



## Developing a Sense of Pride in Oneself and Respecting the Similarities and Differences of Others

This is an appropriate lesson for November and December because many faiths have religious holidays at that time of the year.

This lesson will require several class periods before beginning the second lesson in this series.

### Contributor

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### Lesson or Unit Plan Objective

- To understand the meaning of *traditions* and to identify them within their own family as well as their peers' families
- To show respect for the diversity of religion and traditions within the class, as well as the world around them
- To create a sense of pride in students for the uniqueness of their traditions

🕒 **Time:** 60 minutes

✂ **Materials:** Texts and websites are listed under Supplementary Resources.

- Chart paper
- Felt markers
- *Uncle Vova's Tree* by Patricia Polacco (depending on the makeup of the class).
- Have the principal approve handouts before sending them home.
- Handout 1—Traditions (make one overhead, if needed, for instructional purposes). For a good Meaning of *traditions*, see Background Information with Resources.
- Handout 2— My Family Traditions
- Handout 3— Venn Diagram
- A letter to parents telling them about student presentations. See Application.

## **Getting Started**

### **Knowledge Now**

- Introduce holidays by talking about them in general, religious and non-religious and what they do during special holidays.
- The teacher should reinforce the fact that family holidays and celebrations are different but all are important so that students will feel comfortable during these activities.

### **Engaging Interest**

- Why is it fun to learn how other families celebrate? Chart the responses on the board.
- We should all be proud of doing things in our families that are special to us.

### **Learning Activities**

- Use the think/pair/share strategy to show the similarities and differences of their holidays and how they celebrate them. If you do not have students from a variety of faiths, elicit from the class what holidays other faiths celebrate at this time of the year. Christians celebrate Christmas, Jews celebrate Hanukkah, Hindus celebrate Diwali, and depending on their calendar Muslims may be celebrating Eid al-Fitr, the breaking of their fast known as Ramadan.  
\*See Background Information and Supplementary Resources.
- As a class, identify through discussion some similar and different components of their celebration and record their answers on chart paper. Ask: Why is it important to be accepting of these?
- Review the list of holidays presented and discuss what happens at your family celebrations. Explain that these are called traditions. Traditions are beliefs or ways of celebrating that people in a certain group have continued to do for a very long time.
- Talk about why some families have different traditions.
- Read *Uncle Vova's Tree* (Polacco, 1995) and discuss their family traditions and how they differ from Canadian traditions. (Use this book, depending on the class makeup).
- Complete Student Handout 1—Help students fill in the blanks and give oral instructions for the picture.
- Send home a copy of Student Handout 2 and request that it be returned to the school. Student will need their parents' help so send a letter home explaining the presentations and when they will take place. The teacher may compose this letter together with the class or create a generic letter.

- Explain to students that they will be giving presentations about one of their own family traditions. They will need to identify the tradition, give its purpose and describe what happens during the celebration. They may bring in pictures or items relevant to that day.
- When completed, collect this student handout 2 from the students to review their information to see how many parents are willing to participate in celebrating their family's traditions.
- In one of the lessons prior to the presentations, the teacher may create a presentation rubric incorporating the items students should use. An example has been included in supplementary materials.
- Allow students to see the rubric and send it home to keep parents informed
- In one of the lessons prior to the presentations, discuss with students what good presenters and listeners do. Chart these for review just before presentations.

### **Assessment/Analysis**

- Elicit from students that we accept different traditions in others' families. Ask students to share ideas as to how we can show (asking questions, paying compliments) that we are accepting of other classmates' traditions.
- Ask students what they find interesting about their family's traditions, as well as other families' traditions which are different from theirs.
- With a classmate, ask students to orally compare an aspect of their family tradition, already mentioned.
- Create a poster showing their family traditions.

### **Application**

- Discuss what it would be like if every family were exactly the same. What would our community be like? What about the world? Would they prefer a world in which everything was the same? Why or why not?

### **Activities for Extension and/or Integration**

- Students use a Venn diagram to show the similarities and differences among these celebrations.
- Have a cultural celebration/festival where children bring a food symbolic of their cultural heritage. Split it up so cultural group(s), for example, Ukrainian, German, Polish, Japanese, etc. bring food on assigned days.
- Afternoon tea: Students invite a family member to come to the classroom for tea and to share stories (and pictures) from their family's tradition.

- When serving food in the classroom, be sensitive to students' allergies and other health problems.

## **Subject and Level Learner Outcomes for Subject and Level Social Studies Grade 1**

1.2.1 Appreciate how stories and events of the past connect their families and communities to the present.

- Acknowledge and respect symbols of heritage and traditions in their families and communities. CC, I, TCC

### **Knowledge**

- Students will understand the different types of communities/groups to which they belong.
- Students will identify how we recognize the different groups to which people belong.
- Students will identify traditions and celebrations in their families and communities that began in the past and continue today.

### **Skills**

- Express ideas
- Participate cooperatively
- Think critically
- Consider the ideas and suggestions of others

### **Attitudes**

- Students will appreciate multiple points of view, languages, cultures and experiences within their own groups and communities.
- Students will appreciate how stories and events of the past connect their families and communities to the present.

### **Safe and Caring Topics and Concepts**

- Recognizing and appreciating that individuals, families and cultures are unique
- Developing self-esteem
- Respecting diversity

## Teaching Strategies

<b>Go to</b> www.sacsc.ca/ Resources_Strategies.htm for strategy descriptions	<b>Cooperative Learning</b>	<b>Inquiry Learning</b>	<b>Direct Instruction</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Think/pair/share</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Questions</li> <li>Explanation</li> </ul>

<b>Generalization and Transfer</b>	<b>Peer Teaching</b>	<b>Empathy/Affective Education</b>	<b>General Teaching Activities/Ideas</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modelling</li> <li>Literature</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brainstorming</li> <li>Read aloud</li> <li>Surveys</li> </ul>

## Supplementary Resources

- Polacco P. 1995. *Uncle Vova's Tree*. New York: Putnam
- Scott S., ed. 1999. *Stories in My Neighbor's Faith; Narratives from World Religions in Canada*. Toronto, Ont.: United church Publishing House.
- Fast,A., et al. 2003 *ATA Safe and Caring Schools for Students of All Faiths: A Guide for Teachers*, 2003
- www.interfaithcalendar.org

## \*Background Information for the Teacher

- Tradition:**  
All cultures have traditions which one generation passes on to the next. Such traditions give expression to peoples' self-understanding, their sense of their past, their systems of beliefs and their codes of conduct. Sub-groups within the larger whole may have their own special traditions. These traditions are passed down in the form of stores, sayings, songs, poems, confessions, creed, and so on. (Hayes and Holladay 1982, 85)
- “A tradition is something - a truth or a custom or a law – handed down from generation to generation. There are national traditions, school tradition, family traditions” (Castelot 1961, 9).

## Several of the world religions celebrate a major religious holiday during November and December.

- You might have students from other faiths not listed here. Be sensitive to them and include them in all aspects.
- **Hanukkah**—Jews celebrate Hanukkah which is also referred to as the Festival of Lights and the Feast of Dedication. It commemorates the victory of Judah the Maccabee and religious freedom, and the rededication of the Temple in 165 BCE. It also celebrates the power of God and faithfulness of Israel. Hanukkah begins at sundown the previous day.
- **Christmas**—Christians celebrate Christmas, which is the anniversary of the birth of Jesus. It is also the celebration of Lights because for Christians, Jesus is the Light. That is why houses are decorated with lights and why lit candles are very symbolic of Christmas.
- **Diwali**—Hindus and Jains celebrate Diwali known as the Festival of Lights. Diwali is associated with one of the stories about the destruction of evil by Vishnu in one of his many manifestations.
- **Eid al-Fitr**—Muslims celebrate Eid al-Fitr, the Breaking of the Fast at the end of their month-long fast known as Ramadan. This holiday usually occurs in November December but also fluctuates according to their calendar.

### Website

Diwali—celebrated by Jains

[www.rumela.com/events/festival\\_diwali\\_other.htm](http://www.rumela.com/events/festival_diwali_other.htm)

Hindu Diwali—the Festival of Lights

[www.reachgujarat.com/diwali.htm](http://www.reachgujarat.com/diwali.htm)

Hanukkah

[www.geocities.com/Heartland/Prairie/5493/hanuka.html](http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Prairie/5493/hanuka.html)

Festival of Lights as celebrated by Hindus:

[www3.kumc.edu/diversity/ethnic\\_relig/diwali.html](http://www3.kumc.edu/diversity/ethnic_relig/diwali.html)

Muslim—Eid ul-Fitr celebrated after Ramadan

[www.ummah.org.uk/ramadan/](http://www.ummah.org.uk/ramadan/)

Christmas—celebrated by Christians

[www.cresourcei.org/cyxmas.html](http://www.cresourcei.org/cyxmas.html)

## References

Castelot, J.J., 1961, *Meet the Bible*. Baltimore, Md.: Helicon Press.

Hayes, J.H., and Holladay, C.R., 1982, *Biblical Exegesis*. Atlantic, Ga.: John Knox Press.

## Handout 1

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Traditions

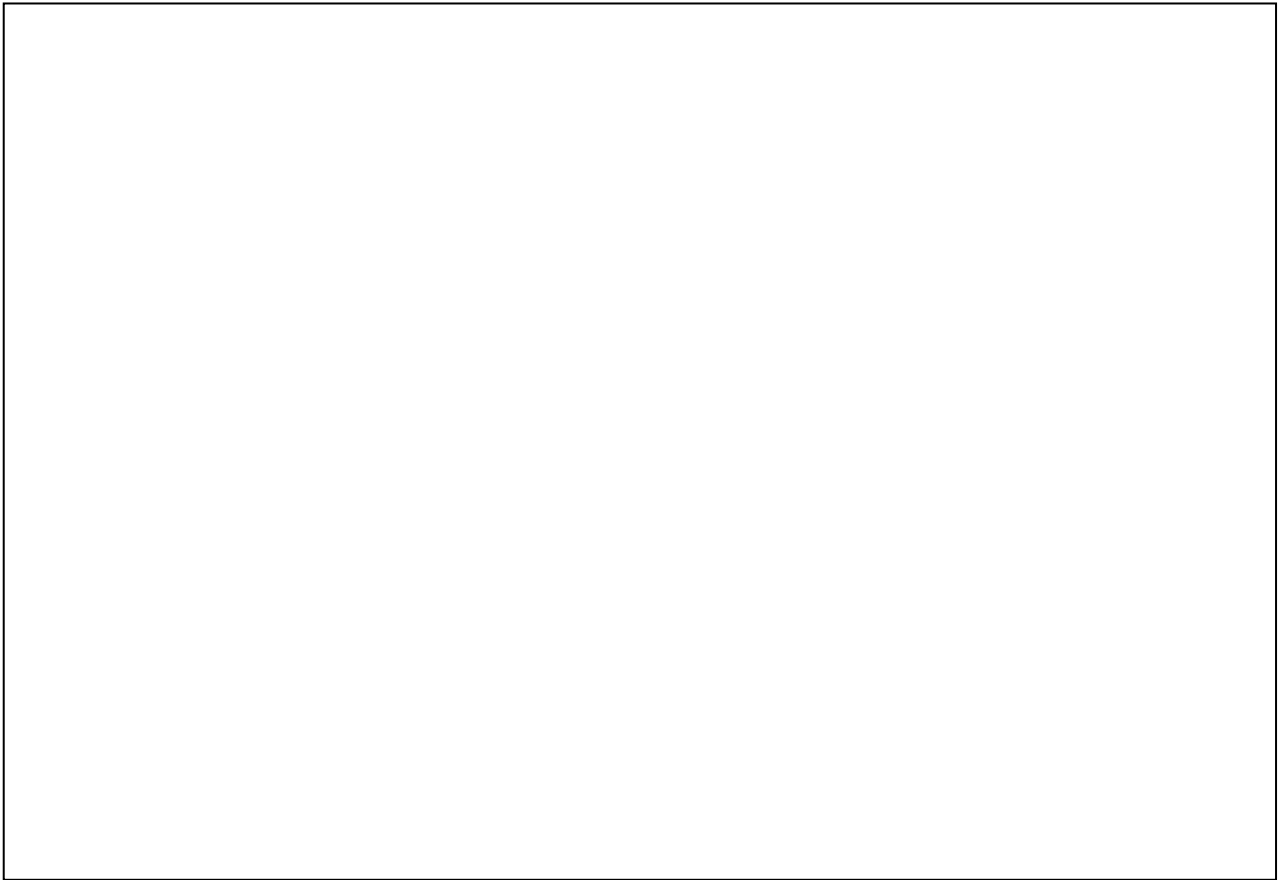
Traditions are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

We learn them from \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Draw and colour a picture of your favourite family tradition. When you are finished, share your picture with a classmate and explain your tradition to them.





## Handout 2

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### My Family Traditions

Please help your child complete this survey about your family traditions and return it to school. Traditions are special ways of doing things that are passed down from generation to generation; for example, cooking traditional foods, speaking a different language, celebrating special days, wearing certain clothing, and enjoying recreation activities/vacations.

1. What languages do you speak at home and with other family members?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Are there special foods that are made at home? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
If yes, what are they?

\_\_\_\_\_

Are they made just on special occasions? Which ones?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you have any special clothing that is worn on special occasions?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Are there special (cultural or traditional) crafts or music in your family?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Please list the special days that your family celebrates.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. How does your family have fun together: for example, recreation, vacations, and so on?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Would you be willing to do any of the following at a later date?

\_\_\_\_\_ Bring or send an example of a craft or music.

\_\_\_\_\_ Show the class how to make a craft.

\_\_\_\_\_ Bring or send a traditional food for a cultural celebration.

Thank you! Please return to school by \_\_\_\_\_

## Handout 3

### Venn Diagram

