

INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION MANUAL

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Intercultural Education

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INTRODUCTION

Audience

This educational manual is prepared for educators working with all school aged students. While the manual and lesson plans are written for a school environment, with simple modifications the lesson plans can be implemented in workshops and special activities in cultural houses such as museums.

Overview of Intercultural Education

Intercultural education is a pedagogical approach designed to foster understanding, respect, and cooperation among people from diverse cultural backgrounds. It aims to prepare individuals to engage effectively in our increasingly interconnected and multicultural world, addressing the challenges and embracing the opportunities of cultural diversity. This educational approach goes beyond simply learning about other cultures; it involves developing deep intercultural competencies that enable individuals to interact respectfully and empathetically with people from different cultural backgrounds.

UNESCO offers three guiding principles for Intercultural education, from [The UNESCO Guidelines for Cultural Education](#) (2006):

Principle I: Intercultural Education respects the cultural identity of the learner through the provision of culturally appropriate and responsive quality education for all.

Principle II: Intercultural Education provides every learner with the cultural knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to achieve active and full participation in society.

Principle III: Intercultural Education provides all learners with cultural knowledge, attitudes and skills that enable them to contribute to respect, understanding and solidarity among individuals, ethnic, social, cultural and religious groups and nations.

Intercultural Competences

Intercultural competencies are the capabilities required to function effectively and respectfully when interacting with others who have different backgrounds, beliefs, and behaviors. Developing these competencies is essential for fostering mutual understanding and successful interactions in diverse settings.

Knowledge

- **Cultural Self-Awareness:** Understanding one's own cultural background, including biases, values, and how one's culture is perceived by others.
- **Cultural Other-Awareness:** Knowledge of other cultures and their histories, values, communication styles, beliefs, and practices.
- **Sociolinguistic Awareness:** Understanding the role of language in communication, including idioms, gestures, and context-specific language use.
- **Global Issues and Trends:** Awareness of global issues (e.g., migration, climate change, social justice) and how they impact different cultures differently.

Skills

- **Effective Communication:** Ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in diverse cultural contexts, both verbally and non-verbally.
- **Active Listening:** Listening attentively and empathetically to understand others' perspectives and experiences fully.
- **Adaptability and Flexibility:** Ability to adapt behavior and work methods in response to new cultural contexts and diverse groups.
- **Empathy:** The ability to place oneself in another's position and understand their feelings and perspectives.
- **Critical Thinking:** Analyzing and evaluating issues from multiple cultural perspectives without prejudice.

- **Problem-Solving:** Ability to find solutions in situations where cultural differences complicate the context.

Attitudes

- **Openness:** Being open to new experiences, ideas, and ways of thinking that are different from one's own.
- **Curiosity:** A genuine interest in learning about other cultures, their norms, and their ways of life.
- **Respect:** Showing esteem for all people, regardless of cultural differences.
- **Tolerance for Ambiguity:** Comfort with uncertainty and unfamiliar situations.
- **Patience:** The ability to be patient in the process of learning about and understanding cultural differences.
- **Responsibility:** Recognizing the impact of one's actions in intercultural interactions and taking responsibility for them.
- **Humility:** Acknowledging one's limitations in knowledge and understanding of different cultures and being willing to learn.

Core Principles of Intercultural Education

- **Respect for Diversity:** Central to intercultural education is the respect for cultural diversity, including languages, religions, ethnicities, and traditions. It promotes an appreciation for the richness that diverse perspectives bring to a community and the world at large.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** Intercultural education strives to create inclusive environments where all individuals feel valued, and their cultural backgrounds are seen as assets.
- **Dialogue and Understanding:** Encouraging open dialogue is a key principle of intercultural education. Through dialogue, individuals can share their experiences and perspectives, leading to greater understanding and empathy among diverse groups.
- **Critical Reflection:** This approach encourages critical thinking about one's own cultural assumptions and biases. Reflecting critically on how culture influences perceptions and interactions allows individuals to engage more thoughtfully and respectfully with others.

FOUNDATIONS OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

Defining Culture, Interculturality and Cultural Identity

Culture is a complex and dynamic system of shared beliefs, values, norms, behaviors, traditions, and artifacts. It is transmitted from generation to generation through various forms of communication, both verbal and non-verbal, food, dress, traditions, music, art, literature, etc. Culture shapes our identity, influences our behavior, and allows us to make sense of the world around us.

Interculturality refers to the presence and equitable interaction of diverse cultures. Intercultural education aims to go beyond mere exposure to diverse cultures; it seeks to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of cultural differences and similarities, promoting effective communication and interaction among people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Cultural identity is the sense of belonging to a group. It is part of a person's self-conception and self-perception and is related to nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, locality, or any kind of social group that has its own distinct culture. In this way, cultural identity is both characteristic of the individual but also of the shared identity of members sharing the same cultural identity or upbringing.

Recognizing and understanding one's own cultural identity is crucial in intercultural education. It involves reflecting on one's own beliefs, values, and behaviors, and understanding how one's culture influences perceptions and interactions with others. This self-awareness is the first step towards appreciating the cultural identities of others and fostering empathetic and respectful interactions.

Intercultural education is foundational for preparing students to navigate and thrive in an increasingly interconnected and complex world. By focusing on understanding culture and interculturality, exploring cultural identity, educators can equip students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for successful intercultural interactions.

TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

Creating an Inclusive Classroom Environment

Creating an inclusive classroom environment is essential for fostering a sense of belonging and respect among all students, regardless of their backgrounds, abilities, or learning styles. An inclusive classroom not only accommodates diversity but also celebrates it, ensuring that every student has access to equitable learning opportunities.

Here are some ideas for creating a more inclusive classroom.

1. **Inclusive Morning Meetings:** Start the day with a morning meeting where every student gets to share something or be part of a group activity. This routine helps build a strong, inclusive community where every student feels valued.
2. **Collaborative Group Work:** Regularly organize students into diverse groups for projects and learning activities. This encourages collaboration, communication, and appreciation for different perspectives and strengths.
3. **Culturally Responsive Teaching:** Integrate students' cultural references in all aspects of learning. This method makes the curriculum more relevant to the lives of diverse students and encourages respect and appreciation for cultural differences.
4. **Flexible Seating and Classroom Layout:** Design the classroom to accommodate various learning preferences and needs. This could include areas for group work, quiet individual work, and comfortable seating options to give students some control over their learning environment.
5. **Peer Support Systems:** Encourage a classroom culture where students help each other through peer tutoring, buddy systems, and collaborative learning. This fosters a sense of community and mutual respect.

By systematically implementing these strategies, educators can create a learning environment that is truly inclusive. Such an environment not only supports the academic success of all students but also nurtures a school culture that values diversity, promotes understanding, and encourages empathy and respect among students and staff.

Interactive Pedagogies

Interactive pedagogies for intercultural education are designed to engage students actively in the learning process, fostering deep understanding, empathy, and skills necessary for navigating diverse cultural expressions. These pedagogies emphasize experiential learning, critical thinking, and reflective practice, aiming to prepare students to thrive in a globalized world. Here are some effective interactive pedagogies for intercultural education:

Collaborative Projects with International Partners

Using technology to connect classrooms across the globe, students can collaborate on projects with peers from different cultural backgrounds. These projects could focus on shared global challenges, cultural exchange, or joint research initiatives, encouraging cross-cultural dialogue and collaboration.

Cultural Immersion Experiences

Whether through virtual reality or actual field trips, cultural immersion experiences allow students to "step into the shoes" of people from different cultures. This could include virtual tours of historical sites, participation in cultural festivals, or immersive language learning experiences.

Interactive Storytelling and Digital Narratives

Using digital tools, students can create or participate in storytelling projects that explore cultural identities, traditions, and experiences. This could involve digital storytelling platforms, podcasts, or video projects that allow student expressions on personal and communal stories.

Debates on Global and Cultural Issues

Organizing debates on topics relevant to different cultures and global issues fosters critical thinking and helps students understand and articulate diverse perspectives. This pedagogy encourages active engagement with complex topics, enhancing students' ability to argue respectfully and constructively.

Intercultural Dialogue Circles

Small, guided discussion groups can facilitate meaningful exchanges about cultural norms, values, and experiences. These dialogue circles promote active listening, mutual respect, and a deeper understanding of diversity and commonality among cultures.

Service-Learning Projects

Service-learning that involves working with diverse communities can provide hands-on experiences with cultural diversity and social responsibility. Through these projects,

students can apply intercultural learning in real-world contexts, reflecting on their experiences to gain insights into cultural dynamics and social equity.

Multicultural Literature

Multicultural literature introduces students to the lives, cultures, histories, and stories of people from diverse backgrounds. By presenting narratives beyond the dominant culture, it expands students' understanding of the world, promoting greater awareness of and appreciation for cultural diversity. This exposure helps demystify the 'other,' reducing stereotypes and biases. Literature circles encourage discussion, critical analysis, and empathy, as students explore the themes, settings, and characters of multicultural texts.

Art and Music-based Interactive Activities

Integrating art and music from various cultures into the curriculum through interactive workshops or projects can be a powerful tool for exploring and celebrating cultural diversity. These activities can include art exhibitions, musical performances, dance workshops, and crafts, offering sensory-rich experiences of cultural expressions.

Sample Lesson Plans

Identity Development

Understanding one's own identity development is fundamental to engaging in a diverse world as it helps the person understand the aspects that make up their own identity and how that identity impacts how they behave, communicate, and understand the world. Only when an individual realizes and appreciates the complexity of their own identity can they begin to develop the empathy, compassion, and active listening skills that will allow them to fully realize and appreciate another person's identity. The set of sample lesson plans below each work with students of different ages to understand that their own identity is

made up of many factors including their cultural background, their families, how they look, what they like to do, with whom they identify, their religious/traditional background, etc.

Identity: -What makes me me? And what makes you you?

Below are four lesson plans, one for each age group, focusing on identity development. Each of the plans offers:

- A lesson framework following the Understanding by Design* Lesson plan which offers educators *enduring understandings* (statements summarizing important ideas and core processes that are central to a discipline and have lasting value beyond the classroom) and *essential questions* (open-ended questions that naturally recur, they enable students to make meaning rather than simply take or receive them), followed by:
 - *Competences* (knowledge, skills, attitudes)
- Performance tasks (the task which the educator will use to assess student learning)
- Learning activities which describe the plan for the learning

Once the educator has read through the plan for the selected age group, he/she/they can decide on the scope, depth and length of the learning.

* Understanding by design (UBD) helps students apply what they learn in a course to the real world, which deepens and enriches their learning experience. UBD is based on the principle of backward design and its three stages. The first stage is where instructors identify desired results: what competences should students master? The second stage is for determining acceptable evidence: what are some indicators that show students have achieved desired results? The final stage is for planning learning experiences: what activities will help students master the specific competences identified?

Early Childhood (4-6)

This learning can be done in its entirety or in smaller pieces. For this age group it is very important not to demand that the students attend to one activity (especially sitting) for more than 15 minutes at a time. It is recommended that this entire activity be completed over three 15-minute sessions.

Learning Outcomes:

- Students will acknowledge and name the distinct features of their own family

- Students will understand that every family is different, and may include differences in who lives in their house, how many people are in their family, what languages they speak, where they were born, if they have pets, etc.
- Students will practice showing respect when they share about their families and listen to their classmate share about theirs
- Students will practice showing curiosity by asking questions about each other's families.

Enduring Understandings

Students will understand that...

- Everyone has a unique family and culture.
- Understanding and respecting diverse families is essential for having a kind and welcoming classroom environment.

Essential Questions

- What makes a family?
- How does your family help make you who you are?
- How do our families and family life affect the way we see ourselves and interact with others?

Competences:

Students will know...

- The concept of a family can be diverse
- How to share information about their family.
- How to ask questions about someone else's family.

Students will be able to...

- Describe their own family (people in their house, names, languages, favorite food, pets, etc)
- Ask questions of classmates about their families
- Show respect for the families of others through their words and actions.

Students will develop the following attitudes:

- Self-Awareness
- Curiosity
- Respect

PERFORMANCE TASKS:

By observing the students as they engage with and complete these tasks, the educator will be able to determine how they are developing the above knowledge, skills and attitudes.

- Family Photo Display and presentation: students will bring in a family photo for display and tell about their families (their names, relation to the child, what language they speak at home, where they were born, if they have pets)
- Class Discussion: students engage in a discussion in which they ask each other questions based on what they heard. Model and prompt the students to ask questions such as: who lives in your house? Do you have pets? What are your family members names? What foods does your family like to eat? What games does your family like to play?

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

Introduction to Identity:

- Display and read over the essential questions (5 min)
- Begin with a story or picture book that explores the theme of family. Discuss the story's main themes and how they relate to students' own lives. Begin to introduce the types of questions you want the students to learn to ask: who is in this person's family? Where are they from? Do they have pets? What do they like to do? (10 min)

Activity:

- **Family Photo Sharing:** Children bring a family photo and share stories about the people in the photo, who are they, their names, maybe their ages, pets, favorite activities/food. Photos are displayed like a museum in the classroom. (15 min)

Discussions:

- How do you feel when you look at the picture of your family? The pictures of other people's family?
 - What do you see that is the same when you look at the pictures? What do you see that looks different in the pictures? (total of 15 min)
-

Elementary School (Ages 7-10)

This learning can be done in its entirety or in smaller pieces. Depending on the educator choice it is estimated that if all activities are completed it will take three 45-minute classes.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will understand that identity is multifaceted and includes one's personal preferences, cultural background, and experiences and that it is developed over time.
- Students will recognize the importance of respecting their own identities and those of others.

Enduring Understandings

Students will understand that...

- Everyone has a unique identity shaped by various factors including family, culture, interests, and experiences.
- Understanding and respecting diverse identities is essential for healthy interactions in a multicultural society.

Essential Questions

- What makes you who you are?
- How do our identities affect the way we see ourselves and interact with others?
- How do our identities shape our worldview?
- Why is it important to respect and celebrate different identities?

Competences:

Students will know...

- The concept of identity and the factors that contribute to it.
- How to articulate aspects of their own identity.
- How to analyze characteristics and identity from stories both fictional and real.

Students will have the skills to...

- Describe their own identity and factors that influence it.
- Analyze and extract information about identity from a story
- Describe another's identity based on a story/text.
- Show respect for the identity of others through their words and actions.

Students will develop the following attitudes:

- Open mindedness
- Empathy
- Self-Awareness
- Curiosity
- Respect
- Critical Thinking
- Responsibility
- Cultural Sensitivity

PERFORMANCE TASKS:

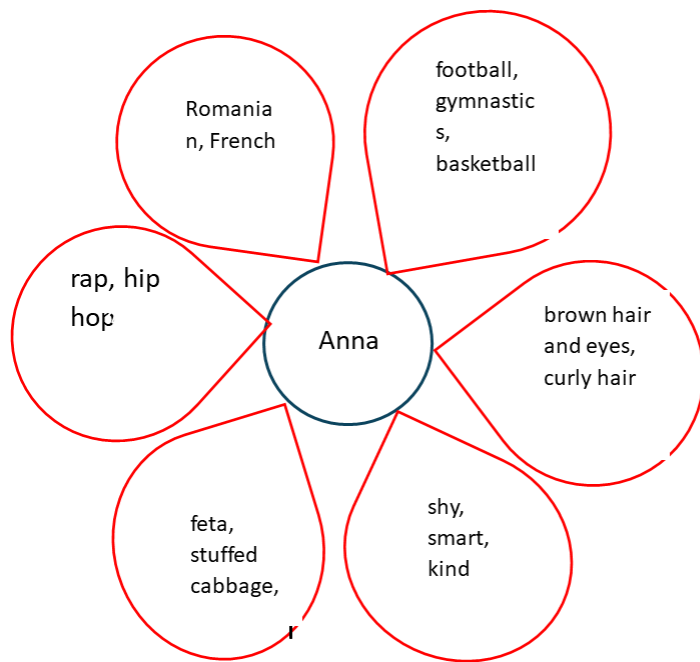
By observing the students as they engage with and complete these tasks, the educator will be able to determine how they are developing the above knowledge, skills and attitudes.

- Storytelling: Students write short stories or comics depicting a day in their life
- Identity flowers creation and presentation: Students create identity flowers to identify identity categories of a classmate from a written text. They present the flowers and then analyze all the student flowers and discuss similarities and differences that emerge within the class.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

Introduction to identity

- Review the essential questions, allow the students to begin answering them if they are “hooked” intrigued by the questions. (10 min)
- Begin with a story or picture book that explores the theme of identity. Discuss the story's main themes and how they relate to students' own lives. Create an Identity Flower as a class about the main character. Raise awareness of the different information they gather about the character (how he/she/they look, what they like/dislike, what they do, how they behave, hobbies, family, etc). Ask the question: is there a category of things that make us who we are that we didn't see in this book? Make a list. (35 min)



Activities:

- **"Walk in My Shoes" Storytelling:** Students write short stories or draw comic strips about a typical day in their life, emphasizing details, and unique aspects about themselves. Everyone should add a drawn picture or photograph to the story/comic strip. Students trade stories with another classmate and create the first draft of the author's identity flower. (45 min)
- **Identity Flowers:** Using the example from the introduction and the list of categories, students each make an identity flower based on the story/comic and picture they are reading. Then they give the author their identity flower. The author reviews the flower and, in another color, adds whatever they think is missing ex. categories=petals, details such as traits (what are they like), hobbies, cultural background, and languages spoken. Display the flower garden in the classroom and have each student present themselves. Ask the students to look at all the flowers and notice the differences and similarities within the class. (45 min)

Discussions:

- How did your story communicate to your reader about your identity? What would you have done differently if you could write your story again?
 - How are the things you enjoy doing part of who you are? (think about your hobbies and interests)
 - What did you learn about your classmates, either as individuals or as a group from seeing everyone's Identity flowers?
-

Middle Grades (Ages 11-13)

This learning can be done in its entirety or in smaller pieces. Depending on the educator choice it is estimated that if all activities are completed it will take two 45-minute classes.

Learning Outcomes:

- Students will understand that identity is multifaceted and includes one's personal preferences, cultural background, and experiences and that it is developed over time.
- Students will recognize the importance of respecting their own identities and those of others.

Enduring Understandings

Students will understand that...

- Everyone has a unique identity shaped by various factors including family, culture, interests, and experiences.
- Understanding and respecting diverse identities is essential for healthy interactions in a multicultural society.

Essential Questions

- What makes you who you are?
- How do our identities affect the way we see ourselves and interact with others?
- How do our identities shape our worldview?
- Why is it important to respect and celebrate different identities?
- How does the dominant culture impact us and others?

Competences

Students will know...

- The concept of identity and the factors that contribute to it.
- How to articulate aspects of their own identity.
- The concept of dominant culture.
- How to articulate how dominant culture impacts them and others.

Students will have the skills to...

- Describe their own identity and factors that influence it.
- Show respect for the identity of others through their words and actions.
- Analyze the arc of characters and their own lives and identify the major inflection points that impacted identity development
- Describe the concept of a dominant culture
- Consider the relationship between media and dominant culture

Students will develop the following attitudes:

- Open mindedness
- Empathy
- Self-Awareness
- Curiosity
- Respect
- Critical Thinking
- Responsibility
- Cultural Sensitivity

PERFORMANCE TASKS:

By observing the students as they engage with and complete these tasks, the educator will be able to determine how they are developing the above knowledge, skills and attitudes.

- Media and Identity research and presentation: students analyze and present a character's identity from a book or TV show. They analyze media representation and its impact on them.
- Artifact exhibition: students carefully consider which family/cultural artifact to present as a reflection of their own identity

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

Introduction to identity: (15 minutes)

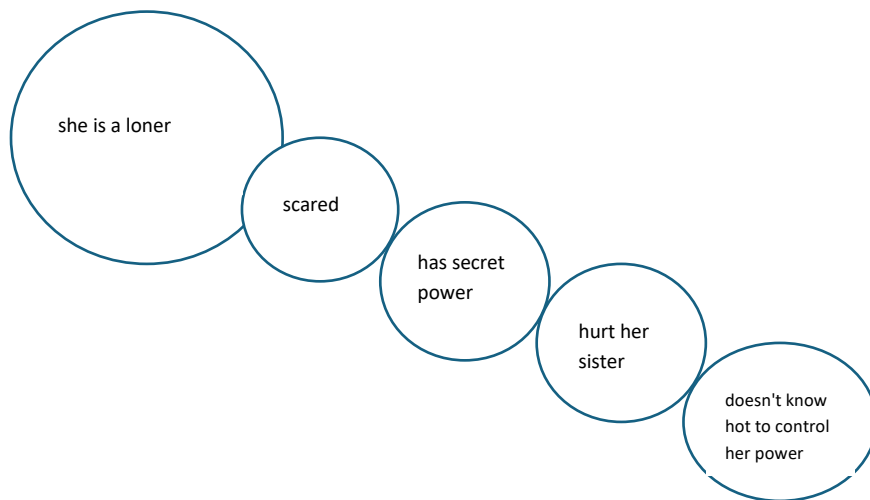
Open a discussion asking the students:

- What is dominant culture?
- Who decides what is beautiful in media, and how might this be influenced by the dominant culture in a society?
- How do movies, TV shows, and advertisements show what is considered beautiful
- Do you think these standards are the same around the world?
- Together make a list of their favorite characters from books, movies, TV

Activities:

1. **Identity and Media:** (A – 20/35 min) Choose a character from a book or popular TV show. Analyze the character in terms of their identity (e.g., gender, ethnicity, interests, traits, languages, music, holidays) as a class. Use the caterpillar method to visualize student thinking and reasoning as they think deeply about identity and how it is formed. As a class create several caterpillars for one character; each caterpillar's head is one identity category.

Ex. Character: Elsa from Frozen, Identity characteristics: personality= is a loner, afraid; looks=pale skin and hair, blue eyes, thin; interests=snow and ice, keeping people safe



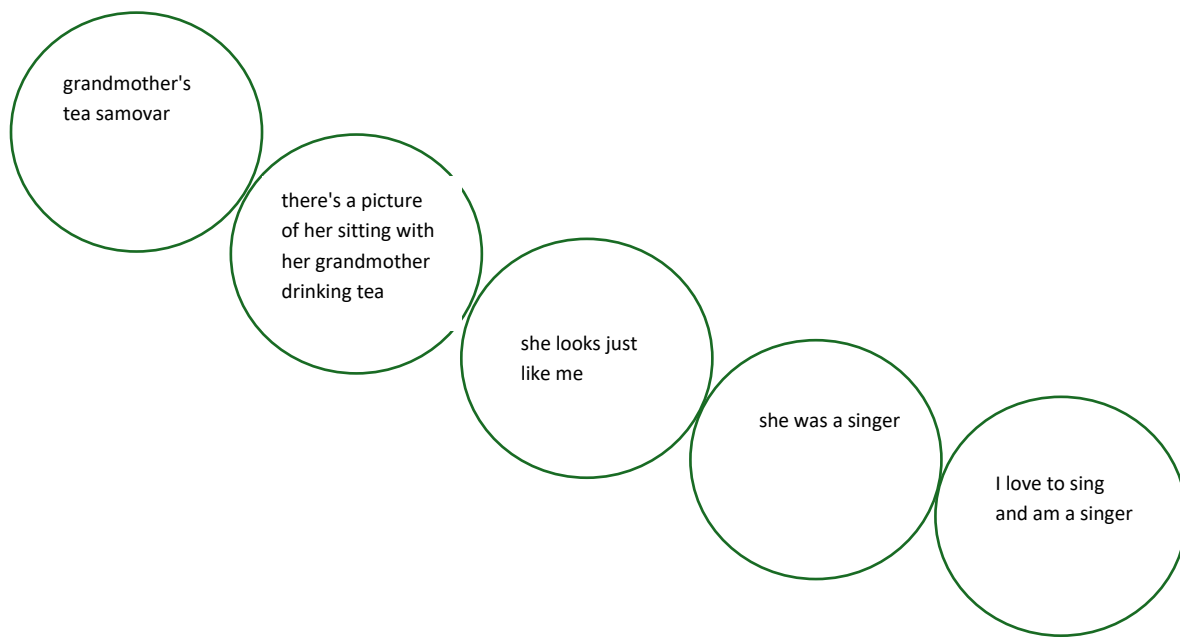
(B - 45 min) Put students in small groups and they choose a character and repeat the exercise independently as a group and present them to the class. Together the class observes and discusses what they observe when looking at all the caterpillars.

Discussion questions:

- What do the students notice about the characters they chose to analyze? Are there themes that they share in terms of their identity? What, if anything does that tell us about the media we are exposed to?

- How does media representation impact the way we think of ourselves, our identity and our own family culture?
2. **Cultural Artifact Exhibition:** (C – 45 min) Students bring an item from their homes that represents an aspect of their cultural identity, they gather information from home about the artifact, its history and how it came to their family). Back at school each student creates a personal caterpillar connecting their artifact (all the information they gathered) to their identity.

Ex. Tea samovar – I am a singer



Display the caterpillars beside each artifact and create a "museum walk".

Discussion questions:

- Think about the media persona caterpillars, and what you observed: are your identities reflected/represented by the media and dominant culture?
- Why or why not do they think this is so? How do they feel about it?
- Does the media represent the diversity you see in your school, community, society?

High School (Ages 14-18)

This learning can be done in its entirety or in smaller pieces. Depending on the educator choice it is estimated that if all activities are completed it will take three 45-minute classes.

Learning Outcomes:

- Students will understand that identity is multifaceted and includes one's personal preferences, cultural background, and experiences and that it is developed over time.
- Students will recognize the importance of respecting their own identities and those of others.

Enduring Understandings

Students will understand that...

- Everyone has a unique identity shaped by various factors including family, culture, interests, and experiences and that identity can be developed, weakened and strengthened.
- Understanding and respecting diverse identities is essential for healthy interactions in a multicultural society.
- Understanding and appreciating that there is a relationship between diverse identities and communities and societies – each impacts the other.

Essential Questions

- What makes you who you are?
- How do our identities affect the way we see ourselves and interact with others?
- How do our identities shape our worldview?
- How do diverse identities impact communities and societies?
- Why is it important to respect and celebrate different identities?

Competences

Students will know...

- The concept of identity and the factors that contribute to it.

- Connect key points in their lives and connect them to aspects of identity development (strengthening & weakening).
- How to articulate aspects of their own identity.
- How to articulate how their community and society impacts them and others.
- How to articulate how their identities and the identities of others impact community and society

Students will have the skills to...

- Describe their own identity and factors that influence it.
- Show respect for the identity of others through their words and actions.
- Analyze the arc of characters and their own lives and identify the major inflection points that impact their identity development
- Describe how communities and society impact identity development
- Consider how diverse identities impact communities and society

Students will develop the following attitudes:

- Open mindedness
- Empathy
- Self-Awareness
- Curiosity
- Respect
- Critical Thinking
- Responsibility
- Cultural Sensitivity

PERFORMANCE TASKS:

By observing the students as they engage with and complete these tasks, the educator will be able to determine how they are developing the above knowledge, skills and attitudes.

- Students actively participate in a debate about identity
- Students map out identities first through a book character, identifying major moments in the storyline that shape the character and his/her/their identity and explain *how* the event/moment shaped the character's sense of identity. The students then create their personal timeline with major life inflection points and describe/explain how those key moments impacted their sense of identity.

- Students engage in fishbowl and/or small group discussions to explore identity development

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

Introduction:

Begin with this “hook” activity to get students thinking about identity, cultural heritage and knowing other’s identities and cultural heritage.

Identity “Standing Debate”: Organize the space with chairs on three sides and present a statement such as: “It is more important to understand your own cultural heritage than to learn about others”. On the right sit the students who agree, on the left students who disagree and in the middle those who aren’t sure. Take turns right to left with points of agreement and disagreement (students who are sitting in the center aren’t allowed to comment). Students can move at any moment to a different spot as their thinking shifts. This activity can go on for about 10-15 minutes, allowing enough time for students to explore different points of view.

Activities:

- **Mapping My Identity:** Begin by modeling this activity with a character in a book recently read by the class – create a timeline for the major moments, experiences, culture and contexts that have shaped that character. Once all the key moments are mapped, the class uses a fishbowl discussion method to describe and explain how those moments impacted/shaped the sense of identity/identity development of the character. 3-4 students sit in a small circle (they hold the discussion). Other students stand around the inner circle and listen. They can move into the circle when they find a quiet moment to tap the shoulder of someone in the circle and they replace them. The educator facilitates the conversation by offering the inner circle a key moment/scene in the character’s life and asks the inner circle to discuss how this moment/scene/characteristic shaped the character’s sense of identity.
- Next the students create digital or artistic maps that represent their cultural heritage and personal journey, highlighting key moments that shaped their identity with explanations (written (narrative, poems, songs), drawn, etc) as to how those moments have shaped their sense of identity. They can create their map as a timeline, spiral, collage, concentric circles, any creative way that helps them both

visualize and explain key aspects in their lives and how they have shaped their personal sense of identity. Once the students have created their “maps” they can convene another fishbowl or hold small group conversations discussing the essential questions:

- What makes you who you are?
- How does your identity affect the way you see yourself and interact with others?
- How does your identity shape your worldview?
- How has your identity been impacted by your community and society
- How do diverse identities impact communities and societies?
- Why is it important to respect and celebrate different identities?

Questions for further discussion:

- How do our personal narratives (the stories we tell about ourselves) shape and/or strengthen our sense of personal identity?
- How does society influence our understanding of our own identity and the identity of others?
- In what ways do you feel that your identity is supported within your family, community and society as a whole?
- How do diverse identities impact our community or society and how does that impact your appreciation of diversity?

Food & Dress

Food and dress both determine and express cultural identity. They are both easily accessible, understandable and often deeply engrained within cultural norms, history, heritage and cultural pride. The sample lessons below have been developed in a two-step structure. In intercultural education it is important for learners to first identify their own cultural heritage and then engage with diverse cultural heritages. This allows learners to ground their understanding of others in their understanding of themselves. As such, the first lesson asks students to explore their own cultural food and dress and the second lesson invites them to explore cultures different from their own.

Intercultural Learning: Exploring Dress and Food

Below are lesson plans, two for each age group, focusing on cultural identity through food and dress. For lower elementary, the first lesson helps students explore their understanding of their cultural food and dress. Beginning by differentiating between regular/popular foods and cultural foods and learning from their families about their own cultural food and dress heritage. In the second lesson students explore cultural foods and dress of other cultures and compare them to their own.

For upper elementary, the first lesson will help students explore and make connections between their own cultural dress and food with the geography and climate. In the second lesson, students will expand their learning and explore how geography and climate impact the development of cultural food and dress in other places.

Each of the plans offers:

- A framework following the Understanding by Design* Lesson plan which offers educators *enduring understandings* (statements summarizing important ideas and core processes that are central to a discipline and have lasting value beyond the classroom) and *essential questions* (open-ended questions that naturally recur, they enable students to make meaning rather than simply take or receive them; always displayed visibly during the entirety of the learning), followed by:
 - *Competences* (knowledge, skills, attitudes)
- *Performance tasks* (the task which the educator will use to assess student learning)
- Learning activities which describe the plan for the learning

Once the educator has read through the plan for the selected age group, he/she/they can decide on the scope, depth and length of the learning.

* Understanding by design (UBD) helps students apply what they learn in a course to the real world, which deepens and enriches their learning experience. UBD is based on the principle of backward design and its three stages. The first stage is where instructors identify desired results: what competences should students master? The second stage is for determining acceptable evidence: what are some indicators that show students have achieved desired results? The final stage is for planning learning experiences: what activities will help students master the specific competences identified?

Elementary School (Ages 7-10) #1

In this lesson students will explore their understanding of their own cultural food and dress. Beginning by differentiating between regular/popular foods and cultural foods and learning from their families about their own cultural food and dress heritage.

Learning Outcomes:

- Students will explore the difference between the food they love/eat and food that is part of their culture.
- Students will understand the significance of traditional food and dress in culture in general and their culture specifically.
- Students will recognize the diversity within their classroom community and appreciate the cultural backgrounds of their peers.
- Students will develop empathy and respect for different cultural traditions.

Enduring Understandings

- Cultural identity is shaped by a variety of factors, including food, dress, customs, and traditions.
- Exploring and understanding our own cultural heritage helps us appreciate and respect the diverse backgrounds of others.
- Embracing cultural diversity enriches our communities and promotes mutual understanding and acceptance.

Essential Questions (Post these on the wall where everyone can see them)

1. How do food and dress represent culture?
2. How does learning about our own cultural heritage through food and dress contribute to understanding and respecting others?
3. Why is it important to celebrate and embrace cultural diversity?

Competences

Students will know.....

- The difference between the food that they enjoy and the food that is part of their cultural heritage
- Examples of their cultural food and dress and their significance
- Know how to interview their families about cultural food and dress
- Know about the background cultures of their classmates

Students will have the skills to.....

- Compare and describe what food is part of their culture
- Describe examples of their cultural dress
- Interview their families to learn about their cultural food and dress
- Compare and contrast cultural food and dress within their class

Students will develop the following attitudes:

- Open mindedness
- Empathy
- Self-Awareness
- Curiosity
- Respect
- Critical Thinking
- Cultural Sensitivity

PERFORMANCE TASKS:

By observing the students as they engage with and complete these tasks, the educator will be able to determine how they are developing the above knowledge, skills and attitudes.

- Students will create a visual representation (drawing, collage, etc.) of their favorite traditional food and clothing from their own cultural background.
- Students “dress” a paper doll with their own creations representing their traditional dress.
- Students will participate in class discussions and activities, sharing personal stories and experiences related to their cultural identity.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

Introduction:

- Display pictures around the room of people from different cultural backgrounds– showing diverse cultural dress and food.
- Invite the students to walk around the room to look at the pictures and then to stand near a set of pictures that are new to them - they don't think they have seen before.
- Ask the students: what do they see that is different or new for you?
- Facilitate a discussion about students' own cultural backgrounds using the pictures. Ask them: if there were pictures about your background what would we see? Have the students complete a drawing showing their dress and a food they eat with their family. They can display their pictures after they present what they drew.
- Notice whether students offer cultural or tradition foods/dress or whether they offer more “popular” or global food/dress.
- Ask the students to think about what they eat/wear in their homes on special occasions: holidays, birthdays, etc. Notice and bring to their attention whether that food is different than what they originally drew.

Main Activities:

A. Exploring Traditional Food:

1. Send the students home with a paper with questions to ask their families:

- What are special foods we eat in our home that are part of our culture and traditions?
- When do we eat these foods?
- Where do these foods come from?
- What are our favorite traditional foods?

2. When students return with the information gathered, they share their favorite traditional foods from their own culture and explain why they love the food and when they eat it.

3. Students draw or create visual representations of their favorite traditional dishes. With the help of the teacher they notice what similarities emerge from the class and what differences.

B. Discovering Traditional Dress:

1. Go back to the pictures in the classroom and ask the students:

- Why do you think people wear different clothes in different countries/cultures?
- Can you think of any traditional clothing from your country/culture?

2. Send the students home with a paper with questions to ask their families:

- Where does our family come from?
- What clothes are traditional from there?
- Do we have any of these clothes?
- When do people in their family wear traditional clothes?
- Bring a picture of the traditional clothing back to school

3. When students return they share what they have learned with their classmates. If they have a picture of traditional clothing they use it, if not, offer them a picture of traditional clothing from the country/region in which they live. Create paper dolls for each student and offer them materials, markers, crayons, textiles, etc to dress their doll in their traditional dress.

Conclusion:

1. Create a gallery in which each student presents their picture of food and their dressed paper doll in the classroom, entitled “Our class”
2. Facilitate a discussion about the similarities and differences in students' cultural backgrounds, emphasizing the importance of respecting and appreciating diversity.
3. Help the students think about what they learned about their own background and what they learned about their classmates' backgrounds.

Elementary School (Ages 7-10) #2

Intercultural Learning: Exploring Dress and Food in Different Cultures

During this lesson students will continue their exploration of cultural food and dress by researching and learning about other's cultural food and dress traditions.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will develop an understanding of cultural diversity by exploring the traditional food and dress of different cultures.
- Students will recognize and respect the cultural differences and similarities between their own culture and others.
- Students will demonstrate empathy and appreciation for diverse cultural traditions.

Enduring Understandings

- Cultural diversity is reflected in the food and dress of different societies, contributing to the richness of human experiences.
- Exploring and understanding cultural differences promotes empathy, respect, and appreciation for diverse perspectives.
- Recognizing similarities and differences between cultures fosters global awareness and intercultural understanding.

Essential Questions:

1. How does exploring the food and dress of other cultures contribute to our understanding of cultural diversity?
2. What similarities and differences do we observe between our own cultural food and dress and those of others?
3. How can we show respect and appreciation for the cultural traditions of others?

Competences

Students will know.....

- How to describe the cultural food and dress of a culture different from their own
- How to use a Venn diagram as a tool for comparing and contrasting
- How to respectfully present information about another culture
- How to ask questions of classmates to clarify and deepen their learning

Students will have the skills to.....

- Research the cultural food and dress of a culture different from their own
- Create a visual presentation of food and dress of another culture
- Make an oral presentation explaining their learning
- Explain how a Venn Diagram is used to compare and contrast food and dress from different cultures
- Respectfully explore and try foods/activities from other cultures
- Respectfully and actively listen to classmates

Students will develop the following attitudes:

- Open mindedness
- Empathy

- Self-Awareness
- Curiosity
- Respect
- Critical Thinking
- Cultural Sensitivity

PERFORMANCE TASKS:

By observing the students as they engage with and complete these tasks, the educator will be able to determine how they are developing the above knowledge, skills and attitudes.

- Students will research cultural food and dress of a culture different from their own
- Students will create a visual display of the food and dress they researched
- Students will engage in a class discussion or activity where they share their findings and reflections on cultural similarities and differences (using a Venn diagram).

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

Introduction:

Begin by asking the students if they know about foods from other cultures and countries, offer them examples which they may have tasted (Italian, Chinese, Greek...depending on your community/region). Do they have a favorite type of food (from another culture or country).

Review the concepts of cultural food and dress explored in the previous lesson, connecting them to the broader theme of exploring other cultures.

Main Activities

1. Cultural Exploration Stations:
 - a. Set up different stations around the classroom, each representing a different culture.
 - b. At each station, provide simple activities related to exploring traditional food and dress. For example, at the "Japanese" station, students could try using chopsticks, watching a video on kimono and tasting seaweed; at the "Iceland" table you could touch wool, and try knitting needles, watch a video on fishing/drying fish and tasting dry fish.

- c. Allow students to rotate through the stations in small groups, spending a few minutes at each station to engage in the activities.
 - d. Facilitate a class discussion and collect the students' thoughts and questions about each station. What did they notice? What did they enjoy? What was difficult? Encourage students to share their observations and ask questions about the cultures they are exploring.
2. Creative Expression:
- a. Each student (or pairs/small groups) choose/s one other culture to work with. This can be wanting to learn more about a culture that was presented or an entirely new culture they want to explore. They research food and dress from the culture (watching videos, finding pictures, reading when they can) to learn more about the food and dress.
 - b. Provide art materials such as paper, crayons, markers, and fabric scraps, magazines, etc. so that students can creatively (visually) present what they have learned about food and dress from that culture.
 - c. Once complete, put all the pieces together to create a large class multi-cultural mural/collage for display.
 - d. With the students observe the full collage and ask them to reflect:
 - i. What do they see?
 - ii. How does seeing their collage/mural make them feel?
 - iii. What are they still curious about, what to learn more about?
 - e. Together choose one culture to use to compare and contrast to the local culture using a Venn Diagram. As an extension activity students, in groups, can make their own Venn Diagrams to compare and contrast two cultures.
 - f. Consider inviting other classrooms to view the classroom mural/collage and allow the students to present their work.

Upper Elementary (Ages 10-14) #1

Exploring Intercultural Education through Own Food, Dress, Geography, and Climate

Learning Outcomes

- Students will explore the connection between their own cultural identity, geography, and climate through the lens of traditional food and dress.
- Students will recognize the influence of geography and climate on food production, culinary traditions, and clothing choices within their culture.

- Students will develop a deeper understanding of cultural diversity and the interplay between environmental factors and cultural practices.

Enduring Understandings

- Geography and climate play a significant role in shaping the food and dress of different cultures, influencing agricultural practices, culinary traditions, and clothing materials.
- Understanding the connection between geography, climate, and cultural identity enhances our appreciation and respect for diverse cultural practices and traditions.
- Environmental factors contribute to the richness of cultural diversity, highlighting the interconnectedness of human societies and their natural surroundings.

Essential Questions

1. What are the connections between our own cultural identity, geography, and climate?
2. How does geography and climate influence the food and dress of different cultures?
3. Why is it important to understand the relationship between environmental factors and cultural practices?

Competences

Students will know.....

- Their regions/culture's geography and climate
- How geography and climate impacted the agricultural practices
- How geography and climate impacted the food and dress in their culture
- How one of their cultural foods is related to the region's geography and climate
- How to use a caterpillar to visualize their reasoning

Students will have the skills to.....

- Discern differences in climate and geography around the world
- Reason through causal variables that led to their cultural food
- Explain the causal effects of geography and climate on their culture's food and dress
- Research and present how geographic features, climate conditions and agricultural practices led to this food/dress.

- Create a multi-media presentation to share their findings

Students will develop the following attitudes:

- Open mindedness
- Empathy
- Self-Awareness
- Curiosity
- Respect
- Critical Thinking
- Responsibility
- Cultural Sensitivity

PERFORMANCE TASKS:

By observing the students as they engage with and complete these tasks, the educator will be able to determine how they are developing the above knowledge, skills and attitudes.

- Students will create a multimedia presentation (e.g., video, podcast, animation) exploring and presenting their reasoning of the connection between their own cultural food, dress, and the geography and climate of their region.
- Students will participate in a class discussion and reflection, analyzing the impact of geography and climate on cultural practices and traditions.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

Introduction (45 min):

1. Present the essential questions to stimulate students' thinking and guide their exploration of the interplay between geography, climate, food, and dress within their own culture. Allow them time to discuss any of the questions that “hook” them.
2. Display a world map for the entire class to see and open up a conversation asking the students to think about food and dress in different regions of the world. Guide them to consider geography and climate, emphasizing their influence on human societies and cultural practices. What are some general patterns they can already identify?
3. Display a map of the region where the students live, discuss the geography (land and borders) and the general climate. Help students think about how all those factors impact food production and clothing choices.

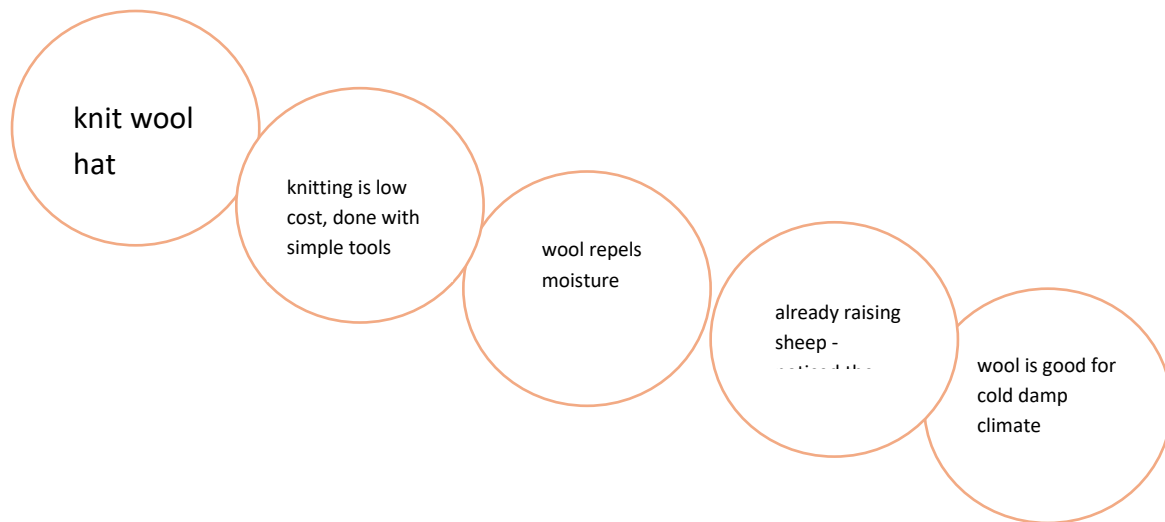
Main Activities:

Geography and Climate Impact on Food Research (2-45 minutes lessons):

1. Discuss with students the influence of geography and climate on food production, availability, and culinary traditions.
2. In pairs or small groups have students research and present one example of traditional foods from their own culture. The research should explore how geographic features, climate conditions and agricultural practices led to this specific food. Students create a digital book/comic strip, podcast, video to show the relationship of geography and climate to the food they researched.
3. Create a class-wide final digital presentation that showcases all the research products the students created.

Geography and Climate Impact on Dress:

1. Discuss with students the influence of geography and climate on clothing materials, styles, and traditions.
2. Students (individually or in pairs) research and present examples of traditional clothing from their own culture, explaining how geographic factors and climate conditions influence clothing choices and design. Students choose one piece of clothing (shoes, headdress/hats, inner/outer wear, anything); they research its history, what it is made of, what processes were traditionally used and how it came to be in relation to the geography and climate. Students utilize the caterpillar method here to visualize their research and reasoning – the context and events that lead to the piece of clothing being made.



3. Students use their research caterpillar to create visual representations (e.g., sketches, posters, textiles, dolls, etc) or fashion displays illustrating the connection between their cultural dress and the geographic region/climate it reflects alongside their caterpillars.

4. Students present their visual representations to the class.

Conclusion:

1. Gather students to share their multimedia presentations and personal reflections on the influence of geography and climate on their own cultural food and dress.

What new insights did they gain?

What new questions do they have for their own research or other's research?

Upper Elementary (Ages 10-14) #2

Exploring Intercultural Education through Other's Food, Dress, Geography, and Climate

Learning Outcomes

- Students will explore the connection between other's cultural identity, geography, and climate through the lens of traditional food and dress.
- Students will recognize the influence of geography and climate on food production, culinary traditions, and clothing choices as they explore other cultures.
- Students will develop a deeper understanding of cultural diversity and the interplay between environmental factors and cultural practices.

Enduring Understandings

- Geography and climate play a significant role in shaping the food and dress of different cultures, influencing agricultural practices, culinary traditions, and clothing materials.
- Understanding the connection between geography, climate, and cultural identity enhances our appreciation and respect for diverse cultural practices and traditions.
- Environmental factors contribute to the richness of cultural diversity, highlighting the interconnectedness of human societies and their natural surroundings.

Essential Questions

1. What are the connections between our own cultural identity, geography, and climate?
2. How does geography and climate influence the food and dress of different cultures?
3. Why is it important to understand the relationship between environmental factors and cultural practices?

Competences

Students will know.....

Students will have the skills to.....

Students will develop the following attitudes:

- Open mindedness
- Empathy
- Self-Awareness
- Curiosity
- Respect
- Critical Thinking
- Responsibility
- Cultural Sensitivity

PERFORMANCE TASKS:

By observing the students as they engage with and complete these tasks, the educator will be able to determine how they are developing the above knowledge, skills and attitudes.

- Students create a “claymation” food festival and fashion show showcasing their learning about cultural food and dress of a culture different from their own
- Students will participate in a class discussion and reflection, analyzing the impact of geography and climate on cultural practices and traditions.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

Introduction (30-45 min):

- Begin with a silent conversation. With this method, students engage in a silent conversation, where there is no talking. Instead, students respond in writing to something written on the board of very large piece of paper. Put this quote on the board: “A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots.”(Marcus Garvey, Jamaican Activist) or “A cheese is as worthy of preserving as a sixteenth-century building.” (Carlo Petrini, Italian author and activist).
- Give students markers and in silence invite them to: agree, disagree, ask a question. Once they have had time to respond (about 10 minutes); invite them to respond, agree, disagree, ask questions of what is written and answer them. (10 minutes)
- Once they conversation is complete. Ask the students to gather around and read everything on the paper/board and ask them:

- What do you see?
- What connections or themes are there?
- What are you curious about?

Main Activities: (3-4 45 min sessions)

After exploring connections of geography and climate to their own cultural food and dress it is time to begin exploring how geography and climate impact and connect to other cultures' food and dress.

- In small groups students choose a culture that is different from their own about which they are curious and want to learn more. In these groups, they begin general research of that culture's food and dress. From the initial research, the group chooses one piece of clothing and one dish to explore further. As they did in the previous lesson, students research how the geography and climate impacted agricultural practices, and how that specific food and specific item of clothing came to be. (1-2 45 min sessions)
- Once the students have their research complete they begin creating clay representations of the food and dress they researched and they write a script describing the food and dress, the place they come from, it's climate and geography and how that led to this food and dress. Students create a claymation/stop motion video as a food festival and then a fashion show. Here is a [simple video](#) to show you how. Also, there are apps for phones and [chromebook](#) to use for this project. Students decide on how they will create their film, set up the festival and set up the runway. Then each group will create their piece of the video (motion and script) and once all videos are filmed then they can be put together into one longer video. If there isn't access to technology, students can create a real time simulation of a food festival and fashion show, using their clay creations and moving them themselves. Consider inviting other classes into to view the fashion show and attend the food festival. Each student groups gets a turn to show their clay creation and read/perform their written script. (1-2 45 min sessions).

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