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Exploring Cultures Lesson Objective

Time: 80 minutes plus extensive time for research and reporting

New York State Parenting Standard: **Standard 1: Roles and Responsibilities, Standard 2: Human Growth and Development, Standard 3: Support Systems and Services**

Aim: To Gain an understanding and appreciation for different cultural birthing and parenting practices.

Objectives: Students Will:

- 1. Discuss the world “culture” and the concept of “tolerance” and relate this to their own life experience**
- 2. Identify and share their own cultural customs and traditions with others.**
- 3. Working as a member of a small group, research birthing and parenting practices of other cultures, and present this information to the class.**
- 4. Compare and contrast birthing/childrearing patters from different countries/cultures.**

Materials Needed:

Lesson outline, Handouts: graphic organizer, evaluation tool; Video: “World Song” and/or World Birthday; A World of Babies, by Judy DeLoach and Alma Gottlieb: Cambridge University Press, and/or other cultural picture books.

Exploring Cultures Lesson Outline

- I. Laying the Foundation
 - A. Read the following quote aloud or have it written on the board.
 1. Understanding Cultures: “The cultural values and practices of a group of people reflect their best strategies, at a particular historical moment, for negotiating their environment and circumstances. Each cultural group has developed in a different context, total agreement is unlikely as to the best or most appropriate ways in which to lead our lives. Therefore the human and civil rights of all people entitle them to be treated with dignity, respect, and equality.” (Nieto 19)
 2. Ask the students to respond to what they are reading.
 3. Pair students up - Have them share with a partner a time they were discriminated against or witnessed it happening to someone else.
 - a. How did it make them feel?
 - b. What did they do?
 - B. Tolerance, justice and peace are noble ideals.
 1. Tolerance of others is something that is learned, modeled and usually begins in the home.
 2. In order to dispel stereotypes and prejudice, fostering respect for differences and building community, work needs to be done in the classroom, as well, regarding these issues.
- II. World of Babies & Welcoming Babies
 - A. Using the World of Babies book share some traditions and values that other countries embrace and practice regarding child rearing.
 1. “A Beng (Africa) baby has his/her face painted with elaborate designs every day to ensure the baby’s health.” (DeLoache 76)
 2. “A Balinese baby is considered a god. As befits a god, the child’s head is to be kept high at all times – even while breastfeeding.” (DeLoache 111)
 - B. Have students share with a partner a custom or tradition they have in their family.
 - Each group of people, country and families has rituals and traditions that make them unique.
- III. Learn By Doing
 - A. Using the websites provided read and research a country/culture and prepare an oral presentation using the information gained.
 - B. Information, only, for the countries and cultures listed, can be obtained through the first website. If students are interested in a different country

they need to make sure they have enough information to provide a solid presentation.

C. Websites:

4. Use any major search engine and type in “childrearing practices, parenting, families, or culture”. You will need to research site in advance to identify if they are appropriate and user friendly for students.

IV. Content of Presentation

A. Provide the following information for the country/culture you are researching:

1. Birthing process – hospital, midwife, home delivery, women in village
2. Who is present at the birth? – father of the baby, extended family, community
3. After the birth – care for the baby, any rituals or traditions following the birth – naming ceremony, anointing, baptism
4. Roles of the other family members – caregiver, mentor, companion, teacher
5. Feeding, bonding, and general care for the infant
6. Toddlerhood and early childhood – expectations of the child, style of discipline and guidance.
7. What is valued? – education, religion, work, family, respect
8. Some games and traditions of babies, toddlers or school age children
9. Any other interesting facts about the assigned culture.

B. Rubric is used to grade the presentation. Emphasize that it is a group effort and each member is responsible for a portion of the assignment.

V. Culminating Activity

A. World Birth Day – 2001, 2002 Originally aired on The Learning Channel. Features expectant women/couples in 8 – 10 different countries in a 48-hour period giving birth. Approx. two hour video but worthwhile if you have the time.

B. World Song – Information in Cornell Cooperative Extension’s Recommended Parenting Education Resources