

Cultural Awareness

What is your culture?

GOAL

Students will develop organizational skills, create student-parent involvement in the learning process, and use cameras as a means of expressing an understanding of cultures and of expressing their own creativity.

OVERVIEW

Students will study different aspects of world cultures and complete a photographic essay that demonstrates an understanding of the subject. The process of thinking and choosing the examples that will best fulfill their own interpretation of such words as 'ceremony', 'status', and 'family' makes this project very valuable in the process of learning about themselves, their relationships, and their culture. This lesson can be applied for units in art, social sciences, computers, communications and life studies.

METHODOLOGY

- Conduct a class lesson to define the term "culture". Subsequent lectures and discussions can lead to understanding the concepts of norm, fashion, environment, status symbols, ceremony, etiquette, class structure, nuclear family, extended family, status relation, generation gap, and indoctrination. Relate these terms to "Now Chinatown" and discuss the aspects of the movie that reflect facets of culture.
- Small student groups can discuss these terms in relation to their own lives and culture, and also how they, themselves, are products of acculturation.
- Give the students one week to take pictures of people, particularly parents, relatives, and friends, as well as objects in their lives that best exemplify the meanings of the terms discussed. During this time, students should discuss particular problems or difficulties in small peer groups and with the teacher.
- Once the photos are taken and developed, students arrange the photos in a display that best demonstrates their individual culture. Each student explains why he or she took each photo, which becomes a positive experience in terms of peer and familial relationships.

ADDITIONAL OPTIONS

- A digital camera can be used and those stills can be used in the creation of a computer presentation, learning particular technology skills with software such as Photoshop, Quark Express, Pagemaker, PowerPoint and Microsoft Word.
- The same photos may be scanned or digitally transferred into a multi-media program such as iMovie, Final Cut Pro, Premiere, and audio tracks added that are indicative of the culture represented in their visual elements.

