

# How to Kit



## Culture Days Activities

2011

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## **Culture Days Activities**

### **How to Kit: Culture Days**

Culture is a word for people's way of life, meaning the way they are and the ways they know and do things. Different groups of people may have different ways of being, knowing and doing. A culture is passed on to the next generation usually by older people teaching younger people the traditional ways of that culture. Culture is closely tied to language, and is seen in people's writing, religion, music, clothes, cooking – in fact, in everything they do.

There are many reasons to include a range of cultural activities in your classroom, library or literacy program. Canada is a country of diversity: it has many different cultures, including many Aboriginal cultures that are not found anywhere else in the world. Learning about a variety of cultures helps people to be more understanding and accepting of others. Also, participating in cultural activities is fun and engaging for children.

We hope that this how to kit will give you some ideas you can use to explore other cultures.

## Culture Days Activities

### Create Your Own Holiday

Begin by discussing holidays—people often feel that they need more days off during the year. Ask, "If you could create a new holiday, what would the purpose of the holiday be? What would encourage others to want to accept a new holiday?" For ideas, have people discuss ways that they feel their culture, gender, or generation needs to be better understood, appreciated, or celebrated.

- Purpose of the holiday
- Background information
- Date of holiday
- Decorations involved in holiday
- Foods associated with the holiday
- Symbol that represents the holiday

Along with the above requirements, people can include any other information they feel is important to their holiday. Booklets can be constructed by folding construction paper in half lengthwise. The symbol for the holiday should be on the front of the booklet. When the booklets are completed, have students share their creations with one another. If they wish to expand upon their project, students can create a greeting card for their holiday.



## Culture Days Activities

### Multicultural Feast

Hosting a feast at your school or in your community can be a terrific way to bring together a variety of cultures. Ask every person in the group who is able to bring in a dish of food that is representative of their culture.

#### Preparation

It is a good idea to put up a poster explaining the multicultural feast and inviting people to attend. The poster should:

- Ask families to talk about their culture and choose a dish to prepare together.
- Let them know the time and place of the feast.
- Let them know about any food allergies in the group.

#### Decorations

Before the feast, have participants create decorations that reflect their culture. Let them be creative!

#### Activities

Ask around before the day of the feast to see if anyone would be willing to share anything with the group involving their culture. Some examples of performances are: dances, costumes, skits, poems, stories, photos, artifacts etc.



From:

<http://www.teachingvillage.org/2010/02/16/multicultural-activities-in-class-by-vicky-loras/>

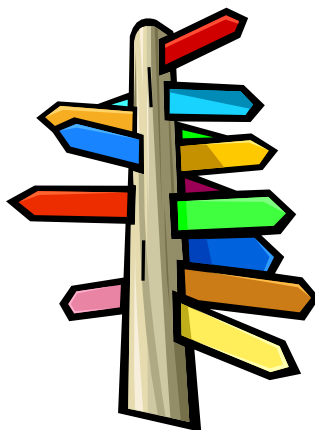
## Culture Days Activities

### Documenting Your Travels

After a holiday, everyone returns home with many experiences from their travels. Often we move on with our lives and over time we forget what we experienced on our travels. Creating a scrap-book or a poster to hang on your wall is a great way to share your experiences with your family and friends.

- Use photos and souvenirs such as ticket stubs from your trips.
- Piece everything together by country or by time frame.
- It may even be a good idea to take a journal with you on your trips to write in each night. A short entry about what you did that day can really be rewarding when you return home.
- Try to date everything.

Share your finished project with your community and share the knowledge you have gained. This may enlighten people about the differences in culture, or it may spark an interest in them to go out and travel. If they do, make sure they document their travels so they can share their experiences too!



*This activity can be modified to be used in a classroom*

## Culture Days Activities

### The Armchair Traveller

Most people return home from a trip with a head full of stories and a camera full of pictures. Why not share those experiences with your community by organizing an armchair traveller event?

- Communicate with community members about the armchair traveller event. That way they can be sure to document their trips!
- Organize an individual or group presentation for a single night, once a week, or once a month, whatever is comfortable with your community.
- Make sure people know when and where to show up for this event. It may also be a good idea to let people know where the presenter had travelled to.



Things to share with your community:

- You can make a slideshow of your pictures from your trip.
- Tell stories about things that happened or people you met while travelling.
- Explain if things felt different while travelling, and why they felt different. Cultural differences?
- Show any souvenirs you may have brought back with you.

## Culture Days Activities

### Show-and-Tell

A cultural show-and tell is a great way to get people to share their cultures. Talk to your local library to host a cultural show-and-tell and invite everyone!

Here are some things people can do:

- Bring a special object and tell the group about it
- Dress up in a traditional costume
- Bring a traditional food to share
- Bring photos of a trip to a different country
- Sing a song
- Teach a few words or phrases in another language

Once the presentations are over people may be interested in expanding upon the information they have absorbed. You could have them create art projects involving the cultures and objects they have just viewed and learned about.



*This activity can be modified to be used in a classroom*



## Culture Days Activities

### Cooking

Trying a new recipe is a fun and tasty way to experience another culture.

- Look through the cookbooks at your local library. Choose one that features dishes from another country. Try out one of the recipes or plan a whole meal!
- Try making some of your favourite restaurant foods at home. For example if you love to go out for sushi, look for a sushi recipe and make your own. There are many recipes for interesting foods on the internet.
- Write to, phone or email a grandparent or other relative and ask them for a recipe from their childhood.



## Culture Days Activities

### Culture on the Radio

Many communities in the NWT have community radio stations. They are a great way to share traditional culture. Here are some suggestions for including culture on the radio:

- Invite an elder in to share traditional stories on the radio.
- Host a radio language lesson. Invite someone who speaks your language well to come in and teach some phrases and sentences over the radio.
- Have children do cultural interviews on the radio. Look at the Interviews section of this kit for more ideas. Children will be very excited to be on the radio!
- Hold a contest in your language. Say an English word or phrase on the radio, and give a prize to the first person who calls in to say the word in your language. Or, say a word in your language and give a prize to the first person who knows the English translation.
- Play traditional music, such as fiddle music, jigs and drum music.
- Put up posters around town so that people will know to tune in!



## Culture Days Activities

### Interviews

Interviewing people from other cultures is a great way to understand them better and learn more about their culture.



Think about who you would like to interview. You might choose someone who has recently moved from another country, an elder who does a lot of traditional activities or a member of a group such as the Francophone cultural association, Philippine cultural association or Ukrainian dancers. Then, phone, write or email in advance to ask if they are interested. Explain a little bit about what you are doing and how you will use the interviews.

Here are some example questions you could ask as part of your interview. You will have to choose the most appropriate questions based on the age and background of your interviewee. Don't be afraid to ask your own questions as well. You may be surprised at the answers you get!

- Where are you from? What do you consider your culture to be?
- Do you speak a different language? What are some differences between English and your language?
- What kinds of food are important in your culture? Music? Books and movies?
- What holidays do you celebrate? What special activities do you do for holidays?
- What are some of the things that you like and dislike about Canadian culture? What is the hardest thing to adapt to?
- How do you think northern culture is different from southern culture?

## **Culture Days Activities**

- What are some changes you have seen from when you were young until now?
- What do you miss the most from your home country or culture?
- Do you feel that others are accepting of or interested in your culture?
- What kinds of activities do you do now to keep your culture strong?

It's a good idea to send a note or thank you card to your interviewee after you finish your project.

## Culture Days Activities

### Meet an Artist

The arts are the purest expression of culture as it is the creation of an individual's upbringing, opinions, thoughts and ideas. All of these are affected by an individual's culture; this is why art is so different around the world.

If you would like to learn more about a particular culture you should look for an artist from that culture to ask some questions. Try hunting down some of your local artists and asking if they would like to participate in your community event by sharing their talent.



Example of artists to invite to your event:

- Musicians
- Painters
- Story Tellers
- Poets
- Sculptors
- Singers

After they have performed you should take advantage of their knowledge by asking them some questions. For example:

- What factors have influenced your art?
- How has your upbringing affected your art?
- Why did you choose your particular medium of expression?



## Culture Days Activities

### Story Telling

Stories are told all over the world, making it a universal art. Stories are used to share personal experiences, pass on knowledge, and spark the imagination of all those that care to listen. Telling stories is a great way to bring together a group of people and it does not need any fancy equipment, just a voice. Combining the voices of a group of people to create a story together is also a terrific community building activity.

There are stories all throughout your community, rich with excitement and knowledge. Try asking a community member to share a story at your event.

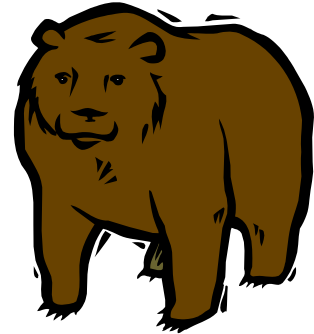
If you are interested in telling a story yourself but do not know one, there is an example of a folk tale on the next page.



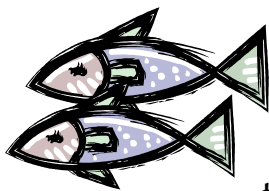
## **The Legend of How the Bear Lost Its Tail**

A long time ago, Bear had a long, bushy tail of which he was quite proud. Bear loved to show off his tail to all the other animals, including Fox. Now Fox loved to play tricks, and one day decided to have some fun at Bear's expense.

It was winter, and the lake had frozen. Fox knew the path Bear took by the lake and decided to lure Bear with some fish. Fox cut a hole in the ice and stacked many fish next to it. Fox knew Bear loved to eat fish, but so did fox. Fox didn't want Bear to fish in this spot, fearing Bear would eat all the fish up.



When Bear saw all the fish he was excited. He asked Fox how he had caught so many big fish. Fox told Bear that he could show him, but he had to do everything he asked if he wanted to catch a fish. Bear was so hungry so he agreed.



Fox went to a different spot and cut another hole into the lake and told Bear that he must put his bushy tail into the water if he wanted to catch a fish. Fox told Bear that he must sit very still and only think about fish. If he thought about anything else the fish would not bite his bushy tail. Fox told Bear that when he felt a nibble on his tail he had to quickly pull out his tail, and then he would have a big fish to eat.

Bear did what he was told and sat very, very still. He only thought about fish and did not notice how cold his tail was. Bear's eyes began to close as he became sleepy. With a great big yawn Bear fell asleep with his

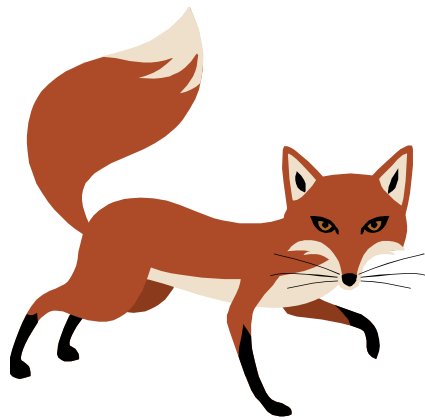
## Culture Days Activities

tail still in the water. Fox was watching Bear from the bushes and was rolling on the ground laughing.

After a while Fox grew tired of waiting. Quietly, Fox crept up to Bear, and began to shout: “Bear! Bear! I can see a fish on your tail! Pull your tail up now!”

Bear woke up with a fright and felt a terrible pain in his tail. He jumped up, and his frozen tail snapped off! All that was left was a small stump where his beautiful, long, bushy tail had been. Bear was very angry and groaned loudly at Fox. But, Fox was too fast and ran away laughing.

And that’s why bears have short tails today. And that’s why you won’t see Fox and Bear having lunch together! Fox knows he would be lunch!





## Culture Days Activities

### Multicultural Movies (For adults and adult learners)

Movies are a great way to travel and observe another culture without leaving home. If you are used to watching Hollywood movies, you may be surprised by how different and interesting movies made in other countries are.



Here are some questions to consider when you are watching a movie about another culture:

- What difference do you see between the culture shown in the movie and your own?
- Could the same storyline have happened where you live? Why or why not?
- Was the movie made by someone who belongs to the culture it shows, or was it made about the culture by someone on the outside? What differences do these make to the movie?
- Do you think it gives a fair portrait of the culture? Does it show the culture in a positive or negative light (or both)? Does it use a lot of stereotypes? You may have to do some outside research to answer these questions.

## Culture Days Activities

Here are some suggestions of movies that show a variety of different cultures. This is just a small sample; there are many more out there! They are suitable for older youth and adults.

### Northern

*Atanarjuat (The Fast Runner)*. 2001. Directed by Zacharias Kunik. Inuit.

A young Inuit warrior struggles to free his community of an evil spirit.

*CBQM*. 2009. Directed by Dennis Allen. Gwich'in.

In Fort McPherson, NWT, the local radio station is more than just a place to catch up with friends and hear old-time fiddle music. It's also the cultural heart of the community.

### Québec

*Bon Cop Bad Cop*. 2006. Directed by Erik Canuel. Québec.

When a body is discovered with its head in Québec and feet in Ontario, an uptight Anglophone cop and a rogue Québécois cop will have to work together to solve the crime.

*C.R.A.Z.Y.* 2005. Directed by Jean-Marc Vallée. Québec.

Zac is the fourth of five brothers growing up in the 1960s and 70s in Québec. But he doesn't seem to fit in with his strict father, ultra-Catholic mother, and cool, smart and athletic brothers.

*La Grande Seduction*. 2003. Directed by Jean-Francois Pouliot.

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A small fishing village is promised a new factory with jobs for everyone...if they can convince a doctor to move to town. This comedy takes a humorous look at life in rural Québec.

### Other Canadian

*Eve and the Fire Horse*. 2005. Directed by Julia Kwan. Canada.

Two young Chinese-Canadian sisters try to fit in by becoming devout Catholics, which when mixed with their Buddhist upbringing brings confusing results.

*Water*. 2005. Directed by Deepa Mehta. Canada

This film follows a group of women living in a widow's ashram in Varanasi, India in the 1930s. Winner of the 2005 Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.

*Bollywood/Hollywood*. 2002. Directed by Deepa Mehta. Canada.

This lighthearted film pokes fun at Indian stereotypes as Rahul tries to find himself a bride quickly so that his mother will let his sister's wedding go ahead.

*Incendies*. 2010. Directed by Denis Villeneuve. Canada.

Their dying mother's wishes send twins Jeanne and Simon to the Middle East to discover their family's dark past. Nominated for the 2010 Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.

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### **European**

*Goodbye Lenin!* 2003. Directed by Wolfgang Becker. Germany.

When his mother awakes from a coma in 1990, Alex must protect her health by keeping her from finding out that the Berlin Wall has fallen and that they no longer live in the country of East Germany.

*L'Auberge Espagnole.* 2002. Directed by Céderic Klapisch. France.

A young French economics student moves to Barcelona to learn Spanish, and moves into an apartment with eight others from all corners of Europe, leading to hilarious cultural and romantic clashes.

*War of the Buttons.* 1994. Directed by John Roberts. Ireland.

Two rival groups of young children face off in the woods and groves of Ireland. Differences in class and income have separated these children to the point of war. The reward for conquest? The buttons off their clothes.

### **Australia/New Zealand**

*Rabbit Proof Fence.* 2002. Directed by Phillip Noyce. Australia.

Three young aboriginal girls escape from a camp that trains them for domestic service and walk over 1500km across Western Australia to reach home.

*Whale Rider.* 2002. Directed by Niki Caro. New Zealand/Germany.

A twelve year old girl must prove herself worthy of becoming the chief of her tribe.

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### **Middle East**

*Kandahar*. 2002. Directed by Mohsen Makhmalbaf. Afghanistan.

An Afghani-Canadian woman attempts to return to Afghanistan during the Taliban era to search for her sister.

*Persepolis*. 2007. Directed by Vincent Parranaud and Marjane Satrapi. France.

This animated film is the story of an outspoken young girl coming of age in 1970s Iran during the Islamic Revolution.

### **Latin America**

*City of God*. 2002. Directed by Fernando Meirelles and Katia Lund. Brazil.

Two boys growing up in Rio de Janeiro take two very different paths. One becomes a photographer and the other a drug dealer.

## Culture Days Activities

### Guest Speakers

Guest speakers are exciting for learners, and can give them a personal connection to other cultures.

Here are some ideas for guest speakers:

- An elder from the community can visit to talk about what it was like to live a long time ago.
- A recent immigrant to Canada can talk about what it was like to move to a new and unfamiliar country, what they like about their new country, what they miss the most from home, what was the most difficult about moving, etc.
- Someone who has recently been on a trip can talk about their travels. They may even be able to bring in pictures and souvenirs to show.
- There is likely someone in your community who has done volunteer work in another part of the world. Invite them to come and share their experiences.



## Culture Days Activities

### Games from Other Countries

Try these games from other countries. Are they similar to any games that you play? You may want to do a library or internet search to find out more about these countries and the people who live there.

#### Dog and Bone from Australia

Number of Players: An odd number, at least 5

Equipment: Anything to act as the “bone” (e.g. a ball, a stick)

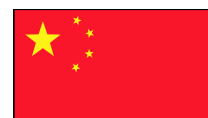


- 1) The players divide into 2 equal teams and stand in 2 lines facing each other. The extra person stands at one end of the lines.
- 2) The players number off from opposite ends of the line.
- 3) The “bone” is placed in the middle between the 2 lines.
- 4) The extra person calls out a number. The 2 people with this number must race each other to the bone.
- 5) The first person to pick up the bone must make it back to her line without being tagged by the other player. If she is successful she scores a point.

#### One, Two, Three, Dragon! From China

Number of players: At least five

Equipment: none



- 1) Everyone forms a line and each player puts his hand on the shoulders of the person in front of him to form a dragon.
- 2) Together, everyone says, “one, two, three, dragon!”



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- 3) The head of the dragon tries to catch the tail without anyone letting go of the person in front of them.
- 4) If someone lets go, the dragon dies.
- 5) If the head tags the tail, then he becomes the new head.
- 6) The game continues until everyone has had a turn to be the head.

### Haneqe from Egypt

Number of players: at least 4

Equipment: chalk or a long piece of string tied in a loop



- 1) Use either the chalk or the string to mark a target circle on the ground. It should be big enough for about half the players to stand inside.
- 2) Divide into 2 teams. One team will be team invasion and one will be team protection.
- 3) During the game, all players must hop on 1 foot while holding the other foot in their hands.
- 4) Team invasion tries to get into the target circle, while team protection tries to stop them from getting in.
- 5) Any player that puts both feet on the ground is out, unless they are already inside the target circle.
- 6) All the players that reach the inside of the target circle score a point for their team.
- 7) The teams switch for the next round.



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### Ampe from Ghana

Number of players: 2

Equipment: none

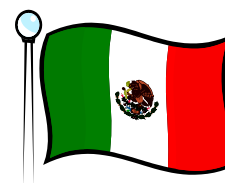


- 1) Two players stand facing each other. One player is “odds” and the other is “evens.”
- 2) The two players count “one, two, three” together. As they say “three,” they jump up and stick out one foot.
- 3) If two feet on the same side are sticking out, then the “evens” player wins. If two opposite feet are sticking out, the “evens” player wins.
- 4) The first player to get 11 points wins.

### Carpenteros, Carboneros, Cardinales from Mexico

Number of players: At least 5

Equipment: none



- 1) Divide into 2 teams, with one person left over.
- 2) The two teams line up facing each other. Choose a safe zone, such as a fence, tree, or cone, about 10m behind each team.
- 3) One team is carpenteros and the other team is carboneros. A caller stands at one end of the lines.
- 4) The caller can call out either, “carpenteros,” “carboneros” or “cardinals.”
- 5) If she calls out “carpenteros,” the carpenteros chase the carboneros to their safe zone. Anyone they catch is out. If she calls out “carboneros,” the carboneros chase the carpenteros.
- 6) If she calls out “cardinales,” everyone must stay absolutely still. Anyone that the caller catches moving is out.

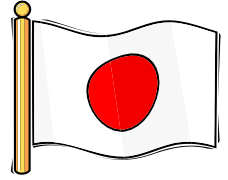
## Culture Days Activities

- 7) The winning team is the team with players remaining when the other team is completely out.

### Japanese Tag

Number of Players: At least 3

Equipment: none



- 1) Choose one player to be it. He tries to catch one of the other players.
- 2) When he catches another player, she is it. However, she has to keep one hand on the place where she was tagged until she catches another player.

Source: Passport to Games from around the World. Created by Harbour Youth Services of Thunder Bay.  
Available from: <http://www.hyskids.com>.

## Culture Days Activities

### Pen Pals

Being a pen pal is a great way to learn about people who live in different parts of the country or in other countries. It's also a great way to practice reading and writing.

People in your community who have friends and relatives in other countries may be able to help you find a pen pal. If your entire class is interested, epals.com is a well-established website for linking classrooms that are looking for pen pals. They also have a number of different cultural projects that classes can get involved in.

Here are some good questions to ask your pen pal, and to answer in your own letters:

- How many brothers and sisters do you have? Do any other family members (grandparents, aunts and uncles) live with you?
- Do you have any pets?
- What is your school like? What kinds of things do you learn in school?
- What kinds of sports do you play?
- What are your favourite books or movies?

It's also fun to send and receive pictures. Send picture of your house, your school and your favourite places in your community. You can print out pictures and send them with your letter, or email digital pictures.



## Culture Days Activities

### Flat Stanley

*Flat Stanley* by Jeff Brown is a book all about a boy who is accidentally flattened when a bulletin board falls on him. He discovers that he can fold himself up into an envelope and mail himself anywhere.

Since 1994, teachers and classes (usually in grades 2-4) have been sending Flat Stanleys through the mail all over the world. Flat Stanley returns with letters from and pictures of the places he has travelled to; he can also send emails along the way! Students get to learn about other parts of the world and practice reading and writing at the same time.

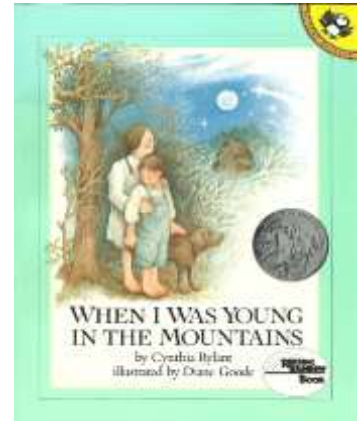
To learn more or to connect with students and families all over the world who are looking to exchange Flat Stanleys at [www.flatterworld.com](http://www.flatterworld.com) or at [www.flatstanleybooks.com](http://www.flatstanleybooks.com).



## Culture Days Activities

### When I Was Young in the Mountains

*When I was Young in the Mountains* by Cynthia Rylant is a well-known book about a young girl growing up a long time ago. Parents and children or classrooms can use the ideas in this book to make their own special books.



#### Reading the book

- Read the book together. Take time to look carefully at the pictures and ask questions.
- Compare and contrast the girl's life in the book to your own. What things does she do that are very different from today? Does she do any similar things?

#### Interview

Have children interview a parent or grandparent about what it was like when they were very young.

Example questions to ask:

- Where did you live?
- Did you do anything special in the spring? Summer? Fall? Winter?
- What did you do in school?
- What was your house like?
- What kinds of food did you eat?
- What did you do for fun?
- Did you have to help your parents do anything?
- Did you learn anything special?
- How did you help around the house?

## Culture Days Activities

### Write your own book

- 1) Choose a title for your book, such as:
  - *When My Mom Was Young on the Tundra*
  - *When My Dad Was Young in Manitoba*
  - *When My Grandma Was Young in the Philippines*
- 2) Write 4 to 8 (depending on the age of the child) small paragraphs using the template below:

When my \_\_\_\_\_ was young in the \_\_\_\_\_

(Write something they did).

(Write another sentence describing the activity).

Example:

When my mom was young on the prairies  
in the summer her cousins came from the city.  
They thought they were lucky having the fastest horse  
—  
until they fell off!



- 3) Type or write each paragraph on a separate piece of paper.
- 4) Illustrate your book using crayons, pencils crayons or markers.
- 5) If you have access to a laminator, laminate each page.
- 6) Staple or sew the pages together to make a book.
- 7) Read the book together.

Not only is this a good activity to practice reading and writing, but it also encourages children to learn more about their family's background and to create a special book they can keep.

## Culture Days Activities

### How to Set Up a Multicultural Classroom

A multicultural classroom embraces the diversity of all its students. As the teacher in a multicultural classroom, you can do many things to set up your room to be inclusive and to respectfully acknowledge the value of your students and their backgrounds. You must prepare yourself as an educator before the students even enter the classroom. Then you must prepare the classroom environment in order to create a safe and friendly environment for peoples of all backgrounds.

**Here is a list of ideas that could help change a classroom to a more culturally friendly space:**

- Display a multicultural calendar, flags, artwork and posters. Use artifacts, postcards and maps in learning centers.
- Provide journals and a variety of art supplies. Opportunities to write and draw are outlets for frustration and modes of expression. Respect each child's privacy by not requiring that journal entries be shared with the class.
- Address multiple learning styles by providing many types of learning experiences. Web sites, videos, books, music and manipulatives such as toys meet a variety of learning styles.
- Fill the shelves of the classroom library with multicultural literature that is representative of many countries and literary genres. Ask your students for names of favorite authors and stories and add those to the library. Share new additions to the library during story time.



## **Culture Days Activities**

- Communicate respect for a child's culture by learning to speak several words in the child's native language. Enlist the help of bilingual staff when contacting parents.
- Invite parents, grandparents or other family members to be guest speakers in your classroom. Encourage them to share details about their native country that might include holiday traditions, games and food.



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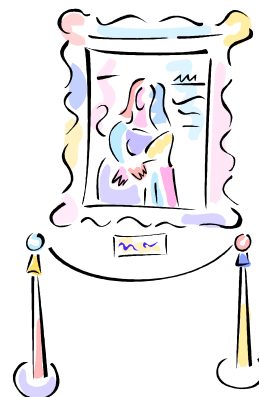
### **What can educators do to build a positive, respectful, and supportive environment that fosters learning for all students?**

1. Understand that you, as a teacher, are a part of the classroom chemistry. Teachers are people too and you bring your own history and experiences with you into the classroom. So it is not just how our students differ, but what happens when we are all interacting in and through our uniqueness.
2. Listen and watch for assumptions about the right or wrong way to do things just because the dominant culture does them that way. Be open to other opinions and consider ways to tackle problems, interpret issues, and demonstrate learning that may be different from what you or others have experienced.
3. Be aware of your own biases or assumptions that you may bring to the classroom. If you are aware of them, you can model a broader view of the world that your students will benefit from.
4. Create an inclusive curriculum.
5. If your students make a distasteful remark in class speak up at once. Create an environment of respect and understanding.
6. Support English language learners in your classes. Encourage them to use their first language to decode and support.
7. Encourage group work as this allows students to view and work with different perspectives. When people work in groups they immediately notice different ideas and approaches to problems. Work with students to provide strategies that allow them to work through the differences in constructive ways.

## **Culture Days Activities**

### **Organize trips to museums or galleries with exhibits from other countries**

This is another way for students to come into contact with the history and art of another country and learn a great number of things. Some museums and galleries even offer hands-on experiences for kids, so they can create things they can even take home with them!



### **Create Inclusive Libraries**

Try adding a special library department or even a shelf with books and material from different cultures into your classroom library. This gives your students access to a ton of information about all sorts of cultures. The more variety in your library the better. While you may wish to read particular books to your class and create projects afterwards it is always a good idea to have loads of books that students can just pick up and read. Be sure to provide time in your class for silent reading or partner reading in order to fully utilize this diverse library.

## Culture Days Activities

### 30 Books

**Andre, J. & Willett, M.** (2008). *We Feel Good Out Here*. Photographs by T. Macintosh. Calgary: Fifth House Ltd.

In this book, Julie-Ann shares her family's story and the story of her land—Khali Luk, place of winter fish. Join Julie-Ann and her daughters in Tsiigehtchic and Inuvik and learn about their home and the traditions of their people, the Gwich'in.

**Bouchard, D.** (1993). *If You're Not from the Prairie*. Illustrated by H. Ripplinger. Vancouver: Raincoast Books & Summer Wild Productions.

Those born and raised on the prairies are passionate about their bittersweet experiences with this diverse land. *If You're Not from the Prairie* is a visual and poetic journey back to those times and the feelings they elicit.

**Brouillet, C.** (2001). *Un Heros pour Hildegarde*. Quebec: Musee du Quebec.

As a young apprentice in a printing shop in Quebec, Emile fell in love with Aurelie, the daughter of a rich client, who returned his love. Their respective families would go on to break their bond as young Emile is forced to join a convent in France rather than be without his beloved Aurelie. The story tells Emile's final adventure that brings him home.

**Brownridge, W. R.** (1995). *The Moccasin Goalie*. Illustrated by P. Montpellier. Victoria, BC: Orca Books.

Danny loves hockey but due to a crippled leg and foot he cannot wear

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skates, but tends goal in his moccasins. When a "real" uniformed hockey team is established in the community, Danny and his friends are elated at the prospect of becoming members.

**Butler, G.** (1998). *The Hangashore*. Illustrated by the author. Toronto: Tundra Books.

In a tiny fishing village in Newfoundland John fights for respect from a new magistrate, who doesn't like how John acts. John has Down's syndrome and judges people by their actions. Readers learn about self-respect and acceptance through John's story.

**Campbell, N.** (2005). *Shi-shi-etko*. Illustrated by K. La Fave. Toronto, ON: Groundwood Books.

Shi-shi-etko counts down her last few days before leaving for residential school, she tries to memorize everything about her home. Shi-shi-etko does everything in her power to remember the little things that are familiar to her - from the sound of the wind whistling through the trees to the dancing sunlight and the tall grass.

**Cheng, A.** (2000). *Grandfather Counts*. Illustrated by A. Zhang. New York: Lee & Low Books.

Helen anxiously awaits the arrival of Gong Gong, her grandfather from China, who is coming to live with her family. She is full of excitement but she also worries about how she will communicate with her grandfather who does not speak English. This story of the intergenerational bond between a grandparent and grandchild suggests how language barriers

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might be overcome.

**Condon, P.** (2000). *Changes*. Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute.

This story is about a young Métis child named Kona, who undergoes a personal journey by learning that the changing seasons closely interact with her emotions. She is guided along the way by the Gathering Spirit who teaches her about accepting change and celebrating the richness of life's emotions.

**Cumming, P.** (2004). *Out on the Ice in the Middle of the Bay*. Illustrated by A. Priestley. Toronto, Ontario: Annick Press.

The gentle, rhythmical text describes how a little girl named Leah wanders away from her home, and her napping father, towards an iceberg in the bay. At the same time, a polar bear cub named Baby Nanook saunters away from his sleeping mother towards the same iceberg. When the parents awake, both Leah's father and the mother polar bear search frantically for their offspring.

**Enzoe, P. & Willett, M.** (2010). *The Caribou Feed Our Soul*. Photographs by T. Macintosh. Calgary: Fifth House Ltd.

Pete takes readers on a respectful caribou harvest. Along the way, he shares Denéq̓líné stories and describes the spiritual areas his community is trying to protect, including Thaidené Nené (land of our ancestors).

**Eyvindson, P.** (1996). *Red Parka Mary*. Illustrated by R. Brynjolson. Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications Inc.

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The little boy in this heart-warming story is afraid of his elderly female neighbour. When his mother reassures him that she is a friendly and kind person, he grows to appreciate and cherish their friendship. Red Parka Mary has much to teach him, and he has much to give to her.

**Eyvindson, P.** (1993). *The Missing Sun*. Illustrated by R. Brynjolson. Winnipeg, MB: Pemmican Publications.

When Emily moves to Inuvik, Emily has a hard time believing her mother's claim that the sun is going to disappear for many days. But her new friend Josie assures her that it is true. When they really do lose the sun, Emily has to wrestle with conflicting explanations. Her mother tells her that the earth is tilted, while Josie says Raven has stolen the sun. Emily's main concern is whether the sun ever shine again.

**Fitch, S.** (2001). *No Two Snowflakes*. Illustrated by J. Wilson. Victoria, BC: Orca Book Publishers.

Lou and Araba are pen pals. Lou is Canadian while Araba lives halfway around the world in Africa. In a letter to her friend, Lou shares her knowledge of snow with Araba, who has never felt it squeak beneath her feet or melt on her tongue. This book shares the beauty of snowflakes – no two snowflakes are alike, just as no two people are alike.

**Highway, T.** (2001). *Caribou Song*. Illustrated by B. Deines. Toronto: HarperCollins Publishers.

*Caribou Song* is set in northern Manitoba and shares the story of the land,



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peoples and customs in both English and Cree. Through the long winter, two brothers, Joe and Cody, dance and play the kitoochigan and, in the spring, become part of a family adventure following the ateeq (caribou) with a sled pulled by huskies.

**Jumbo, S. & Willett, M.** (2010). *Come and Learn With Me*. Photographs by T. Macintosh. Ontario: Fifth House Ltd.

Come and learn with Sheyenne as she takes you on a journey through Sambaa K'e in the fall: the season of moose. You will find out how to make a birchbark basket, identify medicinal plants, pick cranberries and so much more.

**Kusugak, M.** (1993). *Northern Lights: The Soccer Trails*. Illustrated by V. Krykorka. Toronto: Annick Press.

This picture book tells the story of a little girl growing up in the Arctic. Kataujaq learns about her arctic home from her mother, travelling with her across the sea ice, picking flowers during the summer, and gathering berries in the autumn.

**McGugan, J.** (1994). *Josepha: A Prairie Boy's Story*. Illustrated by M. Kimber. Red Deer, AB: Red Deer College Press.

This story, narrated by a young boy, tells of the difficulties encountered by his friend, Josepha, an immigrant from Eastern Europe in 1900. Josepha is adjusting to a new home and a new language.

**McLeod, T. & Willett, M.** (2008). *The Delta is My Home*. Photographs by T.

## Culture Days Activities

Macintosh. Calgary: Fifth House Ltd.

In *The Delta is My Home*, Tom tells us about how the Mackenzie Delta floods in the spring, how to make bannock, and about “ratting” (trapping muskrats) and hunting black ducks.

**Oberman, S.** (1994). *The Always Prayer Shawl*. Illustrated by T. Lewin. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mill Press, Caroline House; distributed by St. Martin’s Press.

This is a story about the importance of tradition and the certainty of change. Adam is a young Jewish boy growing up in Russia in the early 1900s. His Grandfather shares part of his heritage with Adam and it quickly becomes a rock in his life.

**Patton, A. & Burton, W.** (2007). *Fiddle Dancer*. Illustrated by Sherry Farrell Racette. Michif translation by N. Fleury. The Gabriel Dumont Institute: Saskatoon, SK.

*Fiddle Dancer* tells the tale of a young Métis boy, Nolin, and his growing awareness of his Métis heritage and identity while his “Mooshoom”, or grandfather, teaches him to dance. This story captures the importance of Elders as role models, a child's apprehension at learning new things, and the special bond between grandparents and grandchildren.

**Pendziwol, J.** (2004). *Dawn Watch*. Illustrated by N. Debon. Toronto: Groundwood Books.

During a night-time sail across Lake Superior, a girl wakes up to take



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watch with her father. When he slips down to the cabin to fetch hot chocolate, the girl is left alone, and she imagines pirate ships, sea monsters, and rocky islands in the black waves.

**Pendziwol, J.** (2005). *The Red Sash*. Illustrated by N. Debon. Toronto: Groundwood Books.

A young Métis boy notices the red sash that marked the voyageurs who worked with the fur trade. The boy longs to be a voyageur like his father and describes his family's life and the role that Fort William played in the opening of the Canadian interior.

**Pokiak, J. & Willett, M.** (2010). *Proud to be Inuvialuit*. Photographs by T. Macintosh. Ontario: Fifth House Ltd.

Join James and his family and learn about how the beluga whale is interlinked with Inuvialuit culture and history.

**Skrypuch, M.F.** (1996). *Silver Threads*. Illustrated by M. Martchenko. Toronto: Penguin Books Canada.

This book tells the story of Anna and Ivan who escape poverty and hardship in Ukraine to move to the Canadian frontier. Tragedy strikes when Ivan is imprisoned as an 'enemy alien' when World War I breaks out. Anna finds herself alone as she struggles to keep their property and valuables. However, hope comes from an unexpected source.

**Steffen, C.** (2003). *A New Home for Malik*. Illustrated by J. Stopper. Calgary: Calgary Immigrant Woman's Association.

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The book tells the story of a five-year-old boy who has just moved to Calgary from Sudan. Everything is new and so different for him. Readers follow Malik as he meets new friends, learns a new language and experiences Canada's four seasons for the first time.

**Thien, M.** (2001). *The Chinese Violin*. Illustrated by J. Chang. Vancouver: Whitecap Books.

A story about what it is like to emigrate from a faraway place, a young girl and her father leave everything familiar behind when they move to Canada from China. The only piece of home they bring with them is a Chinese violin. As they face the huge challenges of starting new lives in a new place, the music of the violin connects them to the life they left behind.

**Uegaki, C.** (2003). *Suki's Kimono*. Illustrated by S. Jorisch. Toronto: Kids Can Press.

On her first day of first grade, Suki chooses to wear her beloved Japanese kimono to school. The kimono brings back fond memories of her grandmother's visit over the summer, and she wins over her class with her impromptu dance performance.

**Van Camp, R.** (1998). *What's the Most Beautiful Thing You Know about Horses?* Illustrated by G. Littlechild. San Francisco: Children's Book Press.

In Fort Smith on a day so cold the ravens refuse to fly, Van Camp cannot go outside. Instead, he asks his family and friends "What's the most beautiful

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thing you know about horses?” The people of the Tlicho Nation in the Northwest Territories have little experience with horses. The many answers Van Camp receives form the basis for this text that reveals secrets about horses and about the people in Van Camp’s life.

**Waboose, J. B.** (2000). *Sky Sisters*. Illustrated by B. Deines, Illustr).  
Toronto: Kids Can Press.

*Sky Sisters* is a story about two young Ojibway sisters, Nishiime and Nimise, who set out across the frozen north country to Coyote Hill, where the Sky Spirits dance. The story honours the mystery in the sky that is the Aurora Borealis and tells of the bond between sisters, generations, humans and nature.

**Yee, P.** (1996). *Ghost Train*. Illustrated by H. Chan. Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre / Groundwood.

*Ghost Train* draws on a poignant Chinese ghost story tradition to recount hard historical facts about the dangers of building Canada’s railways.