

# I Know About Many Cultures

## Fast Facts

Curriculum Area: Social Studies

Grade Level: Grade 1

Suggested Duration: 1-2 days

## Stage 1 Desired Results

### Established Goals

**(3) The geography content standards for first grade are that each student will:**

(a) identify and describe human and physical local landmarks.

**(4) The history content standards for first grade are that each student will.**

(a) distinguish between past, present, and future time;

(b) understand how events might be described differently depending on historical contexts and perspectives, including those of tribes in Montana.

**IEFA Essential Understanding 1** There is great diversity among the twelve sovereign tribes of Montana in their languages, cultures, histories, and governments. Each tribe has a distinct and unique cultural heritage that contributes to modern Montana.

**IEFA Essential Understanding 2** Just as there is a great diversity among tribal nations, there is great diversity among individual American Indians as identity is developed, defined, and redefined by entities, organizations, and people. There is no generic American Indian.

**IEFA Essential Understanding 3** The ideologies of Native traditional beliefs and spirituality persist into modern day life as tribal cultures, traditions, and languages are still practiced by many American Indian people and are incorporated into how tribes govern and manage their affairs. Additionally, each tribe has its own oral histories, which are as valid as written histories. These histories predate the “discovery” of North America.

## Understandings

- Culture is a way our families teach us to live.
- Cultures have different dance, music, language, and traditions.
- There is a wide diversity of cultural traditions among American Indian nations/people.

## Essential Questions

- Why is culture important?
- How are our cultures the same?
- How are our cultures different?



### Students will be able to . . .

- explain why culture is important.
- identify similarities of their unique cultures among students.
- identify differences of their unique cultures among students.
- describe cultural traditions their families celebrate.
- develop an awareness of unique cultural traditions of Native Americans.
- continue to interact with and respect people from different cultures throughout their life.
- respect cultures that are different than their own.

### Students will know . . .

- people in Montana share many cultural traditions but there are also cultural differences related to things such as dance, music, language,
- how to interact with and respect people from different cultures.

## Stage 2 Assessment Evidence

### Performance Tasks

1. Complete a Venn diagram that illustrates the similarities and differences between their culture and family history and cultural traditions of other people.
2. Give an oral presentation on the cultural traditions of their family. Encourage students to invite a parent or family member to present with them and/or have them bring photos or items that show some of their family's cultural traditions to share with the class.

## Stage 3 Learning Plan

### Learning Activities

Explain to the class that today they are going to learn about culture and explore some other cultures. Begin by showing them the brief video [What is Culture](#). (There are numerous videos about cultural traditions on YouTube and this is an example of one.) Depending upon their reading ability, you may need to read the words displayed aloud to them as the video plays. Before starting the video, explain that they should be able to answer two or three of the following questions at the conclusion of the video.

- A person they saw
- A type of food they saw
- A piece of artwork they saw
- A landmark or type of building they saw

Ask students to share with the class some of the things they saw in the video. As they describe or list things, reaffirm the nationality, geographic location, or ethnic group mentioned. Utilize a map or globe to illustrate where a certain person or group of people in the video might be from, e.g., a Spanish Matador, the pyramids of Egypt, people in Africa, rural vs. urban Americans, double decker buses, and

Big Ben in London. Be sure to mention the cultural images related to Northwest tribal art and the tipi if they are not mentioned by students.

Ask the students to think about their own culture. Ask them what things they saw or were discussed after the video that are the same for them and what was different.

Now show this [brief clip](#) produced by the National Congress of American Indians. It provides a good display of tribal diversity. (Note: the video was produced as part of an educational effort to bring awareness regarding Native American mascots.) Ask them to answer the same four questions and facilitate another class discussion.

- A person they saw
- A type of food they saw
- A piece of artwork they saw
- A landmark or type of building they saw

After the discussion, explain to the students they are going to learn about some of the cultural and family practices among American Indian families. Provide an overview of Montana Indians and tribes if necessary.

Introduce and read aloud one or more of the books listed below. These should be in your school library. Review and discuss the main ideas and talking points with the class prior to reading, then circle back to the questions during guided discussion after reading.

*Shota and the Star Quilt* by Margaret Bateson-Hill

- Discuss the cultural traditions in this book. Has any student ever made a star quilt? Did anyone notice the writing down below the words that was being read? This writing is Lakota, a different language spoken by Shota's family. Ask if students know that many Indian people speak a different language. Discuss activities students do with their family members that is similar to Shota and her family. Compare and contrast Shota and her family to families of students.

*Where Did You Get Your Moccasins?* by Bernelda Wheeler

- Discuss whether all Indians wear moccasins and if all moccasins look alike, especially with designs (some are geometric shapes, others are flower designs). Compare and contrast the main character to students. Ask them if they have family members that make shoes, clothing, or other crafts that have cultural significance.

*Jingle Dancer* by Cynthia Leitich Smith

- Discuss the history of the pow wow using the information on pages 2-3 of *Your Guide to Understanding and Enjoying Pow Wows*. Be sure to explain how the pow wow has changed over time. Discuss the jingle dance as well as the other dances explained on pages 12-17. Highlight Jenna's relationship with her grandmother and how pow wow dancing is part of her family history. She enjoys seeing videos of her grandmother dancing. Ask students if they have events or traditions in their family that go back to their grandparents. Have they ever had friends and family help them get something done so they could participate in an event or attend something important?

After reading the story(ies), have the students complete a VENN Diagram that portrays the cultural similarities and differences between themselves and the cultures observed in the video and story books.

Provide students with instructions for their family cultural presentation. All students will give an oral presentation on the cultural traditions of their family. Encourage students to invite a parent or family member to present with them and/or have them bring photos or items that show some of their family's cultural traditions to share with the class. In some cases, students might also be able to do this on their own with some teacher assistance and support. Tell students to be creative and have fun – this is a celebration of culture.

### Resources

Bateson-Hill, Margaret. *Shota and the Star Quilt*. Illustrated by Christine Fowler, consultant, Gloria Runs Close to Lodge (Oglala), Lakota text by Philomine Lakota. Chicago, IL: Zero to Ten, 1998.

Smith, Cynthia Leitich Smith. (Muscogee Creek) *Jingle Dancer*. Illustrated by Cornelius Van Wright and Ying-Hwa Hu. New York, NY: Morrow Junior Books, 2000.

Wheeler, Bernelda (Cree/Saulteaux). *Where Did You Get Your Moccasins?* Illustrated by Herman Bekkering. Winnipeg, MB: Peguis Publishers, 1992.

### Teacher background information

[Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians](#)

[Montana Indians Their History and Location](#)

[Your Guide to Understanding and Enjoying Pow Wows](#)

[Native American culture lesson plan from the National Endowment for the Humanities](#) Lesson plan is intended for middle school; however, it has some excellent background information that could be adapted for younger students.