

Sadie Levy

Culture LAP 5: flags and interview questions

When?

1. Content: Describe **what** it is you will teach. What is the content?
  - a. In this lesson we will begin exploring what our cultures have in common and where culture comes from by examining our flags. By noticing the similar colors present in each flag, we will come to the conclusion that both the history of a country and the lands it's on are important to the culture.
  
2. Learning Goal(s): Describe what specifically students will **know** and **be able to do** after the experience of this class.
  - a. SWBAT understand that cultures are not created out of thin air but actually involve history and their land.
  - b. SWBAT make connections from our previous speaker's insight on flags and all of the flags we are examining.
  - c. Students will understand that culture gets passed down through *generations*. (language goal)
  - d. SWBAT create interview questions that dig deeper than just the basics, but also glean their peer's opinions.
  
3. Rationale: Explain how the content and learning goal(s) relate to your Curriculum Unit Plan learning goals.
  - a. This lesson is critical in the scope of my broader CUP goals. I realized after the last few lessons so focused on research that I needed to do some reiterating of where culture comes from. One of my main goals is for students to understand to appreciate and understand the differences and similarities in people's cultures. The lesson is structured so students gain a deeper understanding of what connects culture based on the flags. After hearing Mr. Polanco's talk on the Puerto Rican flag it made me realize how many flags share the same colors. I did some research and found that every flag of a country of a student in my class that has red symbolized the blood of the heroes/warriors fighting for the countries independence. Other colors like blue and green always symbolized something relating to nature - water and/or the beautiful natural riches of the wildlife. There were also other colors which were similar - whites and yellows, although not all flags had those. I had been trying to find a way for my students to realize the similarities among their cultures, and when this idea dawned on me, it made perfect sense! My hope is that students will recall what Mr. Polanco's taught us about the Puerto Rican flag and apply it to this noticing exercise. Doing this exercise right before creating the interview questions I think will allow for some interesting questions.

4. Assessment: Describe **how** you and your students will know they have reached your learning goals.
  - a. Mostly my students will be assessed informally based on their participation in the discussion of what they notice between the flags. I will try and have a long wait time when I pose questions so all students will have a chance to mull over the question and participate. The interview questions will also be part of my assessment tool, although those questions I imagine will reflect a more general lens of cultural understanding, versus asking about culture in relation to history or the relationship with the land.
  - b. I will be looking for interview questions that are specific in their questions about culture as well as asking for the opinion of the other person on their culture. Before they start writing them, I will tell them these two expectations. I would hope students can come up with at least 6 in the time we have available.
  
5. Personalization and equity: Describe how you will provide for individual student strengths and needs. How will you and your lesson consider the needs of each student and scaffold learning? How specifically will ELL students and students with learning disabilities gain access and be supported?
  - a. In this lesson, most of the learning will take place through conversation which I think will be a pleasant change of pace from the reading-heavy research we were doing at the beginning of the unit. Students will be seated and I will project images of the flags. I will start by very generally asking students what do they notice about the flags, being sure to give ample wait time for all students to really soak in the images and see what they notice. I think my wait time after the general questions will be critical to involving students who may need an extra moment to collect their thoughts or gain confidence to raise their hand (Angelyn, Christian, Angelo for example).
  - b. Since the questions that I originally had them answer about their culture are pretty explicit, I imagine most students will have a starting point of what questions to ask in for interview. Writing these questions will be an independent time where I imagine most students can work on their own, so I will be more available to helping students who might need help starting. A way for me to probe them and bring the abstract to right in front of them would be to imagine they wanted to get to know more my culture - what would you ask me? These are the same questions they could ask about anyone's culture (probably), and from that place they can start writing them down.
  
6. Activity description and agenda
  - a. Describe the activities that will help your students understand the content of your class lesson by creating an agenda with time frames for your class. Be prepared to explain why you think each activity will help students on the path toward understanding.

time	activity	rationale
5 min	<p>Start students seated on the rug to remember where culture comes from.</p> <p>T/T with your neighbor: How can we learn culture? / Who teaches us culture?</p> <p>Review <b>generation</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- redraw the family tree I drew before</li> </ul>	<p>I realized in reviewing the trajectory of this unit, that I had not been focusing on one of my goals of teaching about culture - that culture does not come out of thin air.</p> <p>Even though we'd mentioned it before, I really wanted to make sure that hit home - we are taught culture from one generation to the next.</p>
5 min	<p>What does it mean to symbolize something?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- colors are symbols for other things</li> <li>- oftentimes in culture there are symbols that have a much deeper meaning</li> </ul>	<p>In order for students to understand a flag's significance, I think having a general understanding of what a symbol is will be important.</p>
15 minutes	<p>Project Google Doc with all flags on Elmo -</p> <p>When I was listening to Astrid's dad last week, I was inspired to learn more about the flags of all of your countries, and realized they had something all in common! See if you can see what I was noticing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Colors are similar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- why? (Hopefully they'll draw connections between what William presented last week about the battle for freedom, as well as the connection with the land and ocean in the blues and greens)</li> </ul> </li> <li>- All colors symbolize different things</li> </ul> <p>Conclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Culture is related to history and the land!</li> </ul>	<p>I like the idea of opening up my brain to my students to share with them how I'm learning about culture too. I think this way of looking at flags really allows for students to make the connections to land and history that I want them to have before Afriany joins us on Friday.</p> <p>I think this is a bridge from the more abstract to the tangible that they can make with the provided scaffolding.</p>

15 minutes	<p>With this in mind, I want to make sure students have enough time to work on their interview questions. I will recommend students to ask questions regarding what they think about their culture in relation to the land. I also will encourage students to ask questions not just about the culture, but what people's opinions on the culture is.</p> <p>Start writing your interview questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not just about the culture but also their opinions on the culture</li> <li>- At least 6 questions</li> </ul>	<p>One of my overarching goals of this unit which also fits into my philosophy of teaching and life is that people have choice. I want my students to know that they can have a negative or positive opinion on their culture - they can like parts of it and dislike other parts.</p>
as needed	<p>If students finish this, they can go onto NewsELA from Google Classroom where I've linked to a few particular articles related to culture.</p>	<p>Especially in a reading-heavy area like this, students will work at different paces, so I figured it would be important to have extra activities for students to do if they finish early.</p>

- b. What particular challenges, in terms of student learning or implementing planned activity, do you anticipate and how will you address them?

I'm a little worried that the connection between looking at these flags and the flag Mr. Polanco showed us the other day will be too abstract. My hope is that at least some people will recognize the color similarities between the flags we see, and then if need be I can remind students that each of the colors had meaning, and can anyone remember what it meant. I think once students remember just what one of the colors stood for, they may wonder if that same color stands for the same thing on each flag

If no one is making the color connection, I also did some research on the flags which I can share with the class and have them do table turn and talks to discuss what they think the meaning is.

7. List the Massachusetts Learning Standards this lesson addresses.

- a. 3.11 Identify what individuals and families bring with them (e.g. memories, cultural traits, goods, ideas, and languages or ways of speaking ) when they move to a different place and identify the significant impacts of migration; identify elements that define the culture of a society (e.g. language, literature arts,

religion, traditions, customs); explain how the community is enriched by contributions from all people who form it today.

- i. *Clarification statement: Students should be able to give examples of traditions or customs from other countries practiced in the US today, with a focus on the cultures represented in the class and what those cultures have contributed to US society: describe traditional foods, customs, games, and music of the place they, their family, or their ancestors came from.*
- b. SL. 1 Participate in collaborative discussion with peers and adults in small and larger groups on history/social science topics.
  - i. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g. gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time, staying on topic)
  - ii. Build on one another's talk in conversations by responding to comments through multiple exchanges.
  - iii. Ask questions to clear up confusion about the topics and texts under discussion.
- c. SL.2 Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
- d. SL.4 Describe people, places and things related to history/social studies; speak clearly at an understandable pace and use appropriate vocabulary.

#### 8. Reflection

- a. In light of all areas of planning, but especially in terms of your stated purpose and learning goals, in what ways was the activity(ies) successful? How do you know? In what ways was it not successful? How might the activity be planned differently another time?
- b. What did you learn from the experience of this lesson that will inform your next LAP?

This lesson went better than expected! There were a few really great moments which were absolutely necessary for this lesson to work. Firstly, right off the bat, Astrid noticed that all of the flags had the color red which she thought maybe that was to honor the warriors who fought for the country's freedom - it was like I planted her! I was not expecting anyone to notice that so quickly, but it really jump started our conversation. After that, a few other students noticed the similar white, blue, and green that came up in many flags. I was pleasantly surprised

that my conclusion to say that culture is partially shaped by history and the connection with the land was not totally pulled out of thin air. I definitely think some students will need a review/reteaching of that lesson, but most of the class was right with me!

One interesting unexpected part of the lesson was that my voice was very tired, and I was having a hard time keeping the class all focused, so I started typing up my questions in the Google doc that was projected on the Elmo with the flag images. This strategy worked surprisingly well! Students were excited to read my questions on the Elmo, and impressed by my quick typing skills. Below is a screenshot of the conversation we had on the Elmo. It was also a great way to keep track of which students had contributed to the conversation.

**what do we notice**

- **Red might stand for the blood of the warriors**
- **Stars - what's that about?**
  - **maybe it's for the country**
- **Similar colors to the United State's flag:**
  - **red - blood of the warriors. Blood of the heroes who fought for the country's freedom**
  - **white - maybe it's for the clouds**
  - **blue - maybe it stands for the sky and the ocean**

**all this red**

|

**all this blue and green**

**... makes me think....**

**THATTTT**

**what 2 things might be really important to culture???**

- 
- **1 Tariyah: Something that might be important to people's culture is their land (maybe where they live is special to them).**
    - **Maybe the green is for the land (Naliya)**
    - **Maybe the blue is for the sky (Naliya and Mario)**
    - **the blue and ocean and water is so important - you can swim in it and you can drink it (Khloe)**
  - **2. Kyara: Maybe the warrior's blood.**
    - **People's freedom and history is important to culture!**

After the great conversation on the Elmo where, as one could see, several students made connections about the blue and green colors to land and sea, we wrote our interview questions. At this point, students only had about 10 minutes to write their questions, but some were able to get quite a few in that time. Others really struggled, but still had one or two down. As the students were writing their questions, I wrote on the board exactly what I expected so there were no surprises. I wanted students to ask about their partner's culture, but also ask opinions about what they think of their culture.

Because we didn't do our interviews until at least a week after this writing time, many of their questions had changed within that time and my reflections and evidence in LAP 8 are a better indicator of my student's question quality and how they were reflective of their cultural awareness.