



## **Cultural Snapshots: Reflections and Illuminations of Francophone Cultures**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 03.01.04  
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Everybody knows that French is spoken in France, even if some well-meaning but confused students mistake the adjective for the proper noun (as in, "*Have you ever been to French?*") Views of France, especially of Paris, are readily available. But Americans know less about other French-speaking cultures. This unit will give students a sense of familiarity with the unfamiliar, to push beyond France to those French-speaking countries that often get little more than a surface treatment during middle school French classes.

This unit will serve as an invitation for cultural exploration, as we will use authentic films from French-speaking countries as the foundation for our shared cultural knowledge. In particular, this unit introduces Burkina Faso, Quebec, Martinique, and Madagascar. Initiated by basic information about each country, and augmented by samples of popular music, works of art, selections of poetry, and traditional recipes showcasing dominant crops, these films will illustrate key characteristics of each culture. Our goal is to acknowledge the qualities of each culture as distinguished from each other, as well as from what we know of our own culture. While students are recognizing the differences between cultures, it is my hope that they will also attain an understanding of universal human needs and emotions.

(Recommended for French, grades 7-8.)

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