so that the learner can examine persistent issues involving the rights, roles, and status of the individual (or individual nation) in relation to the general welfare.
- Standard C [High School]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of how people create and change structures of *power, authority, and governance*, so that the learner can

- analyze and explain ideas and mechanisms to meet needs and wants of citizens, regulate territory, manage conflict, establish order and security, and balance competing conceptions of a just society.
- Standard F [High School]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of how people create and change structures of *power, authority, and governance*, so that the learner can analyze and evaluate conditions, actions, and motivations that contribute to conflict and cooperation within and among nations.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

National Standards for Geography

Human Systems

- Standard 11: The geographically informed person knows and understands the patterns and networks of economic interdependence on Earth's surface.
- Standard 13: The geographically informed person knows and understands how forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of Earth's surface.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 1 hour and 30 minutes

In-class: 2 hours and 20 minutes, three different days; less if students read selections at home

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

[European Union web site](#)

News articles on issues facing the EU

Instructions

1. Briefly introduce students to the history and purpose of the European Union. You may want to access information from the [European Union web site](#). With roots of the organization dating back to the 1950s, the multinational umbrella government sets policies on everything from the economy to health. The organization grew from 6 countries in the 1950s to 28 countries in 2013.
2. On a map, show the students the member countries (as well as the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Turkey).

• Austria	• Estonia	• Italy	• Portugal
• Belgium	• Finland	• Latvia	• Romania
• Bulgaria	• France	• Lithuania	• Slovakia
• Croatia	• Germany	• Luxembourg	• Slovenia
• Cyprus	• Greece	• Malta	• Spain
• Czechia	• Hungary	• Netherlands	• Sweden
• Denmark	• Ireland	• Poland	• United Kingdom
3. Organize students into a model EU, with most of the class representing the member countries and a few representing the candidate countries. Each student should be assigned to represent a specific

country, either an EU country or a candidate country. Students should read the CultureGrams report of the country they represent and research current issues facing that country so that they can support their country's interests in a debate. Students should also read the CultureGrams report of at least one of the candidate countries.

4. Have the students each bring in several news articles about an issue facing the EU. It might deal with new member states, economic policy, or how to govern the EU.
5. After this initial preparation, pick three main topics to be debated, with at least one topic being the admission of new member countries. Have students representing the member countries and candidate countries debate the pros and cons of admitting the new nations. Presentations should focus on the positive aspects of the countries and on what they can contribute to the European Union as a whole. Then have presentations on the other issues.
6. After all the presentations have been given, have the students vote on the topics. They should be able explain the rationale for their decisions to the class.
7. Lead a follow-up discussion about what the students learned from the Model EU.

Extension activity

This activity may also be adapted for other regional organizations (NATO, ASEAN, etc.).

National Identity

Research and Writing

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will understand the components of national identity as well as be aware of current issues affecting France.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Foreign Language Education

Cultures: Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures

- Standard 2.1: Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied.

Developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

Time requirement

Preparation: 45 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes, plus outside research time

Materials

CultureGrams World Edition—[France](#)

Recommended articles from the BBC

Instructions

France is a country known for its cultural cohesion and strong sense of patriotism. However, some in the country have felt that their national identity has been threatened.

1. Introduce the lesson by explaining what national identity is and what it's made up of. You may talk about things like flags, national anthems, historical traditions, holidays, values, etc. You may also refer to this *New York Times* opinion piece, called "[Who Gets to Be French?](#)"
2. Then, have students read the [France CultureGrams report](#), looking the answer to these questions:
 - a. What factors might cause cultural tension? (e.g., introduction of Islam, proposal to lengthen workweek, fast food restaurants, etc.)
 - b. What factors are sources of national pride? (e.g., language, food, recreation, arts, farming, etc.)

3. Using the CultureGrams report as background, introduce articles that describe France's cultural struggles:

	Article subject	Web address	Cause	Conclusion about Culture
a	Enforcement of full-face veil ban	http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-15023308	Increasing numbers of Islamic immigrants	The role of religion in this historically secular state is being debated.
b	French protest the raising retirement age	http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programme_s/from_our_own_correspondent/8988132.stm	Changing economy	The French way of life, which emphasizes balancing leisure with work, is threatened by changing economic realities.
c	A movement to end the use of the word <i>mademoiselle</i>	http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-16503341	Evolving role of women	The French are negotiating traditional gender roles with increased equality for women.

4. Have students pick an issue that interests them and do outside research on it.
5. Assign the students to write a short position paper. Explain that they must fulfill these guidelines in the paper: a) present the issue, b) discuss how it is affecting perceptions of France's national identity, and c) offer their opinion on what should be done—if anything—about it.

Questions for further discussion

1. How important is it for a country to have a strong national identity? Is it okay for it to have several national identities?
2. Are there any issues similar to those in France that U.S. Americans see as a threat to U.S. national identity? What are they? What are the students' feelings on them?

Extension activity

At home, have students write an essay in which they describe their sense of U.S. national identity. In class, compare the essays and talk about characteristics that the students share as well as important ways in which they are different. Discuss how these differing perceptions of national identity result in some of the country's most heated debates, including things like gun control, abortion, the death penalty, etc.

Olympic Boycotts

Presentation

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will learn about the issues surrounding Olympic boycotts and participate in a mock UN debate.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.1* Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1* Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7* Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Power, Authority, & Governance

- Standard A [High School]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of how people create and change structures of *power, authority, and governance*, so that the learner can examine persistent issues involving the rights, roles, and status of the individual (or individual nation) in relation to the general welfare.
- Standard C [High School]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of how people create and change structures of *power, authority, and governance*, so that the learner can analyze and explain ideas and mechanisms to meet needs and wants of citizens, regulate territory, manage conflict, establish order and security, and balance competing conceptions of a just society.

- Standard F [High School]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of how people create and change structures of *power, authority, and governance*, so that the learner can analyze and evaluate conditions, actions, and motivations that contribute to conflict and cooperation within and among nations.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

National Standards for Geography

Human Systems

- Standard 11: The geographically informed person knows and understands the patterns and networks of economic interdependence on Earth's surface.
- Standard 13: The geographically informed person knows and understands how forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of Earth's surface.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 1 hour and 30 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 20 minutes, two different days; less if students read selections at home

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

[United Nations web site](#)

News articles on controversies surrounding the Olympic Games

Instructions

1. Introduce students to the history and functions of the United Nations. You may want to access information from the [United Nations web site](#). As a class, discuss the role of the United Nations in conflict resolution. What forums are available to address disputes between nations?
2. Ask students to research the motivations behind countries' decisions to boycott past Olympic Games (e.g., the 1980 and 1984 Games). Have the students each bring in at least one news article about a controversy that surrounded a more recent Olympic Games (e.g., alleged human-rights violations by Russia prior to the 2014 Winter Games in Sochi). Discuss why a country might choose to boycott the Games or use the Olympics to highlight political issues.
3. Assign each student a different country to represent in a mock UN Security Council. Students should read the CultureGrams report of the country they represent so that they can support their country's interests in a debate.
4. Pick a relevant topic (human rights, pollution, terrorism, etc.) to be debated at the Security Council meeting in advance of an upcoming Olympic Games. Have students representing the member countries debate the different sides of the issue. After all the presentations have been given, have the students vote on the topics. They should be able to explain the rationale for their decisions to the class.

Regional Food Tour

Research and Writing

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will compare foods from different continents and write short responses.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.8* Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9* Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can apply an understanding of culture as an integrated whole that explains the functions and interactions of language, literature, the arts, traditions, beliefs and values, and behavior patterns.
- Standard E [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can demonstrate the value of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

National Standards for Geography

Human Systems

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Recipe Collection](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Interviews](#)

Instructions

1. Ask each student to select four countries, each from a different continent, for which there are corresponding interviews. To save time, you may wish to select these yourself. (For an index of all available interviews, access the [main Interviews page](#).)
2. Using the CultureGrams [World Edition](#), have the students read the Diet section for each of their selected countries. They may also access the [Recipe Collection](#) to learn more about typical dishes.
3. Ask each student to read one interview for each of the four countries he or she has researched. What has each interviewee identified as a favorite food or foods?
4. Have the students write a one-paragraph response essay identifying which of the four countries' cuisine seems most appetizing to them. Of all the dishes described—in the World Edition Diet sections, Recipes, or Interviews—which would they most like to try?
5. In a second short response essay, have the students compare the cuisine from the different continents. How did they differ? What staple foods, dishes, or popular ingredients were unique to one continent?

Extension activity

Have the students select a recipe from the [Recipe Collection](#) to make at home and bring to class. You may wish to select a limited number of options beforehand that have simple instructions and readily available ingredients.

Ruler of a New Country

Discussion and Writing

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will create a fictional country using sound geographical, historical, and cultural principles and write a CultureGrams report for that country.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1*** Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grades 9-10): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.1*** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grades 11-12): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1*** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2*** Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2*** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2*** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can apply an understanding of culture as an integrated whole that explains the functions and interactions of language, literature, the arts, traditions, beliefs and values, and behavior patterns.

People, Places, and Environments

- Standard E [High School]: Social studies programs should include experience that provide for the study of *people, places, and environments*, so that the learner can describe, differentiate, and explain the

relationships among various regional and global patterns of geographic phenomena such as landforms, soils, climate, vegetation, natural resources, and population.

Global Connections

- Standard B [High School]: Social studies programs should include experience that provide for the study of *global connections and interdependence*, so that the learner can explain conditions and motivations that contribute to conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among groups, societies, and nations.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

Instructions

1. Give each student a copy of a CultureGrams report and have him or her read it before class.
2. Conduct an in-class discussion to help students draw connections between categories. Discuss how history or religion can impact economy, how land and climate might impact transportation, how general attitudes could affect visiting, etc.
3. Assign each student to create his or her own fictitious country of which he or she may choose to be the ruler. They must then write a CultureGrams report for that country. Inform students of the following rules:
 - a. Students need to follow the natural cause-and-effect principles in geography and history. Meaning, if a student creates a desert-like country, he or she cannot have an economy based on the production of tropical fruits.
 - b. The student's CultureGrams report for his or her fictitious country should include all of the same categories and subcategories as an actual CultureGrams report.
4. Have the students get together in small groups (about 4-5 per group) and have them analyze how their countries would get along. Which countries would trade with one another? What political problems might arise? Which country would hold most of the resources? What alliances would develop and why?

Extension activity

Have the social studies and language arts teachers form a panel to judge the students' CultureGrams reports based on the quality of the writing and the plausibility of the connections between the various categories. Post the winner on the school web site.

South Africa Today

Research and Presentation

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will understand how South Africa's apartheid system was abolished and learn about the challenges the nation still faces.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1*** Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grades 9-10): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.1*** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grades 11-12): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1*** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2*** Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2*** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2*** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for World History

Era 9: The 20th Century Since 1945: Promises and Paradoxes

- Standard 2: The search for community, stability, and peace in an interdependent world.
 - 2C. The student understands how liberal democracy, market economies, and human rights movements have reshaped political and social life.
 - [Grades 5-12]: Therefore, the student is able to explain the dismantling of the apartheid system in South Africa and the winning of political rights by the black majority.

Developed by the National Center for History in the Schools

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 2 hours and 30 minutes, three different class sessions; less if students read selections at home

Materials

CultureGrams World Edition—[South Africa](#)

Recommended articles from the BBC and New York Times

Instructions

1. Ask students to read the History section of the South Africa report. As a class, discuss the apartheid system and how it was abolished.
2. Ask the students to finish reading the South Africa report. Have them list some of improvements in South African society since the end of apartheid. Also have them list the challenges South Africa still faces. Have students read some of the following articles from the *New York Times*:
 - [“Raw Tensions Over Race Fester in South Africa”](#)
 - [“Reframing Forgiveness for Terrorism”](#)
 - [“South Africans Suffer as Graft Saps Provinces”](#)
 - [“A Revered, and Divided, Liberator of South Africa”](#)
 - [“South Africa Slips From the Moral High Ground”](#)

Organize the students into small groups and have them discuss the following question: If they were leaders of the South African government, how would they address South Africa’s challenges? Instruct students in each group to write a proposal with their ideas. Have the students present their proposals to the class.

Tracing the Effects of Slavery

Discussion and Presentation

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will understand the geographical scope of the slave trade. They will be able to trace some of the lingering socioeconomic and cultural effects of slavery across the world.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1*** Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grades 9-10): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.1*** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grades 11-12): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1*** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1*** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2*** Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2*** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for World History

Era 7: An Age of Revolutions, 1750-1914

- Standard 6: The student understands major global trends from 1750-1914.
 - [Grade 7-12]: Therefore, the student is able to describe major patterns of long-distance migration of Europeans, Africans, and Asians and analyze causes and consequences of these movements.

Developed by the National Center for History in the Schools

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes, less if students read selections at home

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

Instructions

1. Explain to the students how, besides being a general atrocity and a personal tragedy for the millions of Africans who were sold as slaves, the African slave trade has had a major effect on the history of the world. Slavery has influenced the historical development and current cultural and socioeconomic conditions of many nations: African nations from which individuals were captured and nations in the Americas to which Africans were brought as slaves.
2. Divide the class in half to form two groups. Have each group read from these selections in class or at home:

Group One

- [United States](#) (History)
- [Antigua and Barbuda](#) (History, Arts, Holidays)
- [Barbados](#) (History, Language, Arts)
- [Haiti](#) (History, Population)
- [St. Lucia](#) (History, Population, Holidays)
- [St. Kitts and Nevis](#) (History, Flag description)
- [St. Vincent and the Grenadines](#) (History, Holidays)

Group Two

- [Angola](#) (History)
- [Botswana](#) (Religion)
- [Malawi](#) (History)
- [Mozambique](#) (History)
- [Senegal](#) (History)
- [Sierra Leone](#) (History, Population, Religion)

3. Ask the students in Group Two to discuss the circumstances surrounding the African side of the slave trade, in addition to any long-lasting effects it has had on populations or religions.
4. Ask the students in Group One to discuss the history and cultural impact of slavery in the countries on their list. What did it take to end slavery? What types of economies were created as a result of the slave trade? How did it influence the arts and languages of the Americas?
5. Have each group prepare a short presentation to share their findings with the other group.
6. As a class, analyze the Country and Development Data for all of the countries. Which statistics might slavery have influenced and how?

Extension activity

For background information, visit the International Labor Organization's [web site](#) to find out more about modern-day slavery.

Explain to the class that slavery still exists and briefly discuss the various forms it takes (i.e. child and bonded laborers, sex slaves, domestic servants, agricultural workers, etc.). For homework, instruct students to look up a current event dealing with a form of modern-day slavery, then do a write-up that summarizes the event and analyzes the laws and circumstances that result in continued slavery; they might also compare the effects of modern-day slavery with those of the African slave trade.

Turkey: Europe or Asia?

Presentation

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will understand the factors that influence how countries are grouped into regions.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9* Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

Places and Regions

- Standard 6: The geographically informed person knows and understands how culture and experience influence people's perception of places and regions.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes

Materials

CultureGrams World Edition

- [Turkey](#)
- Middle Eastern reports (See below)
- European reports (See below)

Instructions

1. Divide the class into two debate teams: one that will argue that Turkey should be classified as part of Europe and another that will argue that it should be grouped with Asia. Select three students to be judges. (Make sure these students are aware that they must read both teams' materials.)
2. For homework, assign all students to read the CultureGrams report for Turkey. Then, assign each team to read the reports from the two different regions. Team One will read selections from the Middle

Eastern reports ([Iran](#), [Syria](#), [Lebanon](#), etc.). Team Two will read selections from the European reports ([Greece](#), [North Macedonia](#), [Bulgaria](#), [Albania](#), etc.).

3. Instruct the students that they may want to skim the CultureGrams reports assigned to the opposite group in order to anticipate their opponent's arguments. Remind the three students who are judges that they must read the assignments for both teams.
4. In class, give each team time to prepare and organize its arguments.
5. Divide the board in half and have each team write the group's main arguments on it.
6. Have a spokesperson from each team explain their group's arguments, without responding to what the other team has written on the board.
7. Give the teams time to consult and come up with rebuttals, while reinforcing their initial arguments. A different spokesperson from each team delivers the rebuttals to the class, with help from team members who raise their hands to offer additional comments.
8. The class judges decide which team wins and justify their decision to the class.

Questions for further discussion

1. Why would Turkey's government want to be classified as part of Europe? (Discuss how they are attempting to gain membership in the European Union).
2. Why would other elements of the population be more interested in Turkey being grouped with the Middle East? (Discuss cultural reasons).
3. Can the students think of any other countries that might fit in more than one region?

Extension activity

Have the students write a persuasive essay to the publisher of a fictitious U.S. geography textbook. Instruct the students that these essays should elaborate on the points brought up in the debate and make a case for Turkey being placed either in the Middle East or Europe. Their essays should also demonstrate a keen awareness of audience while also addressing and refuting counter-arguments.

Unification Challenge

Research and Writing

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will examine similarities and differences between two countries and imagine a hypothetical scenario in which they merge into a single country.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.1* Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1* Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1* Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 9-10):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9* Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

Culture

- Standard C [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can apply an understanding of culture as an integrated whole that explains the functions and interactions of language, literature, the arts, traditions, beliefs and values, and behavior patterns.
- Standard E [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can demonstrate the value of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.

People, Places, & Environments

- Standard H [High School]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *people, places, and environments*, so that the learner can examine, interpret, and analyze physical and cultural patterns and their interactions, such as land use, settlement patterns, cultural transmission of customs and ideas, and ecosystem changes.

Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies

National Standards for Geography

Places and Regions

- Standard 4: The geographically informed person knows and understands the physical and human characteristics of places.

Human Systems

- Standard 9: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface.
- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education

Time requirement

Preparation: 30 minutes

In-class: 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different class sessions; less if students read selections at home

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

Instructions

1. Assign each student two countries to research. The countries may be assigned within a particular region the class is studying, or they may be assigned at random from any part of the globe. For example, the names of different countries could be written on slips of paper placed in a bowl, and each student could determine their assigned countries by drawing two slips of paper.
2. Using the CultureGrams [Distance Calculator](#), students should determine how far apart their two countries' capitals are. Then have them use the [World Time](#) feature to determine how many hours separate the two capitals.
3. Have the students imagine that the distances in space and time they determined in step 2 no longer exist. They should imagine a hypothetical scenario in which the two countries neighbor each other and plan to merge into a single, unified country.
4. With this scenario in mind, the students should read the CultureGrams reports for their assigned countries. They should take notes on what characteristics the countries share and how the countries are different.
5. Using their notes, the students should write an essay analyzing the prospects for the new country. What challenges would the new country face? How would the country benefit?

Extension activity

Have the students read the CultureGrams World Edition report for [Germany](#), paying particular attention to the History, General Attitudes, and Economy sections. As a class, discuss the challenges the former East Germany and West Germany faced when they became a single country in 1990. The two countries shared a language and common history, but reunification still presented major problems. How would these problems be compounded if two countries with different languages and cultures attempted to unify? Did the students address the magnitude of the challenges in their essays?

Video Comparison

Creative Project and Presentation

Grade level

9-12

Objective

Students will learn about producing video while making connections between a foreign culture and their own.

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
 - **Literacy in History/Social Studies (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7* Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
 - **Reading: Informational Text (Grades 11-12):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.7* Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

National curriculum standard(s)

National Core Arts Standards

Media Arts

- Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
 - HS Proficient (MA: Cr1.1.1): Use identified generative methods to formulate multiple ideas, develop artistic goals, and problem solve in media arts creation processes.
- Anchor Standard 2:
 - HS Proficient (MA: Cr2.1.1): Apply aesthetic criteria in developing, proposing, and refining artistic ideas, plans, prototypes, and production processes for media arts productions, considering original inspirations, goals, and presentation context.

Developed by the National Art Education Association

Time requirement

Preparation: 20 minutes

In-class: 50 minutes, two different days

Materials

CultureGrams [World Edition](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Video Gallery](#)

Video production equipment—cameras, editing software

Instructions

1. Divide students into groups of three or four. Have each group choose a video from the [CultureGrams Video Gallery](#) that they are interested in (interviews excluded). Longer video clips will work better for this project.
2. Discuss the anatomy of a video clip by defining the word *shot* (a continuous piece of video footage) and *cut* (a transition between two shots). Have the students analyze their video clip by creating a shot list in which they keep track of the content and angle or movement of every shot in the clip. For example, one entry might read “a close up of a woman cutting potatoes,” while another might say “a far shot moving from left to right of a building exterior.” Breaking the clip down in this way will help students understand how short video stories are created and how they might create their own.
3. Students should then read the CultureGrams report associated with their video for contextual information and brainstorm an equivalent subject matter to film from their own culture. For example, if the students choose to analyze the Netherlands’ “Flower Market” video clip, they might choose to film a local boutique or grocery store that sells flowers. Alternatively, since flowers are a major Dutch export, students might choose to film a major U.S. or regional export.
4. Each group of students will then film and edit a clip of their chosen subject, sticking as close to the shot list of the CultureGrams clip as possible.
5. Students will then screen the CultureGrams clip followed by their own clip to the class, so that the class can see cultural comparisons presented in a visually similar way.

Questions for further discussion

1. How does the tone of a video clip change depending on the order in which the shots are edited together? How does the length of each shot, or the time between cuts, affect the tone?
2. What are some of the ethical concerns a videographer must consider when filming human subjects—especially those from another culture?

Extension activity

To gain a better understanding of how editing can change video content, have the students re-edit their shots in a different order and at a different speed. Have the class watch the new versions of the clips and respond with a discussion of how their reactions changed.