



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1992 Volume IV: The National Experience: American Art and Culture

A Celebration of Cultural Richness in Our Community

Curriculum Unit 92.04.11
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This Curriculum Unit will be used with Special Education L.D. (Learning Disabled) and S.E.M. (Socially Emotionally Maladjusted) students in grades 9th-12th. These students are not always easy to motivate and in most cases they have little to no knowledge about the cultures in our society.

In this Unit, I will explore the diversity of three cultures. In order for students to appreciate the different heritages and all who contributed to them, we need to provide students with a multicultural education.

The story of America is a Multicultural one from the start. We interact with and were built, shaped and inspired by people of every immigrant stream, of many races, cultures and religions.

The following cultures will be explored from start to finish. 1) Italians, 2) Hispanics, 3) and the Irish.

This Unit will offer students the strength of diversity, the values that allow diversity to flourish, the history and immigration that have shaped our country and our world.

Students will learn about the history of different cultures, which includes individual contributors, immigration, traditions, and the geographical structure of the homeland.

In our schools, we can help determine how students relate to their identity and the identity of others.

Our children need a multicultural education, without knowledge of the many streams that nourish the general society, the mainstream cannot be properly studied or understood.

Throughout this Unit, students will learn a variety of skills: 1) critical thinking, 2) comprehension, 3) vocabulary building, 4) writing skills, and 5) map skills.

This Unit will help students make past to present links. Students need knowledge of the world at large and the world of individuals at hand, the history and culture of our nation and intergroup and interpersonal relationships.

INTRODUCTION :

CULTURE—What is Culture?

Culture refers to the entire way a society lives and is organized. This includes all the ideas, customs, values, norms, social institutions, attitudes, music, art, language, technology and traditions of a society.

No culture remains exactly the same. Every culture is dynamic or changing throughout the years.

All cultures have features that results from basic needs shared by all people.

Culture provides us with a set of common understandings, a kind of map for life's activities.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CULTURE

1. Culture is learned. Culture is not instinctive or innate; it is not part of the biological equipment of man.
2. Culture is transmitted from one generation to the next. It presents our social legacy as contrasted with our organic heredity.
3. Culture is socially shared. Culture patterns are shared by human beings living in organized groups and are kept relatively uniform by social pressures.
4. Culture represents the ideal forms of behavior. The group habits that comprise the culture are viewed as ideal patterns of behavior.
5. Culture is gratifying, culture satisfies human needs and in this sense is gratifying.
6. Culture is Adaptive. Culture of necessity has to adapt and adjust to forces outside of itself.
7. **Culture is** Integrative. The part of a given culture and to form a consistent and integrated whole.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Re-educate students to a truer understanding of our society.
2. Help to motivate as well as stimulate students in what they are learning.
3. Be able to relate to the identity of others.
4. To learn about famous contributors in each culture.
5. To understand traditions and languages.
6. Compare and contrast the cultural differences and similarities.
7. To understand the geographical make up of each home land.

The immigration experience has influence on our image as a nation. There have been many different cultures which have immigrated to the United States over the last 300 years. They all have come with the notion of starting a new way of life. With them, they bring the richness of their cultures. They also bring their traditions, customs, values and a way of life that most of us are not accustomed to.

This Unit will last for appropriately 6 weeks. Students will explore the different cultures and the effects cultural diversity can have on a society.

Many countries are comprised of many diverse cultures. By examining different cultures—their customs and traditions—people can gain a better understanding of others.

Most of these groups have their own language, customs, and traditions, and have shown fierce determination to maintain their own culture.

Students will be involved in a variety of different activities. These range from small group, large group, teacher discussion and individual hands on projects.

STRATEGIES:

WEEK 1

Teacher will introduce Unit, followed by teacher-centered lectures and discussion on historical background and immigration, emphasizing that particular element will be assigned as reading and discussion. The term Culture and Multiculture will be discuss. Students will discuss their culture and how they feel that the customs and traditions of their culture compare, or differ from other cultures in their community.

WEEK 2

Students will investigate the American immigration and the development of the Nation.

The immigration experience has influenced our image as a nation. Many different people have immigration to the United States over the last 300 years.

Students will read and discuss historical information on each Culture. Example: Italians—Who are these people? Where did they come from? What is their language? Where is the country located? What foods are they known for preparing?

WEEK 3

LIBRARY SETUP In class, students will setup a selection of Novels taken from the school library on different cultures in the community, students will then select a Novel to read and write an two to three page book report. This will be followed by students sharing their written reports with the class.

WEEK 4

CONSTRUCTING GRAPHS

In this activity, students will gain practice in creating their own graphs by constructing a line graph and a bar graph. Students will create line graphs to illustrate trends in immigration to the United States. Students will title the line graph "Immigration to the United States from 1820-1985." Students will be provided with information to construct the graph.

WEEK 5

ART PROJECT Together teacher and students will put together an *MULTICULTURAL AWARENESS WEEK* . Students will be involved in making a variety of hands-on activities. Including: using clay to sculpture, making drawings or paintings or collages. Students will then set-up displays. Some artwork displayed including different works of art by different artists, handouts on artists, which would include background information, recipes from different cultures, fashions, including clothing, hairstyles, headdress, beads, and pins.

This display will be set-up in the school library, so that it maybe shared with all students and staff in the school.

WEEK 6

Culminating activities for this unit includes a slide presentation. Students will view the works of famous artists in each culture. Students will be guided through exercises to help them interpret, analyze, and describe paintings.

Students will be tested on parts of this unit, which includes, vocabulary, comprehension, critical thinking skills, map skills and writing skills.

Most people do not realize how greatly culture influences their behavior until they come across other ways of doing' things.

Any cultural contact between two societies with different cultures causes change in both societies. Each borrow cultural traits from the other.

IRELAND

Ireland is a small, independent country in Northwestern Europe. Its official name is the republic of Ireland. Dublin is the capital and largest city. The country occupied about five-sixths of the island is occupied by Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom of great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Ireland is called E'ire (pronounced Air uh) ub Gaelic, the ancient language of Ireland. Gaelic and English are the country's official languages, Ireland has long been known by the poetic name Irin.

Many people consider the Irish to be exceptionally warm hearted and friendly. The Irish also have a reputation for hospitality, close family ties, and skill as writers and storytellers.

The Irish have a long history that includes many hardships and struggles. In the 1840's a potato famine killed hundreds of thousands of people in Ireland and forced hundreds of thousands more to leave their homeland. As a result, only about half as many people live in Ireland today as lived there in 1845.

Saint Patrick brought Christianity to Ireland. St. Patrick was born in Britain and was taken to Ireland as a slave in the early 400's.

After six years of slavery, he escaped and went to France, where he studied for the priesthood. He returned to Ireland as a Christian missionary in 432.

The Irish people accepted Christianity and came to regard Patrick as their patron (guardian) Saint. Today, the feast day March 17, a national holiday. Many Irish in the United States attend celebrations, such as the parades, and attend church services on this holiday.

Irish cooking is simple. Principal foods include beef, bread, chicken, mutton, pork, and potatoes. One of Ireland's most famous dishes is Irish stew. The favorite alcoholic drink in Ireland is beer. A type of beer called stout is especially popular.

Ireland has produced outstanding artists in many fields, but the country is especially famous for its writers.

The great waves of immigration did not begin until the 1840-1850 period. They came resettling along the East coast of the United States. They like other cultures experience the ridicule and discrimination in the U. S. They came with no education and they were unskilled, many doors were closed to them.

Gradually they were able to improve their conditions in life, and they began to expand their influence and power. They were very instrumental in the growth of the Catholic church in America, and together with the Catholic church they emphasized the importance of a Catholic education.

ITALY

Italy is the leading tourist country of Europe. Every year, millions of visitors from other countries come to Italy. Rome, the capital and largest city, has been an important center of civilization for more than 2,000 years.

Since World War II ended in 1945, Italy's population has increased by less than 1 percent a year. In 1981, Italy had about 58 million.

About 59 percent of the people live in cities with populations of more than 100,000. Four cities have more than a million persons. In order of size, they are Rome, Milan, Naples, and Turin.

Italian, like French and Spanish, is a Romance language one of several languages that came from Latin. Italian began to develop as a separate language about A.D. 1000. Italian language is the official languages of Switzerland.

Many words in other languages come from Italian. For example, English borrowed the words balcony, cantata, carnival, cash, costume, granite, laundry, malaria, opera, and infantry, came from French, but their roots were originally Italian.

Pasta (food made chiefly from flour and water) is the basic food throughout Italy. Pasta includes spaghetti, macaroni, ravioli, lasagne, and vermicelli.

Italy has a spaghetti historical museum in Pontedassio, near Imperia, with exhibits that show the history of the food. Pizza is another popular dish. Almost every region of the country has its own food specialty.

Italy has a rich tradition of painting and sculpture. Italian artists played important roles in early Christian art and in the styles of the middle ages. Italian painting developed new forms with the work of Giotto, an artist of the early Renaissance. These forms were marked by a wide range of subject matter, and by showing the human body with a three dimensional effect. Renaissance painters also make their work realistic and introduced changes in the use of color. These developments reached a high point in the art of the 1400's and 1500's.

Michelangelo's painting and sculpture make him the most famous artist of the Renaissance. Other painters, including Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and Titian, also produced world-famous works.

Important Renaissance sculptors also include Donatello, Lorenzo Ghiberti, and Andrea del Verrocchio.

Among the best known modern Italian artists are the painters Giorgio de Chirico and Amedeo Modigliani, and the sculptors Giacomo Manzù and Marino Marini.

The main resource of Italy was agriculture, which had sustained the many feudal states for many centuries.

In New Haven, we have a large population of people who emigrated from Amalfi, a small town on the Tyrrhenian coast. Amalfi is our "sister City," the feast of St. Andrew; Amalfi is the one more frequently mentioned, because so many Amalfitani or their descendants reside here.

In today's society, Italian Americans occupy places and jobs of importance in all fields.

PUERTO RICO , or Borinquen as the Taino Indians, the native people, called the island before Christopher Columbus landed in November 19, 1493, is part of the Antilles Island chain in the Caribbean, It is 111 miles long from east to west, and 36 miles wide, north to south. The soil is fertile and three quarters of the land is mountainous. The climate is warm and tropical, cool sea breezes moderate the summer heat.

Because of its location, Puerto Rico is a strategic stepping stone for U.S. imperialism into Latin America and affords the U.S. control of the sea lanes to Africa and the Middle East.

Despite a dramatic social and economic revolution that has placed Puerto Rico ahead of many nations in Latin America and the Caribbean region in education, health and overall quality of life, high unemployment is still a serious problem. This fact, combined with easy air transportation between Puerto Rico and the United States, has prompted many Puerto Ricans to migrate because Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens and therefore able to travel freely between the island and the United States, there is a constant human stream traveling in both directions. U.S. Census figures show that in recent years nearly two million persons of Puerto Rican birth or parentage have been living at any given time in the United States.

More than two million Puerto Ricans are living in the U.S. with about half in New York City: (1,125,000). There is a large concentration in the Midwest.

The majority of Puerto Ricans in the U.S. hold low-paying jobs as dish washers, sewing machine operators,

pushcart vendors, or agricultural workers. Nationally, 29% of Puerto Ricans are categorized as “operators, including transport, factory and truck drivers” while 19% are clerical; 18.6% professional and technical. The median income of Puerto Rican workers in the U.S. is \$9,855 while the median for all U.S. workers is reported to be \$19,661.

Four Centuries of Spanish presence in Puerto Rico have left an indelible imprint on the island with the Spanish language as a constant reminder, but Puerto Rico has been a true ethnic melting pot. The early blend of the Spaniards with Taino Indians and Africans, and the later addition of Corsicans, French, English, Danes and other Europeans, as well as people from the New World, produced a distinct Puerto Rican profile in which color lines are blurred and racial tension lessened.

The abundant literature of Puerto Rico—novels, short stories, drama, poetry, essays—is written overwhelmingly in Spanish and there are legends inspired by Indian themes of mystery and marvel—once again a vivid reminder of an ethnic strain.

Jose Campeche (1752-1808) produced some magnificent portraits and paintings of historical and religious themes. Francisco Oller (1833-1917) became acquainted with and was influenced by the great figures of French impressionism. Two of his paintings hang in Louvre museum in Paris and in 1984, a respective exhibition of his works toured the United States. During the last 40 years a vigorous art movement has taken place—especially in the graphic and plastic arts.

Although Puerto Rico appears as only a dot on most world maps, its varied topography, unique ethnic blend, complex history and rich culture make it a very special place in which to live and visit.

The Puerto Ricans who have left the island for the United States still maintain a strong identity with Puerto Rico.

Notwithstanding the U.S. presence, by the end of the Century, Puerto Rico was an island with a distinct Antillean profile and strong Spanish roots.

LESSON PLAN # 1

In this activity, students will gain practice in creating their own graphs by constructing a line graph and a bar graph .

Constructing Graphs

The chart in Part 1 shows the number of people who immigrated to the United States from 1820-1985. Use the information that follows to construct a line graph.

Part 1

<i>Period</i>	<i>Immigration</i>
1820	8,385
1821-1830	143,439
1831-1840	599,125

1841-1850 1,713,251
1851-1860 2,598,214
1861-1870 2,314,824
1871-1880 2,812,191
1881-1890 5,246,613
1891-1900 3,687,564
1901-1910 8,795,386
1911-1920 5,735,811
1921-1930 4,107,209
1931-1940 528,431
1941-1950 1,035,039
1951-1960 2,515,479
1961-1990 3,321,677
1971-1980 4,493,314
1981-1985 2,864,406

LESSON PLAN # 2

In this activity, students will explore their own and others' cultural backgrounds, to learn about other cultures and the effects cultural diversity can have on a society.

Recognizing Cultural Differences

Given below are five charts. Each of these charts will help students classify information about a particular culture area. Students will choose four culture areas that interest them. Then they will complete a chart for each culture area by classifying information about its culture traits. For help in completing the chart, students can look in the textbook.

EXAMPLE:

CULTURE AREA: ANGLO-AMERICA

History British and French influences

Form of Government Democracy

Economy free enterprise, industrialized

Language (s) English, French and Spanish

Religion Christianity

LESSON PLAN # 3

Students will be given a short passage on a famous Hispanic artist, his works and background information. Students will then read and answer comprehension questions 1-5.

Franciso Olier (1833-1917) became acquainted with and was influenced by the great figures of French impressionism. Two of his paintings hang in the Louvre Museum in Paris and in 1984 a retrospective exhibition of his works toured the United States. During the last 40 years, a vigorous art movement has taken place especially in the graphic and plastic arts. Numerous galleries are flourishing particularly in San Juan.

Much of the artistic and literary output has used Puerto Rico itself—the landscape the people, the traditions and the personality—as a theme. But Island artists and writer have reached out beyond Puerto Rico's shores and have won recognition abroad.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who were his ancestors?
2. Who influenced Franciso's art?
3. Where did his paintings hang?
4. How old was he?
5. What type of art did he paint?

EXTENDED ACTIVITIES:

Students will learn to evaluate and give opinions on famous works of art shown during slide presentation.

After viewing and discussing the artists and their work, students will be able to distinguish between the differences and similarities.

Materials include; pencil, slides, projector, screen, handouts.

After students have answer questions, together teacher will go over answers with students followed by discussion.

Questions include:

1. What is the painting showing?
2. Who is the artist?
3. What do you think the artist was trying to tell us in his paintings?

MAP SKILLS

Students will locate specific geographic features. Students will compute the distance between two or more given locations.

STUDENT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anderson, Lydia. *Immigration* . New York: Franklin Watts, 1981.

A history of immigration to this country from the 1600's to the 1980's.

Ashabranner, Brent. *The New Americans* . New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1983.

This book describes the changing patterns in the United States immigration, and discusses their importance now and in the years ahead.

Day, Carol Olsen and Day, Edmond *The New Immigrants* . New York: Franklin Watts, 1985.

A good account of the present condition of both legal and illegal immigration in the United States.

Eiseman, Alberta. *From Many Lands* . New York: Atheneum, 1970.

An easy to read history of America's immigrants from the early colonists to the present.

Rosemberg, Maxine B. *Making a New Home in America* . New York: Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Books, 1986.

There are five stories of five children who have immigrated to the United States from Japan, Cuba, India, Guyana and Vietnam.

The America Series . Minneapolis; Lerner Publications Company, 1966.

- a. The Irish in America.
- b. The Italians in America.

A very easy to read series recounting the history and experience of the various groups of immigrants.

The Dream of America Series . Mankato, MN: Creation Education, Inc., 1976.

This is a very informative and well illustrated series of the various aspects of immigration.

TEACHER BIBLIOGRAPHY

Gans, Herbert J. *The Urban Villagers* , New York: The Free Press 1962.

A study of groups and class in the life of Italian-Americans in the Boston's neighborhood called the West end.

Huggins, Nathan Irving. *Harlem Renaissance* . New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.

A historical treatment of the literary and artistic development of Harlem during the 1920's.

Lamm, Gov. Richard D. and Imhoff, Gary. *The immigration Time Bomb* . New York: Truman Talley Books, 1985.

A study of the problems that massive legal and illegal immigration are causing in the United States today.

Rosoli, Gianfausto. *Un Secolo di Emigrazione Italiana* , 1876-1976. Roma: Centro Studi Emigrazione, 1978.

An Italian collection of essays on the Italian emigration between 1876-1976.

Taylor, Phillip. *The Distant Magnet* . New York: Harper & Row 1971.

A study of the hardships and ridicule faced by the 35 million people that emigrated from Europe to the United States during the years 1830-1930.

Thomas, Piri. *Down These Mean Streets* . New York: Vintage Books, 1967.

An autobiography of a young Puerto Rican growing up in the "Mean Streets" of Harlem.

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