



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2025 Volume I: Objects, Material Culture, and Empire: Making Russia

Carol Boynton

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by The Mitten - A Ukrainian Folktale

This two-to-three-week unit, designed for Kindergarten students, introduces aspects of Ukrainian material culture through the story *The Mitten*. Students will hear and learn two versions of the folktale – one retold by Alvin Tresselt from 1964 and the second by Jan Brett in 1989. Through the rich illustrations, each story uses strong and clear examples of Ukrainian objects from home life, clothing, and everyday items. *The Mitten* will serve as a foundation for several discussions, including topics such as animals, size and volume, patterns and designs, story sequencing, and even role-playing. Students will design their own mittens, create animal cards to tell the story, make animal masks to act out the story, and decorate a vyshyvanka – an iconic traditional Ukrainian embroidered shirt.

(Developed for Literacy and Social Studies, grade K; recommended for Literacy and Social Studies, grades K-2)

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