

Teacher's Guide

Alaska's Cultures: An Introduction to Culture

Enduring Understandings

Understanding the nature of culture as a construct will promote the ability to reflect on cultural norms as windows into the customs, beliefs, and practices of groups that are different than those experienced by the viewer.

Estimated Time:

Two class periods

Materials needed:

[Link to Alaska's Cultures unit narrative](#)

Lesson Plan:

Teacher walks across the room, selects a student to greet, extends his hand, and says "How do you do? My name is" Teacher continues this behavior with several other students and then asks the class to comment on how the students

responded to his greeting. Teacher and class discuss greetings, in general, and how they occur in every day life.

Teacher then asks the student to pair up and act out some greetings in different scenarios, such as, two students meeting in the hallway at school, a student meeting a parent of a friend for the first time, a student greeting the principal after being called into the office for discipline, a student calling the police to report the theft of a car.

Class discusses the differences among greetings in these situations.

Teacher asks the class, if they know or can guess how greetings might vary among the different cultures in Alaska or among the different cultures of the world. (Some related variables include: handshakes, hugging, kissing, bowing, the degree of formality, the degree of intensity, etc.)

Students engage in a web or library search to locate information about greetings and introductions in various cultures.

Useful web sites include:

Finland: www.travel-directory.org/Preparation/Customs_and_Etiquette

Singapore: www.discoverabroad.com (Follow the links through “Living Abroad” to Singapore to “Life and Culture”)

Alaska: <http://nmlm.gov/pnr/ethnomed/inupiaq.html> (Take a look at the ‘Etiquette’ section.)

After searching for information, class discusses differences among cultures.

Focus questions: Why do cultures develop practices and customs? Is one way of greeting better than other ways of greeting? What are some other aspects of culture besides greetings? What happens when a person believes that his/her way is the only way? Why is it important to understand the cultural practices of others?

Alaska Standards:

Culture: A, B, E

History: A

AK History: AH PPE 2

Assessment:

Exceeds

Meets

In Progress

Not Started

Content

Student shows evidence of having researched more than one web site for cultural introductions and greetings. Student engages in classroom discussion of topic, listening to others comments and sharing personal reflections.

Student has looked at a web site and takes part in the class discussion on the topic.

No web sites have been consulted. There is some involvement in class discussion and limited response to questions.

No web site has been consulted; there is no class participation or response to questions.

