



WALTON ARTS CENTER PRESENTS

DIGGING UP ARKANSAS

AN ARKANSAS HISTORY PLAY

Written by Mike Thomas | Directed by Kassie Misiewicz
Performed by Trike Theatre

Culture – Pre Performance

Title: Culture and Change in Arkansas

In this activity, students will:

- Explore the meaning of **culture** and how artifacts may help us understand cultures of the past.
- **Inspire:** Students will...
 - Listen to the Teacher share information about a personal artifact and its meaning.
 - Read selected personal artifact paragraphs aloud in small groups.
 - Create an anchor chart of class members' personal artifacts.
- **Excite:** Students will show their thinking by...
 - Brainstorming and planning a tableau or frozen picture that represents the definition of culture.
 - Participating in tableau.
 - Creating a class anchor chart of "Culture is..." statements.
 - Discussing how activities, artifacts, writings, and other objects reflect culture and help us to understand each other.
- **Reflect:** Students will reflect by...
 - Writing three fully developed reasons that a personal object had meaning to them in the past.

- Discussing reasons why culture is important and why people groups maintain their cultures.
- **Write:** Students will creatively assess by...
 - Defining **culture** using dictionary and glossary, tableau and class discussion (family values, traditions, beliefs, activities, careers, education, events, celebrations, music, writing, art, food, work, and other).
 - Quick-writing about personal objects that had meaning to them “when they were little” and give reasons why it was important.
 - Creating anchor charts

Learning Standards Met:

- C.C.5.R.I.2 Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details: summarize the text.
- C.C.5.R.I.9 Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
- C.C.5.R.I.6 Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.
- C.C.5.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.
- C.C.5.W.7 Conduct short research that uses several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
- C.C.5.S.L.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

The learning objectives for this lesson are:

- To determine Main Idea
- To summarize text; integrate information from multiple sources
- To conduct short research investigations
- To create tableaus

- To compare and contrast information
- To produce clear and coherent writing
- To engage in collaborative discussions

Materials you will need to complete this lesson:

- Personal artifact that represents the Teacher (for modeling)
- Chart paper and markers or white/black board
- Sentence Strips or long strips of paper
- Paper and pencils
- Dictionary/textbook glossary containing the definition of the word ‘culture’
- Classroom space for planning and creating tableaux or frozen pictures
- Optional resource: <http://www.learner.org/libraries/makingmeaning/makingmeaning/dramatic/>

Timeline for the lesson:

- Step One: (20 minutes) Quick-write and share in small groups
 - Before beginning the lesson, teacher will display a personal artifact that has meaning or is important in the teacher’s life. The teacher will read a paragraph explaining the meaning of this object. An example is given:
 - ❖ “When I was little, I used to carry a pencil and a sketchbook everywhere with me because I loved to write and draw. My friends loved for me to show them my drawings and tell my stories about them. My little sisters loved for me to tell them bedtime stories and draw pictures of them. In our family, reading and drawing and story-telling were very important. My mother hung my drawings up in my room, or on the refrigerator in the kitchen. She called me her little artist. Is it any surprise that I grew up to become a reading and writing teacher?”
 - Ask students to name an item that they just had to have with them “when they were little.” This could be an item that they needed for bedtime, something they took with them everywhere they went. This is an item that they thought they couldn’t live without at the time. Call this item a **personal artifact**. Ask “What personal artifact represents your past when you were little? Quickly write a detailed paragraph describing this item and give three reasons why it was important to you. How do you think this item will help your classmates know you better?”

- In groups of four, ask students to read their paragraphs aloud to each other.
- Using chart paper or the white-board, create a table like the example below that lists the personal artifacts of each student.

Our Class Personal Artifacts

Student's Name	Personal Artifact from younger days	Change	Personal Artifact from present day
Mrs. LeBert	Sketchpad and pencil		
Julie Brown	Soft baby blanket		
Jason Smith	Little red ball		

- Step Two: (10 minutes) Discuss definition of culture

(The American Heritage Children's Dictionary)

culture noun I. The customs, beliefs, laws, ways of living, and all other results of human work and thought that belong to a people: In most Native American cultures, all land is thought of a common property.

(from An Arkansas History for Young People, page 7)

culture customs; way of life; background

(from the online Merriam Webster dictionary)

culture 5 a: The integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon man's capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations b : the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group; **also** : the characteristic features of everyday existence (as diversions or a way of life) shared by people in a place or time <popular culture> <southern culture>)

- Ask, "How does knowing about personal artifacts of a classmate help you understand who they are?"
- Display the dictionary or textbook glossary definition of the word **culture** to the class. Ask "What does that mean to you? What does this mean in families? How does the personal object that you wrote about show the culture of you or your family? What kinds of objects might represent the culture of our classroom? Our school?"

- Step Three: (20 minutes) Plan and create group tableau that represents culture

- Write "Culture Is..." on a white board or chart paper. Divide students into new groups of 4 to 6 students. Students will be creating a tableau, or 'frozen picture,' of the definition of culture as a group. Every student takes a part in the tableau.

- Encourage students to answer three questions to help them build a frozen picture:
 1. What will we make?
 2. What parts will we need?
 3. What part would you like to play?
- Allow a few minutes for them to brainstorm, plan, and record their definition on paper.
- Once they have determined among themselves what poses will be used for this definition, say “Show me a frozen picture of culture.”
- Teacher will walk to each frozen group and ask them to share their “Culture Is ...” sentence or phrase.
- Frozen pictures should last no longer than about 30 seconds per group.
- Step Four: (5 to 10 minutes) Final Discussion and anchor chart creation
 - Regroup for discussion. Ask students to define culture based on what they have learned about each other. Using each group’s “Culture Is...” statement, create an anchor chart on chart paper or on the white board that lists each definition. Another option is to have each team write their “Culture is...” statement on a sentence strip and post these around the room.
 - Through whole class discussion, guide students to clarify the definition of culture as shared traditions, beliefs, values, activities, writing, food, music, etc. Ask students to describe the culture of their class community based on commonalities they share. Ask them to describe the culture of their school.
 - Give students a second opportunity to revise and recreate their tableau of culture.

Students will show their thinking by:

- Participating in discussion, quick-writes, selection of personal artifacts, culture definitions, and tableau activities.

Prompts for reflecting on this lesson:

- “What artifact represents your past when you were little?”
- Why did this artifact have meaning to you back then? How does this artifact help your fellow students know who you are?
- “What did you learn about your classmates from their artifact stories?”
- “Based on your research and observation, define the word culture.”
- “How did your group’s tableau demonstrate culture?”

- “How do certain artifacts represent culture? How does this help us understand others?”

The final product facilitated by this lesson should be:

- Paragraph describing a personal artifact
- Tableau showing a definition of culture
- Anchor chart of personal artifacts (Keep for Post-performance lesson)
- Anchor chart/sentence strips that lists group “Culture Is…” statements
- Class discussions

Learn More at:

A Dramatic Approach to Reading Comprehension by Lenore Blank Kelner and Rosalind M. Flynn, Heinemann: Portsmouth, NH, 2006.

> Learn more about using drama in your classroom

www.interactstory.com

<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators.aspx>

> Learn more about Digging Up Arkansas

www.waltonartscenter.org

Learn more about engaging students and exploring documents at our National Archives

www.archives.gov/nae

www.DocsTeach.org

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