



Cultural and Social Systems

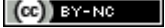
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Introduction

Grade Level

These activities are intended for a fourth grade classroom.

Discipline

These activities have a social studies focus.

TEKS

Content:

Throughout social studies in Kindergarten-Grade 12, students build a foundation in history; geography; economics; government; citizenship; culture; science, technology, and society; and social studies skills. The content, as appropriate for the grade level or course, enables students to understand the importance of patriotism, function in a free enterprise society, and appreciate the basic democratic values of our state and nation as referenced in the Texas Education Code (TEC), §28.002(h)

Skills:

Culture. The student understands the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, and religious groups to Texas. The student is expected to identify the similarities and differences among various racial, ethnic, and religious groups in Texas. TEKS §113.15. Social Studies, Grade 4. (b)(19)(A)

National Education for Sustainability K-12 Student Learning Standards

2.4 ~ Social and Cultural Systems ~ Family and Friends-Personal Identity-Happiness-Fairness-Collaborative Learning

Objective

Students will learn about different cultures, religions, and ethnicities and how they relate to protecting the environment, and forming positive structures for individuals and their communities.

Key Words

Culture
Religion
Ethnicity
Folktale
Holiday
Society
Fairness

Description of Activities

The following activities have been compiled to address the topic of “Cultural and Social Systems” in fourth grade classrooms. The activities meet the state and national education standards for the fourth grade, and are intended to supplement pre-existing curricula, with a focus on integrating sustainability topics. The activities can be used in conjunction or alone.

Activities

Activity 1: Create a Folktale

Introduction

The students will listen to folktales and write their own.

Materials

Copy of original folktales

Writing paper

Pens and/or pencils

Product

Completed folktales written by students

Process

1. Before starting, go to the site www.naturestory.com/database/envIRON.html and select folktales you think the class will find interesting. Teachers may also find a collection of environmental folktales at the library or another website.
2. Gather the students and ask them about folktales. Ask questions like “What is a folktale?” “Why did people write them down?” and “How do they reflect where we come from?”
3. Now, read them the folktales you chose. Throughout the reading, ask for responses to the stories.
4. Place the instructions in front of the stations and discuss safety procedures—the teacher is the only one allowed to touch the skillet, as it gets extremely hot.
5. When finished, put the students into different groups.
6. Ask students to brainstorm ideas for their own folktales that follow environmental themes and write them down.
7. Give the students a few minutes to work together and generate a variety of ideas.
8. Now, ask them to write their own folktales. Remind them of the key themes in the folktales you read them. Let them work together to discover new ideas, and to help each other, but ask them to write the actual story on their own.

9. After giving the students ample time to finish their stories, ask for volunteers to read their work to the class. Ask the class to discuss how the new stories relate to preserving the environment and creating a fair, happy society for all.

Created by Environmental Storytelling. Environmental Storytelling Database. Retrieved from <http://www.naturestory.com/database,environ.html> on August 28, 2014.

Created by Education World. Create a Folktale. Retrieved from <http://www.naturestory.com/database,environ.html> on August 28, 2014.

Activity 2: Bright Holiday Ornaments

Introduction

Students will make holiday ornaments and learn about recycling.

Materials

Construction paper
Glue Sticks
Pointed Tip Scissors
Recycled CD, DVD, or other disc
Recycled materials
String
Washable Glitter Glue
Washable Markers

Product

Holiday Ornaments

Process

1. Discuss with students what their favorite holidays are and why. Then, ask them about the symbols they like that go with those holidays.
2. Pass around the discs and other materials.
3. Trace around the discs on paper with markers. Cut out the circles with scissors.
4. Ask the students to draw symbols they like on the circles. Remind them to leave enough space for the shiny side of the discs. Cut off the undecorated pieces of the circles.
5. Cut yarn to make hangers for the ornament. Tuck the yarn behind the paper on each side of the ornament or thread it through the hole in the center.
6. Embellish one side with glitter glue. Let it air-dry completely.
7. Turn the ornament over and embellish the other side. Let it air-dry.
8. Ask students to volunteer and show their ornaments to the class.
9. Discuss with the students why it is important to reuse the things we have instead of throwing them out. Ask them how they can reuse other things for positive and creative purposes.

10. Encourage them to give the ornaments as gifts. Ask them why it's good to think of other people and be nice towards them.

Created by Crayola. Retrieved from <http://www.crayola.com/lesson-plans/bright-holiday-ornaments-lesson-plan/> on August 28, 2014.

Activity 3: Say “Thank you” for Nature’s Beauty in 100 different languages

Introduction

By learning how to say “thank you” in different languages, and connecting them to natural wonders around the world, we can appreciate and protect nature on a global scale.

Materials

Bulletin board or poster board with a map on it
Thumbtacks
Internet access
Index cards with the names of countries on them
Blank index cards
A bag or hat

Product

World map with “thank you” cards on the bulletin or poster board.

Process

1. Set up the poster or bulletin board on a classroom wall.
2. In a bag or hat, place the index cards with the names of countries. Let each student draw one card from the bag. Give each student a blank index card.
3. Next, take the students online and ask them to look up their country. Ask them to find out how to say “Thank you” in the country’s official language and/or one of its most commonly spoken ones. For example, if they chose Switzerland, they can pick between French, Italian, or German.
4. Then, have them search for natural wonders, endangered animals, etc. in their country and select something they find interesting. For example, if they chose Brazil, they can read more about the Amazon rain forest and river and the various colorful birds that live there.
5. Ask the students to write their name, country, language, and wonder/animal on their blank index card.
6. After they have done some short research, ask the students to present their country. Ask them to talk about the country they chose, how to say “thank you” in one of its languages, and what they chose to research for their country’s natural beauty. When they are finished, ask them to put the card they wrote on the map where the country is with a thumbtack.

7. After the activity, discuss why preserving nature is important. And ask them why it is important to think about protecting nature on a global scale.

Created by Hopkins, G. LessonPlans.com. Retrieved from <http://www.lessonplans.com/say-thank-you-in-100-languages/> on August 28, 2014.

Additional Resources

Online Resources

Primary Resources

http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/00-2/lp2160.shtml

<http://www.naturestory.com/database,environ.html>

<http://www.crayola.com/lesson-plans/bright-holiday-ornaments-lesson-plan/>

http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/02/lp286-04.shtml

www.kids.nationalgeographic.com

<http://www.memory-improvement-tips.com/images/free-printable-world-map.jpg>

Secondary resources

www.kids.nationalgeographic.com

www.kidsdiscover.com

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/country_profiles/default.stm



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