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| **EL Civics Obj 11/Diversity**  **Level: Intermediate Low (4) Task 2: Write About Culture** |
| **Language & Literacy Objectives:**  1. Write and/or report personal information: name, place of birth, native language, etc.  3. Interview classmates about cultural information.  8. Report orally or in writing about one’s cultural background. |
| **INTRODUCTION** |
| In this lesson, students will explore typical customs and traditions in their own culture and those of their classmates. They will also look for similarities and differences between cultures, especially as they relate to the following topics: Education, Food, Medical Care, Money and Work. |
| **ASSESSMENT TASK** |
| For this task, the student will write about life in his native country and compare it to life in the U.S. 25 points possible. |
| **SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES** |
| * Multicultural Fair @ TAS: Work with other classes at your site (or between sites) to plan and organize a Multicultural Fair that would highlight the similarities and differences between cultures. Students would determine theme & activities, plus be responsible for marketing and logistics. |

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| **HANDOUTS PROVIDED** |
| Handout 1: Vocabulary - Culture  Handout 2: Conversation Questions - Culture  Handout 3: Introduction – Cultural Customs & Traditions  Handout 4: Worksheet – Holiday Traditions  Handout 5: Introduction – Technology Across Cultures  Handout 6: Activity – Technology Across Cultures  Handout 7: Worksheet – Customs & Traditions: Similarities  Handout 8: Worksheet – Customs & Traditions: Differences  Handout 9: Practice – Write About Culture |
| **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES** |
| * **Related Websites** - see list in “Additional Resources” section of this binder. |
| **COMPUTER LAB IDEAS** |
| * **Class Newsletter**: Students can write articles about customs and traditions in their native countries, or compare their native traditions to those in the U.S. (Publisher, Internet) Read-Write-Think. * **Class Blog**: Students can post about customs and traditions in their native countries, or compare their native traditions to those in the U.S. (Internet). www.blogger.com |

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| **INDICATORS FOR INTERMEDIATE LOW** |
| TASK 2  (W.4.3) write and expand upon simple, compound and a few complex sentences, applying basic capitalization, spelling, and punctuation rules when writing (ELPS 10.3)  (W.4.17) use an increasing number or general academic and content specific words and expressions in writing (ELPS 7.3)  (W.4.18) use common transition words and phrases to connect events, ideas, and opinions (ELPS 9.3)  (G.4.1) irregular verbs (SEE REGULAR AND IRREGULAR VERBS LIST)  (G.4.7) Mixed tenses: simple present, present progressive, and present perfect) |

TASK 2– Handout #1

**VOCABULARY: CULTURE**

Adapted from Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online ([www.ldoceonline.com](http://www.ldoceonline.com))

**activities:** things people do either because they enjoy it or in order to achieve a

particular goal.

**appropriate:** correct or suitable for a particular time, situation, or purpose

**celebrate:** to show that an event or occasion is important by doing something

special or enjoyable.

**compare:** to examine or judge two or more things in order to show how they are

similar to or different from each other.

**custom:** something people do in a particular society because it is traditional.

**differences:** ways in which two or more people or things are not like each other. Also: “different from.”

**holiday:** time of rest from work, school, etc.

**impolite**: not polite; rude

**inappropriate:** not suitable or right for a particular purpose or in a particular situation

**polite**: behaving or speaking in a way that is correct for a social situation, and considering other people's needs and feelings

**preparations:** making arrangements for something that is going to happen.

**similarities:** ways in which two or more people or things are almost the same. Also: alike, “same as.”

**tradition:** a belief, custom, or way of doing something that has existed for a

long time.

**typical:** someone behaving or something happening in the usual way you expect.

**value:** the importance or usefulness of something.

**with regard to:** about a particular subject.

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TASK 2 – Handout #2

## CONVERSATION QUESTIONS: CULTURE

adapted from The Internet TESL Journal (http://iteslj.org/questions/culture.html)

* Are there many people of different cultures in your country?
* Have you ever felt confused by the actions of someone from another culture?
  + If so, describe the situation.
* In your culture, is it polite to be straightforward and direct when you talk to someone?
* Would you ever consider marrying or dating someone from another culture?
* What is considered rude in your culture?
* How do young people in your culture behave differently from older people?

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TASK 2 –Handout #3

**INTRODUCTION: CULTURAL CUSTOMS & TRADITIONS**

One of the best ways to learn about people is to look at their customs and traditions. These illustrate the values most important to the people living there, and also show how they connect, relax and have fun.

**What is a custom?**

A custom is the usual way of behaving or acting. For example:

|  |  |
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| a white wedding dress | In the United States, most brides wear white on their wedding day. White is a symbol of purity. |
| Chinese bride in red dress CC BY-SA 3.0 | The traditional wedding gown in China is bright red with gold. These colors symbolize luck for the new couple. |

**What is a tradition?**

A tradition is a custom, opinion or belief handed down from one generation to another, often orally or by practice. For example:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| grapes CC BY 2.0 by Zest-pk | In Spain on New Year’s Eve, it is traditional to eat twelve grapes, one for each month of the new year. |
| cup of tea CC BY 2.0 by nicehotcoupofT | In Britain, it is traditional to drink tea with milk in the afternoon. |

* + What customs do you practice?
  + What are your favorite customs?

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TASK 2 –Handout #3 (cont.)

**INTRODUCTION: CULTURAL CUSTOMS & TRADITIONS (cont.)**

**What is a holiday?**

A holiday is a day that has special [meaning](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Value_(personal_and_cultural)) for [individuals](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Individual), a [government](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Government) or a [religious group](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_group). It is usually an [official](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Official) observance of religious, national or cultural significance, often accompanied by celebrations or festivities.

**Examples (from** [**http://www.earthcalendar.net**](http://www.earthcalendar.net/)**):**



***July 4 – Independence Day in United States*** *Celebration of America’s independence from England in 1776. Traditions include barbeques, parades, block parties and lighting/watching fireworks. Also known as “4th of July.”*



***May 5 – Cinco de Mayo in Mexico***

*Commemorates the Mexican army's unpredicted victory over the French soldiers in the Battle of Puebla that occurred on May 5, 1862. Cinco de Mayo means "Fifth of May" in Spanish. It is not Mexican Independence Day, as some believe. (That is September 16.)*

Think about some popular holidays in your native country and the U.S. …  
  
Which ones are your favorites?   
  
How are those holidays typically celebrated?   
  
Which U.S. holidays do you enjoy the most?

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TASK 2 –Handout #4

**WORKSHEET – HOLIDAY TRADITIONS**

**Directions:** Write about a holiday in your country. Interview another student and learn about a holiday in his or her native country.

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | My Country: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | Classmate’s Country: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Name & date of holiday: |  |  |
| Who we celebrate with: |  |  |
| Activities we plan: |  |  |
| Food we eat: |  |  |
| Customs we take part in: |  |  |

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Task 2 – Handout #5

**INTRODUCTION: TECHNOLOGY ACROSS CULTURES**

When it comes to using cell phones, what is considered polite? Are the “rules” different in your home country and the U.S.?

Directions: Work with a partner to answer the questions below.



**Cell Phone Etiquette**

1. With your partner, brainstorm 3 places it is **appropriate** (OK) to use a cell phone.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Is it the same in your home countries and the U.S.?*

1. With your partner, brainstorm 3 places it is **inappropriate** (not OK) to use a cell phone.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Is it the same in your home countries and the U.S.?*

1. Watch the video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1TRDNdDWYDU>   
    What are 3 places “Curt the Cyberguy” said it is not OK to use a cell phone?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Task 2 – Handout #6

**ACTIVITY: TECHNOLOGY ACROSS CULTURES**

Communicating Cliparts #63221

Polite or Impolite?

Is it polite/safe to use your cell phone\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?

Yes, it is.

No, it isn't.

**Directions**: Interview two partners. Ask them to compare customs in their home countries *and* the U.S. Share with the class & create a chart with all the results.

**1) Is it polite to use your cell phone in the bathroom?**

**2) Is it polite to use your cell phone at the movies?**

**3) Is it polite to use your cell phone on the bus?**

**4) Is it polite to use your cell phone at a restaurant?**

**5) Is it polite to use your cell phone in English class?**

**6) Is it safe to use a cell phone while driving?**

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TASK 2 –Handout #7

**WORKSHEET – CUSTOMS & TRADITIONS: SIMILARITIES**

Think about life in your native country and life in the U.S. Fill in the chart below to compare the two cultures. Show how they are the same, or similar.

**My native country:**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**The United States**

**What are two ways these cultures are alike?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **With regard to these topics …** | **Example 1:** | **Example 2:** |
| **EDUCATION:** |  |  |
| **FOOD/COOKING:** |  |  |
| **TECHNOLOGY:** |  |  |
| **HOLIDAYS & GIFT GIVING:** |  |  |
| **WORK:** |  |  |

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TASK 2 –Handout #8

**WORKSHEET – CUSTOMS & TRADITIONS: DIFFERENCES**

Think about life in your native country and life in the U.S. Fill in the chart below to compare the two cultures. Show how they are different.

**My native country:**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**The United States**

**What are two ways these cultures are different?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *In my native country …* | **With regard to …** | *In the U.S. …* |
|  | **EDUCATION** |  |
|  | **FOOD/COOKING** |  |
|  | **TECHNOLOGY** |  |
|  | **Holidays/Gift giving** |  |
|  | **WORK** |  |

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TASK 2 –Handout #9

**PRACTICE: WRITE ABOUT CULTURE**

**Directions:** Answer the questions below about yourself and your native country. Fill in the blank spaces with your answers.

1. **Where were you born? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
     
   Where did you grow up? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   
     
   What was your first language? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
2. **What is your favorite holiday from your native country? Write about two (2) customs to celebrate it.**

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TASK 2 –Handout #9

**PRACTICE: WRITE ABOUT CULTURE**

**Directions:** To answer Questions #3 & #4, choose one of the topics below to write about.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CIRCLE  YOUR  CHOICE:** | **TechnologyLaptop Clipart Image - Laptop Clipart Black And White  laptop-clipart #3199409** | **Holidays & Gift Giving**celebrating birthday coloring pages - Clip Art Library Quilt Coloring Pages #712083 |
| **Tasting Chef Cliparts #2762305**  **Food/Cooking** | **Work**Free Work Human Cliparts, | **Education**Male Teacher Teacher Clipart #2994070 |

1. **Give one example (about this topic) that shows how life in your native country is THE SAME AS life in the U.S.:**

|  |
| --- |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |

**Give one example (about this topic) that shows how life in your native country is DIFFERENT FROM life in the U.S.:**

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