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| **EL Civics Obj 11/Diversity**  **Levels: Intermediate High & Advanced 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, Technology, 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. * Expand classroom conversation and activities to include additional topics, such as: greetings, communication style, personal space, eye contact, views of time, nonverbal gestures, gender roles, taboos. |

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| **INDICATORS FOR INTERMEDIATE HIGH A** |
| TASK 2  (R.5.3) follow simply written directions and narratives on authentic topics  (W.5.2) draft, organize, write, and edit short paragraphs using topic sentence, supporting details, concluding sentence, and transitions (ELPS 2.4, 3.4)  (W.5.4) use complex phrases and clauses (ELPS 10.4)  (W.5.5) produce and expand simple, compound, and complex sentences (ELPS 10.4) |

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| **INDICATORS FOR INTERMEDIATE HIGH B** |
| TASK 2  (W.5.17) adapt written language choice to task and audience (including the adoption and maintenance of a formal and informal style and tone) (ELPS 7.4)  (W.5.18) use a wide range of complex general academic and content specific words and expressions using connecting words for coordination (yet-contrast, so-result, for-reason) (ELPS 7.4) |

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| **INDICATORS FOR ADVANCED** |
| TASK 2  (W.6.1) demonstrate and use correct use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling ( e.g., using reference materials to edit and revise)  (W.6.11) produce and expand simple, compound, and complex phrases/clauses/sentences (ELPS 10.5)  (G.6.3) Prepositions of location |

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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** |
| * **Graphics, PowerPoint presentations & activity worksheets** available for download in “Additional Resources” section of EL Civics folder (see desktop of classroom computer or teacher’s workstation in labs). * **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. <http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/creating-classroom-newspaper-249.html> * **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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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/cultuterre.html](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?
* If you could change one thing about your native culture, what would it be?
* If you could change one thing about American culture, what would it be?
* 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?
* How do young people in your culture behave differently from young people in the U.S.?
* What do you think is important when visiting another culture?
* Do you think "when in Rome, do as the Romans do" is always good advice? Why or why not?
* Have you ever been in a situation where you felt you had to "do as the Romans do"?
* If a group of Americans wanted to visit your country, what advice would you give them?
* What culture besides your own do you admire and why?

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TASK 2 –Handout #3

**INTRODUCTION: CULTURAL CUSTOMS & TRADITIONS**

One of the best ways to learn about the people living in a country 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:

|  |  |
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| 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?
  + What customs do you think should be revised?
  + What customs do you think should no longer be practiced?

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TASK 2 –Handout #3 (cont.)

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

**What is a holiday?**

A holiday is a [day](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Day) designated as having special [significance](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Value_(personal_and_cultural)) for which [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) have deemed that [observation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Observation) is warranted. It is generally an [official](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Official) (more common) or unofficial 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 1 Country: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | Classmate 2 Country: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Name & date of holiday: |  |  |  |
| Preparations: |  |  |  |
| 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**

People around the world are using technology to connect with each other and access information. When it comes to using cell phones, for example, 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.

no cell phone png #984153


**Cell Phone Etiquette**

1. With your partner, brainstorm 5 places it is **appropriate** to use a cell phone.

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

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

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

1. With your partner, brainstorm 5 places it is **inappropriate** to use a cell phone.

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*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 5 places “Curt the Cyberguy” said it is inappropriate to use a cell phone?

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

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Task 2 – Handout #6

**ACTIVITY: TECHNOLOGY ACROSS CULTURES**



Polite or Impolite?

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

Yes, it is.

No, it isn't.

Directions: Interview a partner. Brainstorm with the class & create a chart with 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 supermarket?**

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

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

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

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

**7) Is it polite to use your cell phone on a date?**

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

Writing/Reflection: Have *you* ever used a cell phone inappropriately?

Describe the situation. Where were you? How did others react? How did you handle the situation?

*Student Sample (Inappropriate Use of Cell Phones)*

*Yesterday in class, when I took the test, somebody called me. When my cell phone started ringing, I felt embarrassed because I knew we were not supposed to use cell phones in the class. I have learned now, before the class start, I have to turn off my cell phone.*

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TASK 2 –Handout #7

**WORKSHEET – CUSTOMS & TRADITIONS: SIMILARITIES**

Though we tend to focus on the differences between cultures, there are also many similarities we can find. Think about life in your native country and life in the U.S. Fill in the chart below to compare the two cultures in regard to the topics listed below.

**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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**WORKSHEET – CUSTOMS & TRADITIONS: DIFFERENCES**

Though there can be similarities between cultures, there are also differences that help make them unique. Think about life in your native country and life in the U.S. Fill in the chart below to compare the two cultures in regard to the topics listed below.

**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

**Directions**: Write about life in your native country and the United States. Compare the similarities and differences between the two cultures.

1. Where were you born? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
     
   Where did you grow up? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   
     
   What was your first language? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
     
   Give a brief description of education, home and family life in your native country:

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1. Describe your favorite holiday from your country, and how it is typically celebrated:

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1. Describe how life in your native country is **THE SAME AS** life in the U.S. with regard to **one** of these topics (circle your choice): **EDUCATION ∙ FOOD/COOKING ∙ TECHNOLOGY ∙ HOLIDAYS/GIFT GIVING ∙ WORK**

**TASK 2: WRITE ABOUT CULTURE (continued)**

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1. Describe how life in your native country is **DIFFERENT FROM** life in the U.S. with regard to **one** of these topics (circle your choice):**EDUCATION ∙ FOOD/COOKING ∙ TECHNOLOGY ∙ HOLIDAYS/GIFT GIVING ∙ WORK**

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