

LESSON: Culture (Lesson 1 in the series)**TIME: 50 Minutes**

SUMMARY: In this lesson students learn to define culture using GRAPES. In small groups they practice analyzing and interpreting a culture using this model. They also critique and build on the GRAPES model (**G**eography, **R**eligion, **A**chievements, **P**olitical structure, **E**conomy, **S**ocial structure) through group discussion and individual reflection.

OBJECTIVES:**Iowa Core Social Studies:**

- **SS.9-12.BS.6** Understand the process of how humans develop, learn, adapt to their environment, and internalize their culture.

Literacy

- **CCRA.L.9-12.6** Acquire and use accurately general and academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES:

- Graphic organizers for GRAPES group work
- Student journals
- Writing utensils
- White board/notepad to take notes for class use

PRESENTATION:

Introduce GRAPES. This is an acronym that stands for Geography, Religion, Achievement, Political System, Economic System, Social Structure. Explain that these characteristics are one way to dissect a culture. Make sure students know what each term refers to in a macro and micro sense. (See:

<http://www.slideshare.net/mklingensmith/grapes-the-big-ideas-of-social-studies>)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Model interpretive use of GRAPES for students, showing them how to take an objective fact and interpret it in various ways. For example:
 - a. If for Political System I say that all adults can vote, I might say this shows that our culture wants everyone to have a voice in their government.
 - b. If for Political System I say that all adults can vote, but in a good year only about half do vote, I might say I think this shows that Americans don't feel like their vote matters enough to use it
 - c. If for Political System I say that in our culture adults can vote, but just over 100 years ago many people of color and all women were denied this right, I might interpret this as showing that we are becoming more ethical and equitable as time goes on.
2. After presenting and modeling the concept, check for student understanding by asking for examples of other parts of GRAPES using their school as the culture they're examining. So, if you ask them for an example of achievement from their school culture, students might tell you about winning sports teams. You can then ask them how they would explain what this symbolizes about their culture. For example, a pride in achieving physical feats. Or ask about the geography of the school building and how it affects how students interact. Are 9th grade classes separated from 12th grade classes to 'protect'?
3. Next, split students into groups. Ask each group to use the GRAPES graphic organizer to examine their culture using each of its components. They should provide a fact *and* interpret the fact for each of the six components.
4. Ask groups to share what they came up with.
5. Ask if GRAPES seems like a complete way to describe culture, or if something seems like it's missing from the GRAPES model. For instance, is how people act towards one another, especially in how they trust, tolerate or take responsibility for each other addressed in the model? How would students try to capture this? What shapes this part of a culture? (For instance, the size/scale of a community and the diversity or heterogeneity of the neighborhood are issues to bring up if your class does not.)
6. Introduce the work of Robert Putnam, a sociologist who researches civic engagement. He wrote in his book Bowling Alone that in our modern era we have undergone a fundamental shift: we are more tolerant of others than we were in the past but we trust each other less. Have students make a 5-minute journal entry on the above statement.

Prompt: Do you agree or disagree with Putnam's statement? What kind of behavior would you expect to see if a culture was more tolerant but less trusting? How true do you think this statement is of our culture? Of our school culture? How does the quote relate to our definition of culture? Does it show positive progress of a culture? Or regression? Or is it a mixed bag? Be sure to explain why you think as you do and give some examples from real life that support your perspective on this statement.

7. Continue into Think-Pair-Share. Give students a few minutes to share their journal entries with a partner. Then give a few minutes for groups to share out big ideas and themes. Keep notes on this for students so they can see their discussion as well as hear it.
8. Ask if they think we can generalize about these kinds of interactions across a whole culture, or are interactions of trust and tolerance determined on a more local level. Likely they will see that the ways people treat each other are at least somewhat based in microcultures. Introduce the terms *macroculture*, *subculture* and *microculture*. Examples: US culture is macroculture. Most of us fit into a subculture within the mainstream macroculture, based on our identities and affinities. We're also all a part of a variety of microcultures, including our school, neighborhood, and family.
9. Exit card: Students define GRAPES and what they would add to make it more complete.

GRAPES of a Culture Graphic Organizer

<p>Geography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location • Weather/climate • Mountains, rivers, bodies of water 	
<p>Religion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One god or many • Place of worship 	
<p>Achievements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accomplishments • Scientific discoveries • Literature • Artwork 	
<p>Political structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rulers / leaders • Form of rule 	
<p>Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade • Taxes • Money policies 	
<p>Social structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How people interacted • Class differences • Gender roles and stereotypes 	