



# **CultureGrams**<sup>™</sup> Teaching Activities

**A collection of 28 activities for educators  
using CultureGrams in the classroom**



**ProQuest**<sup>®</sup>  
Part of **Clarivate**

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# Index of Activity Types

A teaching activity may belong to multiple categories, which include:

<b>Creative Project</b>	Students are asked to design or construct an item.
<b>Discussion</b>	The activity presents questions or issues to be discussed in groups or as a class.
<b>Game</b>	The activity involves a game in which groups or individual students compete.
<b>Presentation</b>	Students are asked to prepare a presentation for the class.
<b>Problem Solving</b>	The activity presents information that students must analyze.
<b>Research</b>	Students read assigned material and summarize their findings.
<b>Writing</b>	Students write an essay or creative work.

## Creative Project

- A Postcard from Canada (K-5)
- Collaborative CultureGram (K-5)
- Flag Creation (K-5)
- How Communities Change (K-5)
- Moveable Timeline (K-5)
- Olympic Opening Ceremony (K-5)
- Where Should We Go on Vacation? (K-5)

## Discussion

- A Kid's Life (K-5)
- A Look at Haiti (K-5)
- Comparing Living Conditions (K-5)
- Cultures in Conflict (K-5)
- Favorites Poll (K-5)
- How Communities Change (K-5)
- National Symbols (K-5)
- Tanzanian Life (K-5)
- What is the American West? (K-5)

## Game

- Country Bingo (K-5)
- Geography Bee (K-5)
- Moveable Timeline (K-5)
- Race Around the World (K-5)
- The World Game (K-5)
- Twenty Questions: United States (K-5)

## Presentation

- I'm Famous! (K-5)
- Interpreting Data (K-5)
- National Symbols (K-5)
- Rio de Janeiro 2016 (K-5)
- World Religions (K-5)

## Problem Solving

Fractions and Food (K-5)  
How Far? How Fast? (K-5)  
How's the Weather? (K-5)  
Rio de Janeiro 2016 (K-5)

## Research

A Postcard from Canada (K-5)  
Country Bingo (K-5)  
Cultures in Conflict (K-5)  
Favorites Poll (K-5)  
How's the Weather? (K-5)  
I'm Famous! (K-5)  
Interpreting Data (K-5)  
Olympic Opening Ceremony (K-5)

Race Around the World (K-5)  
The World Game (K-5)  
Understanding Election Results (K-5)  
What is the American West?  
(K-5)  
Where Should We Go on Vacation? (K-5)  
World Religions (K-5)

## Writing

A Kid's Life (K-5)  
A Look at Haiti (K-5)  
Collaborative CultureGram (K-5)  
Comparing Living Conditions (K-5)  
Tanzanian Life (K-5)

#### Grade level

K-5

#### Objective

Students will learn that all cultures have value while learning to write an imaginative narrative.

#### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.6* Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

#### National curriculum standard(s)

McREL Language Arts Standards

#### Writing

- Standard 1: Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process.
  - Level II [Grade 3-5] Benchmark 8: Writes narrative accounts, such as poems and stories (e.g., establishes a context that enables the reader to imagine the event or experience; develops characters, setting, and plot; creates an organizing structure; sequences events; uses concrete sensory details; uses strategies such as dialogue, tension, and suspense; uses an identifiable voice).
  - Level II [Grade 3-5] Benchmark 10: Writes expressive compositions (e.g., expresses ideas, reflections, and observations; uses an individual, authentic voice; uses narrative strategies, relevant details, and ideas that enable the reader to imagine the world of the event or experience).

*Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning*

**Time requirement**

*Preparation:* 30 minutes

*In-class:* 1 hour and 30 minutes, less if writing is done at home.

**Materials**

CultureGrams Kids Edition:

- [Haiti](#)
- [Mexico](#)
- [Hungary](#)
- [Senegal](#)
- [Tanzania](#)
- [China](#)
- [Singapore](#)

CultureGrams—[Photo Gallery](#)

**Instructions**

1. Assign each student to read a selected Kids Edition CultureGrams report from one of the above countries. The students should pay particular attention to categories dealing with daily life in another country—Land and Climate, Games and Sports, Food, Life as a Kid, Schools, Getting Around, etc.
2. Have each student browse through his or her assigned country's photo album. Instruct students to focus especially on those pictures that display people, activities, food, and living conditions.
3. Assign students to write a short story in which they imagine what their life might be like if they lived in their assigned country. They could write about an ordinary day, a holiday, or a social event of some kind. Some of the information for their stories may be taken from the CultureGrams report and the pictures, but students should also be encouraged to use their imaginations in deciding what life in the foreign country might be like.
4. Put the students in groups according to country. Have them read their stories to each other and talk about the similarities and differences they notice.

**Questions for further discussion**

1. In what ways would the students' lives be similar or different if they lived somewhere else? What aspects of the country they read about seemed most appealing and which seemed the most challenging?
2. Are there similarities that all cultures share? (i.e., basic human needs, such as food, shelter, clothing, etc.; holiday celebrations; importance of familial relationships; etc.)
3. In which ways do factors such as geography, climate, economy, language, and history shape how people see the world?

**Extension activity**

Using one of the many online sources available, find pen pals for your students, preferably from the country they wrote their story on. In one of their letters or emails, have students ask their pen pals what a typical day is like where they live and share what their days are like in the United States.

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# A Look at Haiti

## Writing and Discussion

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students use text and photos to identify cultural characteristics of Haiti.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

### National curriculum standard(s)

McREL Geography Standards

*Human Systems*

- Standard 10: Understands the nature and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.
  - Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 1: Knows the similarities and differences in characteristics of culture in different regions (e.g., in terms of environment and resources, technology, food, shelter, social organization, beliefs and customs, schooling, what girls and boys are allowed to do).
  - Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 3: Understands how cultures differ in their use of similar environments and resources (e.g., comparing how people live in Phoenix, Arizona with how people live in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia).

*Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning*

National Geography Standards

*Human Systems*

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

*Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education*



## National Standards for Social Studies

### *Culture*

- Standard E [Early Grades]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity, so that the learner can give examples and describe the importance of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups.

*Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies*

### **Time requirement**

*Preparation:* 40 minutes

*In-class:* 1 hour and 30 minutes

### **Materials**

CultureGrams Kids Edition—[Haiti](#)

CultureGrams—[Photo Gallery \(Haiti\)](#)

### **Instructions**

1. Have students read the [Kids Edition report for Haiti](#). As they read, they should create a list of five characteristics of Haitians (e.g., speak Creole, eat a lot of beans and rice, may practice voodoo, enjoy storytelling, etc.). As a class, discuss some of these findings.
2. Have students access the [Haiti photos](#) in the CultureGrams Photo Gallery. Each of these photos portrays Haitians doing everyday things. Have each student pick a photo and write a short paragraph about the person pictured. (You may choose to have all the students write about the same photo.) Have the students describe what the person is doing in the photo, but also have them imagine what isn't pictured—the other activities the person might carry out in a typical day. Encourage them to use their list of five cultural characteristics as background.
3. Form the students into groups so that all of the students that commented on a particular photo are together. Have the students compare their paragraphs. Did some students have a different idea of what the pictured person's day might be like?

### **Extension activity**

Based on the photos and their reading, have the students write a short essay about what challenges their pictured Haitian might have if he or she moved to the students' hometown? Also, what challenges would the student have if he or she moved to Haiti?

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# A Postcard from Canada

## Creative Project and Research

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### Grade Level

K-5

### Objective

Research a Canadian province and create a post card depicting the highlights of the area.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

### National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

*People, Places, and Environments*

- Standard H [Early Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *people, places, and environments*, so that the learner can examine the interaction of human beings and their physical environment, the used of land, building of cities, and ecosystem changes in selected locales and regions.
- Standard G [Early Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *people, places, and environments*, so that the learner can describe how people create places that reflect ideas, personality, culture, and wants and needs as they design homes, playgrounds, classrooms, and the like.

*Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies*

### Time Requirement

*Preparation:* 15 minutes

*In-class:* 1 hour

### Materials

CultureGrams [Provinces Edition](#)

### Instructions

1. Have students choose a Canadian province they would most like to visit. Each student should read their province's CultureGrams report, making notes about things that are unique to the province and things that attract visitors. They should also pay special attention to the Official Emblems section.

2. On 4x6 index cards, have students design post cards showing some of the highlights and unique traits of the province. Students may also want to incorporate one or more of the provinces' official emblems, or they may do research to find some unofficial emblems.
3. On the back of the post card, have students write a message as though they were visiting the province and writing home. They should think about what they would want to do while in Canada, what difficulties they might run into, and what differences they would expect to find between their home and the province they are visiting.

### **Extension Activity**

Have students pretend that they are from the province they researched. If they were visiting the area in which the students live, what kind of post card would they send home? What would they want to be featured on the front? What would they write on the back? Have students design a post card for their area and write a message on the back to their family at home in Canada.

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# Collaborative CultureGram

## Writing and Creative Project

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will practice collaborative study skills while learning more about their home state or city.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

### National curriculum standard(s)

McREL Life Skills Standards

#### *Working with Others*

- Standard 1: Contributes to the overall effort of a group.
  - Level IV [Grade K-12] Benchmark 2: Works cooperatively within a group to complete tasks, achieve goals, and solve problems.

*Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning*

### Time requirement

*Preparation:* 40 minutes

*In-class:* 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days

### Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

Painting/drawing materials

### Instructions

1. Organize students into groups of four to five members. Assign each group to collaboratively write a CultureGrams report for the students' home state or city, depending on the emphasis of your class. The groups should use the same categories as in the Kids Edition texts, though the categories can be modified depending on the students' interests and abilities. The students may draw on information you have presented in class, on their own experience, or on research.
2. Group members will be responsible for dividing up tasks, gathering information, writing the text, revising the initial drafts, and compiling the finished project into a unified whole.
3. Once the text portions are finished, assign the students to illustrate the texts with pictures that they draw or paint.

4. Have groups show their CultureGrams reports to the rest of the class. Or post the student-created CultureGrams reports for everyone to see.

#### **Questions for further discussion**

1. What was the hardest category for students to write and why?
2. Ask the students what they learned about their state or city in the process of making this CultureGrams report. Did they have to leave out some information due to space constraints? If so, how did they decide on which information to include?
3. How difficult was it for students to come up with generalizations about the diverse people and cultures where they live? Are there important perspectives, attitudes, or behaviors that they've overlooked in their reports?

#### **Extension activity**

Discuss the collaborative process with students. For example, talk about the experience of writing a paper as a group, how they made decisions, how they dealt with differences of opinion, etc.

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# Comparing Living Conditions

## Discussion and Writing

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students use photos and statistical graphs and tables to compare living conditions among Burundi, India, Malawi, and the United States.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3* Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.3* Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.7* Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9* Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

### National curriculum standard(s)

McREL Health Standards

#### *Health*

Standard 2: Knows environmental and external factors that affect individual and community health.

- Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 1: Knows how the physical environment can impact personal health (e.g., the effects of exposure to pollutants).

- Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 3: Knows how personal health can be influenced by society (e.g., culture) and science (e.g., technology).

*Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning*

## McREL Geography Standards

### *Human Systems*

Standard 10: Understands the nature and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

- Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 1: Knows the similarities and differences in characteristics of culture in different regions (e.g., in terms of environment and resources, technology, food, shelter, social organization, beliefs and customs, schooling, what girls and boys are allowed to do).
- Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 3: Understands how cultures differ in their use of similar environments and resources (e.g., comparing how people live in Phoenix, Arizona with how people live in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia).

*Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning*

## National Geography Standards

### *Human Systems*

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

*Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education*

## **Time requirement**

*Preparation:* 40 minutes

*In-class:* 1 hour and 30 minutes

## **Materials**

CultureGrams:

- [Concepts and Terminology](#)
- [Comparison Table](#)
- [Comparison Graphs](#)
- [Photo Gallery](#)

## **Instructions**

1. Explain the concept of life expectancy to the students. An overview is provided on the CultureGrams [Concepts and Terminology](#) page. Emphasize that life expectancy figures indicate the overall health of a population and whether the people have access to nutritious food, clean water, health care, and proper sanitation.
2. Have students access the Kids Edition [Comparison Tables](#) in the Graphs and Tables section. Instruct the student to select Malawi, Burundi, and India, as well as the United States (or their home country if not the United States) for the countries. For the categories, have students select "Life expectancy (male)," "Life expectancy (female)," and "Doctors."

3. Alternatively, have students access the Kids Edition [Comparison Graphs](#). Instruct the students to select the same countries and generate graphs for life expectancy and the other statistics under the “Health” category.
4. Lead a discussion on what these figures reveal. Which country has the highest life expectancy? Which has the lowest? What factors could cause people in Burundi to die nearly 30 years earlier than in the United States?
5. Have students access the CultureGrams [Photo Gallery](#) with photos of the Malawi, Burundi, and India that relate to health and living conditions in those countries. For example:

**Malawi:**

- “Cooking *Nsima*”
- “Preparing Goat Stew”
- “Carrying Water”
- “Women Washing Clothes”
- “Woman Carrying Water”

**Burundi:**

- “Collecting Water”
- “Water Source”
- “Heavy Rains”
- “Thatch-roofed Kitchen”
- “Typical House”

**India:**

- “Shower Sink”
- “Purification”
- “Drying Clothes”

6. Lead a discussion about what the photos reveal. Where are people doing their washing? What does their drinking water look like? What does their housing look like? How are these things different in the United States? How might they impact the life expectancy figures? Do people have access to good medical care? Have student write a short paper on what they discovered.



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# Country Bingo

## Research and Game

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will identify specific characteristics of a country and use them in a bingo game.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7*** Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7*** Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9*** Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
  - **Reading Informational Text (Grade 4): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9*** Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

### National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

*Human Systems*

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

*Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education*

### Time requirement

*Preparation:* 15 minutes

*In-class:* 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days

### Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

CultureGrams—[Interviews](#)

### Instructions

1. Assign each student a country to research for which there is both a Kids Edition report and a corresponding interview. (In the Kids Edition, use the drop-down menu in the upper-left corner as an index of available reports. Access the main Interviews page for an index of all available interviews.)

2. Provide each student with the bingo sheet on the following page. In class or as a homework assignment, have them answer the questions using the Kids Edition report and their assigned interview.
3. To prepare for the bingo game, distribute chips (such as small squares of colored paper) for the students' bingo sheets.
4. To increase the likelihood of matches (and eventual winners), ask questions that incorporate a broader range of answers. For example, students would mark a square if they answer "yes" to questions such as these:
  - Does your country's flag have the color blue?
  - Is your country's national image an animal or have an animal in or on it?
  - Does your country have a population above 15 million?
  - Is your country's most common religion Islam?
  - Did you name soccer as a popular sport?
  - Does the holiday you named begin with a letter between A and K?
  - Does the food you named have meat in it?
  - Does the currency name have more than seven letters?
  - Is a bus the means of transport you named?
  - Was your interviewee's favorite game or sport different than the one you named in question 5?
  - Was your interviewee's favorite food different than the one you named in question 7?
  - Was your interviewee's favorite school subject also your favorite subject?

Note that you may not want to read the questions in this order, as it follows the order of questions on the sheet.

5. Distribute prizes to the winner (or winners).

## CultureGrams Country Bingo Sheet

Answer the questions on the bingo board below.

Answers to questions 1 through 9 are found in the Kids Edition report for your assigned country:\_\_\_\_\_.

After each of these questions is a hint (the section of the report in which the answer can be found).

Answers to questions 10 through 12 are found in your assigned interview:\_\_\_\_\_.

1) What are the colors of the country's flag? <i>(Hint: main page)</i>	2) What is the national image? <i>(Hint: Main page)</i>	3) How many people live in this country? <i>(Hint: Population)</i>
4) What is the most common religion? <i>(Hint: Religion)</i>	5) Name a popular sport. <i>(Hint: Games and Sports)</i>	6) Name a popular holiday. <i>(Hint: Holidays)</i>
7) Name a popular food. <i>(Hint: Food)</i>	8) What is the currency? <i>(Hint: Money and Economy)</i>	9) What is a common means of transport? <i>(Hint: Getting Around)</i>
10) Name an interviewee's favorite game or sport.	11) Name an interviewee's favorite holiday.	12) Name an interviewee's favorite school subject.

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# Cultures in Conflict

## Research and Discussion

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will learn about historical interactions between Native Americans and European settlers, as well as contemporary cultural clashes.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2* Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.2* Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3* Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.3* Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.3* Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.6* Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

- **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.7* Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
  - **Reading Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9* Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9* Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

### National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for U.S. History

*Era 1: Three Worlds Meet (Beginnings to 1620)*

- Standard 1: Comparative characteristics of societies in the Americas, Western Europe, and Western Africa that increasingly interacted after 1450.
  - The student understands the differences and similarities among Africans, Europeans, and Native Americans who converged in the western hemisphere after 1492.
    - [Grade 5-12]: Therefore, the student is able to compare social organizations, including population levels, urbanization, family structure, and modes of communication.
    - [Grade 5-12]: The student is also able to compare dominant ideas and values including religious belief and practice, gender roles, and attitudes toward nature.

*Developed by the National Center for History in the Schools*

### Time requirement

*Preparation:* 30 minutes

*In-class:* 50 minutes

### Materials

CultureGrams States Edition:

- |                            |                                 |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ● <a href="#">Arizona</a>  | ● <a href="#">Iowa</a>          |
| ● <a href="#">Colorado</a> | ● <a href="#">Massachusetts</a> |
| ● <a href="#">Delaware</a> | ● <a href="#">Montana</a>       |
| ● <a href="#">Florida</a>  | ● <a href="#">New Mexico</a>    |
| ● <a href="#">Idaho</a>    | ● <a href="#">Oregon</a>        |
| ● <a href="#">Illinois</a> | ● <a href="#">Tennessee</a>     |
| ● <a href="#">Indiana</a>  | ● <a href="#">Utah</a>          |

### Instructions

1. Divide students into groups of four to five people. Assign each group to survey the Native America category and the early history sections of some of the above reports in the States Edition. Instruct the

students to look for patterns in the development of the “New World.” The groups should focus on the sections dealing with Native American inhabitants, the interaction between Native Americans and whites, the exploration of the American frontier, etc.

2. As they are reading, ask the groups to compile a list of the factors that generally led to conflict between Native American inhabitants and white explorers and settlers. These could include cultural and religious differences, common threats to survival, competing interests in land and natural resources, etc.
3. Lead a class discussion about the relationships generally between Native Americans and white settlers in U.S. history. Was conflict inevitable? Why do people have trouble accepting others who are different? What could have been done to reduce the negative effects of conflict?

#### **Discussion questions**

1. Ask students if they saw any application from this lesson in their lives today. What are some of the things that cause conflicts between students and their friends or family members?
2. How has the United States tried to be a home for many different groups of people, including Native Americans and immigrants from different countries? How well do you think it has succeeded?

#### **Extension activity**

Assign students to write a paper describing what factors generally led to conflict between Native American inhabitants and white settlers.

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# Favorites Poll

## Research and Discussion

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will take a poll of their classmates and compare their answers to those found in interviews with people from different countries.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.6* Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7* Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
  - **Reading Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9* Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9* Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

### National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

*Human Systems*

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

*Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education*

**Time requirement**

*Preparation:* 15 minutes

*In-class:* 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days

**Materials**

CultureGrams—[Interviews](#)

**Instructions**

1. Distribute a copy of the polling sheet on the following page to each student. Using “Polling Sheet 1: Classmates,” students should poll 10 of their classmates to find out what their preferences are in three categories: game or sport, holiday, and school subject. Their classmates’ answers should be marked down on the sheet.
2. Have each student find 10 kids around their same age (or at least younger than age 18) on the image gallery in the Interviews feature. Using “Polling Sheet 2: CultureGrams Interviewees,” they should list the names of the 10 interviewees and mark down the interviewees’ preferences in each of the categories. Let the students know that sometimes interviewees may identify multiple preferences.
3. Each student should tally the results of their two polls. What were the most common answers in each category among their classmates? Were there common answers in the polling sheet for the interviewees?
4. As a class, have students discuss their findings. How did the results from the classmates’ poll differ from the results of the interviewees’ poll? Why might this be?
5. Have the students make a graphical representation of their findings (bar graph, pie chart, etc.) with different colors to represent their classmates’ answers and the interviewees’ answers to each question.

**Extension activity**

Assign students to draft their own poll questions based on what they would like to know about the culture and daily life of their peers. Combine the answers into a single survey and have students respond to the questions.



## Polling Sheet 1: Classmates

Name	Favorite Game or Sport	Favorite Holiday	Favorite School Subject
<b>Most Popular Response</b>			

## Polling Sheet 2: CultureGrams Interviewees

Name	Favorite Game or Sport	Favorite Holiday	Favorite School Subject
<b>Most Popular Response</b>			

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# Flag Creation

## Creative Project

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students discuss the symbolism and meaning of various national flags and then create flags to represent themselves.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

### National curriculum standard(s)

McREL Arts Standards

*Visual Arts*

- Standard 3: Knows a range of subject matter, symbols, and potential ideas in the visual arts.
  - Level II [Grades K-4] Benchmark 2: Knows how subject matter, symbols, and ideas are used to communicate meaning.
- Standard 5: Understands the characteristics and merits of one's own artwork and the artwork of others.
  - Level II [Grades K-4] Benchmark 1: Knows various purposes for creating works of visual art.

*Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning*

### Time requirement

*Preparation:* 40 minutes

*In-class:* 50 minutes

### Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

Art materials—construction paper, scissors, glue, pens, etc.

### Instructions

1. Introduce the concept of flags as works of art that use color, design, and symbols to convey meaning. Refer to some of the flags on the bottom right of the landing page for each country. The accompanying descriptions offer interpretations for the flag's symbols. For example, in the [flag of South Africa](#), the colors symbolize the unity of the nation's races. In the [flag of the United Kingdom](#), the crosses represent England, Scotland, and Ireland. In the [flag of Greece](#), the cross symbolizes the Greek Orthodox Church.

2. Using the [Flag Gallery](#), print a flag outline for each student. Have students color their flags and then present the flags to the class, drawing on information from the flag descriptions found on each country's landing page.
3. Assign students to create a unique flag representing themselves, their family, or their city, state, or country of birth. Encourage them to find colors and symbols that stand for something important to them.
4. Have students display their flags for the class and explain their use of color, symbolism, and design.

**Extension Activity**

Have the students work together to design a flag that represents their class. Place it prominently in the classroom.

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# Fractions and Food

## Problem Solving

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will practice multiplying and dividing fractions in a real-world context.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.7* Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

### National curriculum standard(s)

Principles and Standards for School Mathematics

- Problem Solving Standard [Grade 3-5]: Instructional programs from prekindergarten through grade 12 should enable all students to solve problems that arise in mathematics and in other contexts.
- Number and Operations Standard: Instructional programs from prekindergarten through grade 12 should enable all students to understand numbers, ways of representing numbers, relationships among numbers, and number systems.
  - [Grade 3-5]: All students should develop an understanding of fractions as parts of unit wholes, as parts of a collection, as locations on number lines, and as divisions of whole numbers.

*Developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics*

### Time requirement

*Preparation:* 20 minutes

*In-class:* 50 minutes

### Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

CultureGrams—[Recipe Collection](#)

## Instructions

1. Tell your students that they are chefs for the president of the United States. They are in charge of preparing the menu for an upcoming dinner, which will be attended by diplomats from all over the world. The president would like to serve all the diplomats dishes from their own countries.
2. Assign each student to pick a different country to be in charge of. Each student should read the Food section in the [Kids Edition](#) report for the assigned country and look up the country's recipes in the [Recipe Collection](#).
3. Inform the students that they will need to double the recipes for the main and side dishes in order to feed all of the diplomats. Explain to the students that they will need to triple the dessert recipes, though, because the diplomats have a sweet tooth. They should pay special attention to doubling and tripling the fractions in the recipes.
4. When the students are done with their calculations, tell them that you have just received a memo from the White House saying that due to unexpected events, the dinner has been postponed and as a result several diplomats will not be able to attend. The students now need to halve the original recipes for main and side dishes and—as several diplomats have lately decided to go on a diet—quarter the dessert recipes.
5. Have students check their fractions against each other's recipes to make sure their calculations are correct and that they will turn out delicious on the big night!

## Extension activity

Being able to multiply and divide fractions is not the only math skill good cooks need. They also need to know how to convert metric measurements to English ones, especially if they're making international recipes. After teaching the students a few conversion formulas, have them practice converting a series of measurements.

**Grade level**

K-5

**Objective**

Students will learn state or country locations, capitals, and physical features.

**Common Core State Standards Initiative**

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.6* Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7* Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9* Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

**National curriculum standard(s)**

McREL Geography Standards

*The World in Spatial Terms*

- Standard 2: Knows the location of places, geographic features, and patterns of the environment.
  - Level II [Grade 3-5] Benchmark 2: Knows the location of major cities in North America.
  - Level II [Grade 3-5] Benchmark 3: Knows the approximate location of major continents, mountain ranges, and bodies of water on Earth.

*Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning*

**Time requirement**

*Preparation:* 15 minutes

*In-class:* 1 hour and 30 minutes, two different days; less if part is assigned as homework.

**Materials**

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#) or [States Edition](#)

**Instructions**

1. Divide the class into several groups. Give each group a list of countries/states they are to study. (You may split up the world/United States however you wish.)
2. Assign students to read and take notes on the Land and Climate sections and the maps of their assigned countries in the CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#). Or, if your class is focusing on states, assign students to read and take notes on the Climate and Geography sections and the detail maps in the CultureGrams [States Edition](#). Instruct students to pay particular attention to the:
  - Location (borders)
  - Capital city
  - Major physical features (e.g., lakes, mountains, etc.)
3. Compile the notes the class has taken into one master list. Include only the most significant physical features. Have the students memorize this list, using group work, flashcards, etc.
4. After the students have had a chance to memorize elements from the list, test their knowledge by playing “Around the World.” To play, Student A stands next to the desk behind him or her. A geographic question is posed to both Student A and Student B. If Student A answers the question correctly before student B, he or she moves on to the next desk, where another question is posed to student A and student C. If, however, Student B beats Student A, Student A sits down in Student B’s desk and Student B moves on to challenge Student C. This process continues until one student is able to move throughout all of the desks in the classroom—that is, “around the world.”

**Extension activity**

Discuss with the students the various elements that make up a map, including a key and typical symbols used to denote mountain ranges, bodies of water, capitals, etc. Then, using printouts of either the [political map of the United States](#) from the [States Edition](#) or maps of world regions from the [World Edition](#) (both in PDF formats), have students fill in capitals and significant physical features using the symbols you have discussed. You may have students do this from memory or using reference materials.

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# How Communities Change

## Discussion and Creative Project

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will look at several countries to see factors that shape how a community begins and changes.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1*** Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1*** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2*** Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.2*** Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9*** Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
  - **Reading Informational Text (Grade 4): *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9*** Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

### National curriculum standard(s)

McREL Geography Standards

#### *Human Systems*

- Standard 9: Understands the nature, distribution and migration of human populations on Earth's surface.
  - Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 4: Knows the causes and effects of human migration (e.g., European colonists and African slaves to America, movement of people from drought areas in Africa, movement of people from East Asia to North America, effects of physical geography on national and international migration, cultural factors).
- Standard 12: Understands the patterns of human settlement and their causes.
  - Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 3: Knows the settlement patterns that characterize the development of a community or state (e.g., from the movement of people into an area previously unoccupied to the competition among villages for economic dominance and growth; from a small number of dispersed settlers with few services to the modern pattern of suburbanization and decentralization).

#### *Environment and Society*



- Standard 15: Understands how physical systems affect human systems.
  - Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 3: Knows the ways in which human activities are constrained by the physical environment (e.g., effects of weather, climate and land forms on agriculture, recreational activities, availability of water, expansion of settlement).
- Standard 16: Understands the changes that occur in the meaning, use, distribution and importance of resources.
  - Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 6: Knows the different ways in which resources are used and valued in different regions of the world (e.g., the use of wood in the United States for construction compared to the use of wood in the Dominican Republic for fuel).

*Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning*

## National Geography Standards

### *Human Systems*

- Standard 9: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface.
- Standard 12: The geographically informed person knows and understands the process, patterns, and functions of human settlement.

### *Environment and Society*

- Standard 15: The geographically informed person knows and understands how physical systems affect human systems.
- Standard 16: The geographically informed person knows and understands the changes that occur in the meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources.

*Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education*

## **Time requirement**

*Preparation:* 40 minutes

*In-class:* 1 hour and 30 minutes

## **Materials**

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

Butcher paper

## **Instructions**

1. In preparation, read through three or four country reports in the CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#) (choose countries from different regions and climates), noting factors like location (e.g., island, land-locked, region, etc.), climate (Mediterranean, tropical, desert), history (native inhabitants, colonization, migration, etc.), culture (religion, customs), and natural resources (forests, water, agriculture) that shape how a community begins and develops.
2. Have students read the CultureGrams reports for the countries you have chosen. Ask students to think, as they read, about why people might have wanted to settle in those particular places.

3. As a class or in groups, make a list of the factors (for each country) that contributed to the establishment of the early communities in those countries. Discuss the differences. What factors seem the most important?
4. As a means of discussing what factors make communities grow and change, have students draw a map of their own community on butcher paper. Instruct each student or group of students to identify important features (land, bodies of water, other communities or cities nearby, schools, business and agricultural districts, etc.). Display the completed map and its features, and discuss what factors influence how or whether a community grows. Compare what students learn about influences on their community with influences in other communities. What factors are the same? What factors are different?

**Extension activity**

Have students listen to the news or get help looking through a newspaper to find examples of events that are changing their community. Assign the students to prepare a short presentation to share their events with the class.

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# How Far? How Fast?

## Problem Solving

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### Grade level

### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will compare the distances between various national capitals and a single destination. Students will also calculate approximate travel times to the destination, depending on the mode of travel.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7* Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

### National curriculum standard(s)

Principles & Standards for School Mathematics

Grades 3-5 Expectations: Compute fluently and make reasonable estimates

- develop fluency with basic number combinations for multiplication and division and use these combinations to mentally compute related problems;
- develop fluency in adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing whole numbers;
- develop and use strategies to estimate computations involving fractions and decimals in situations relevant to students' experience;
- select appropriate methods and tools for computing with whole numbers from among mental computation, estimation, calculators, and paper and pencil according to the context and nature of the computation and use the selected method or tools.

*Developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics*

### Time requirement

*Preparation:* 5 minutes

*In-class:* 30 minutes

### Materials

CultureGrams—[Distance Calculator](#)

Calculator

## Instructions

1. Have the students go to the landing page for any country in the [World Edition](#) or the [Kids Edition](#) and then click on the [Distance Calculator](#) in the right-hand column, under the Tools category.
2. Tell students to pretend that they are responsible for organizing travel to a conference on world hunger in Paris, France, and they need to get a rough idea of how far the international participants will have to travel to the conference and how long it will take them to get there.
3. Each student should create a table to track the results of their investigation. The table should include four columns and five rows. In the first column, the student should pick five countries from different parts the world and record a country name in each row in the column. In the second column, the students should list the corresponding capital city for each country. The remaining two columns will be filled out in the succeeding steps.
4. Have each student use the [Distance Calculator](#) to determine how far a conference participant would have to travel from each of the five country capitals to get to Paris. Record those results in the third column. Students could list miles or kilometers.
5. Have students calculate how long (in hours) it would take the participants to travel to Paris by plane or by car. To do this, students must take the total distance and divide it by the average speed per hour in order to figure out the total travel time in hours. Assume the journey can be made in a straight line (unhindered by bodies of water or other geographical features) and that the average speed for a plane is 540 miles (869 kilometers) per hour and the average speed for a car is 60 miles (97 kilometers) per hour. Students should record the respective times for travel by plane and automobile in the fourth column of the table.
6. Have students exchange their tables with their classmates so that class members can check the accuracy of the calculations. (Optional.)

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# How's the Weather?

## Research and Problem Solving

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Research and explore the variation in climate among different Canadian provinces.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.6* Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
  - **Reading Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9* Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9* Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

### National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Social Studies

*People, Places, and Environments*

- Standard F [Early Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *people, places, and environments*, so that the learner can describe and speculate about physical system changes, such as seasons, climate and weather, and the water cycle.

*Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies*

### Time requirement

*Preparation:* 30 minutes

*In-class:* 2 hours, over the course of a month.

### Materials

CultureGrams [Provinces Edition](#)

## Instructions

1. Divide the class into groups and have each group choose a Canadian province whose weather they will research. To start, have each group read the Climate section of the CultureGrams report for their province.
2. Have groups make predictions about the average temperature in their province for the next month.
3. Have each group use a reliable online weather source to research the average daily temperature and rainfall for their province. After one month, the groups will make a graph to represent the temperature and rainfall in their province for the month. Each group should also calculate the average temperature and rainfall for the month.
4. In front of the class, on a large map of Canada, record the class's findings for each province.
5. Discuss their findings. How close were the predictions from the beginning of the month? Where is it the hottest? Where is it the coldest? Which part of the country had the most rainfall? Why do you think this is? Ask students if they think the same time next year will have the same results.

## Extension Activity

Obtain a map that shows the [population distribution](#) in Canada. Compare this map with the map showing the class's findings in terms of temperature and rainfall. Discuss the two maps as a class. Do you see any similarities? Why do you think this is?

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# I'm Famous!

## Research and Presentation

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will learn about prominent people from around the world while practicing research and presentation skills.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
  - **Reading Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9* Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9* Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

### National curriculum standard(s)

Standards for the English Language Arts

- Standard 8: Students use a variety of technological and informational resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.

*Developed by the National Council of Teachers of English and International Reading Association*

### Time requirement

*Preparation:* 15 minutes

*In-class:* 3 hours, over the course of several days

### Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Famous People](#)

Outside research sources

### Instructions

1. Using the online version of the CultureGrams Kids Edition, allow students to pick a country they are interested in. Then have them access the Famous People section for that country and choose a person they'd like to do more research on.

2. Using the Famous People entry as a basis, have the students carry out further research on their selected person. Some students may be required to use online sources to find out more about their famous person.
3. Assign students to put together a presentation for the class. Have them also dress up as their famous person and, if possible, share a sample of the music, writing, art, etc. that made that person famous.
4. During these presentations (which might span a few days), have students take notes and quiz them at the end on some of the most important points presented.

#### **Questions for further discussion**

1. Ask students how many of these famous people they had heard of before. Why do they think so many of them were new names for them? How familiar do they think students in other countries are with U.S. American celebrities?
2. What types of problems did students run into during the research process? What sources did they find the most helpful? What are the characteristics of a reliable online source?

#### **Extension activity**

Assign students to write a short paragraph about the famous person they researched. When the papers are completed, combine them in a class book to display.



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# Interpreting Data

## Research and Presentation

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will learn about regional differences and similarities in the United States by examining statistical data and interpreting the information in a broader context.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2* Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.2* Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.7* Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7* Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

### National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

#### *Places and Regions*

- Standard 4: The physical and human characteristics of places.
- Standard 5: That people create regions to interpret Earth's complexity.
- Standard 6: How culture and experience influence people's perception of places and regions.

#### *Human Systems*

- Standard 9: The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface.

## McREL Geography Standards

### *Places and Regions*

- Standard 4: Understands the physical and human characteristics of place.
  - Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 1: Knows how the characteristics of places are shaped by physical and human processes (e.g., effects of agriculture on changing land use and vegetation; effects of settlement on the building of roads; relationship of population distribution to land forms, climate, vegetation, or resources)
- Standard 5: Understands the concept of regions
  - Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 1: Knows the characteristics of a variety of regions (e.g., land form, climate, vegetation, shopping, housing, manufacturing, religion, language)

*Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning*

### **Time requirement**

*Preparation:* 30 minutes

*In-class:* 50 minutes

### **Materials**

CultureGrams [States Edition](#)

### **Instructions**

1. Divide students into groups of three to four members. Assign each group to pick two states from different regions of the country for purposes of comparison.
2. Have students access the CultureGrams [States Edition](#) to find out more on the states they've chosen. Assign groups to read the reports on the states they've selected. They should look for information about what life is like in the two states currently. Students should pay particular attention to categories such as Climate, Geography, Resources and Economy, and Population.
3. Also, have the groups access the [Create-Your-Own Tables](#) feature in the State Edition in order to compare statistical data on the two states they have selected. After looking at comparative data across a variety of categories, and using the state reports to provide context, students should identify some of the most significant similarities and differences between how people live in one state compared to the other. Encourage the groups to discuss why some of these major similarities and differences are present.
4. Have the groups summarize their findings in front of the class. The groups should create and print out customized data tables that highlight the major points they want to make in their presentations.

### **Questions for further discussion**

1. How do factors such as climate, geography, natural resources, population, and education affect daily life?

What are some of the common characteristics associated with various regions of the United States (the Northeast, the Southeast, the Midwest, the Southwest, and the West)? Why do you suppose that regions often share at least some common characteristics?

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# Moveable Timeline

## Creative Project and Game

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will be able to place important events and periods from their state's history in chronological order.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3* Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.7* Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

### National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for History (K-4)

*The History of Students' Own State or Region*

- Standard 3: The people, events, problems, and ideas that created the history of their state.
  - D. The student understands the interactions among [various] groups throughout the history of his or her state.
    - [Grade 3-4]: Therefore, the student is able to list in chronological order the major historical events that are part of the state's history.

*Developed by the National Center for History in the Schools*

### Time requirement

*Preparation:* 20 minutes

*In-class:* 50 minutes

### Materials

CultureGrams [States Edition](#)

Posters

Drawing utensils

## Instructions

1. Have the students study their state's timeline, available from the States Edition.
2. Divide the students into groups according to the number of entries on the timeline. Give each group a poster, and instruct students to make a creative representation of their assigned event from the timeline by drawing illustrations on the poster. They may write down the name of the event, but *not* the date itself.
3. On the chalkboard, draw a horizontal line that has all of the dates indicated from the States Edition timeline, but none of the events. Collect all the posters and mix them up.
4. Divide the class into two groups, Group A and Group B. Hold up two posters and ask the Group A to place them in chronological order in relation to each other. (Note that they don't need to know the exact date of the event, just which event occurred prior to the other.) If they do so correctly, they get a point. Attach the posters to the correct dates on the board. Move on to Group B, this time holding up one poster. In order to get a point, Group B must correctly place the poster in relation to the two posters on the board. The teacher continues to hold up posters, with each team taking turns trying to place it on the timeline in the correct order. Continue until all of the posters are placed correctly on the timeline. The group with the most points wins.

## Questions for further discussion

1. If the students had to characterize each century on the state's timeline, how would they do it? (i.e. centuries of exploration, settlement, development, etc.)
2. Which events do the students think were the most important in forming the state that they live in today and why? Which ones have they heard of before or celebrate in some way?

## Extension activity

Outside of class, have each group research their timeline event in more depth, so that they are able to write at least a couple of paragraphs about it. Include these paragraphs on their posters, and hang them in the classroom as a permanent display on one of the walls.

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# National Symbols

## Discussion and Presentation

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will compare national symbols from different countries and discuss how these symbols reflect the nations' values.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

### National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

*Human Systems*

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

*Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education*

### Time requirement

*Preparation:* 40 minutes

*In-class:* 50 minutes

### Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

### Instructions

1. Introduce the concept of national symbols. Ask students to name several U.S. national symbols (e.g., U.S. flag, the bald eagle, U.S. coins or currency, the White House, famous presidents such as Washington or Lincoln, etc.). Discuss what each U.S. symbol means and why the things it represents

are important (give short historical background, as necessary). Ask students what they value personally and what people in the United States value as a society.

2. Discuss why national symbols, and traditions that include national symbols, should be given respect. Mention specific ways respect can be shown (removing a hat during a flag ceremony, not hurting a bald eagle, etc.).
3. Using the CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#), show or describe some examples of other nations' national symbols. These are located on the bottom right of the main webpage for each country. For example:
  - a.the kiwi of [New Zealand](#)
  - b.the gaucho of [Argentina](#)
  - c.the panda of [China](#)
  - d.the *dharma chakra* of [India](#)
  - e.the Parthenon of [Greece](#)

You may also want to refer to the symbols in the different nations' flags.

4. Assign each student a country in the Kids Edition. Have each student read that nation's report and give a short presentation to the class on their country's national symbol. Have them explain what the symbol says about what the nation values.

#### **Extension Activity**

Have each student draw a symbol (or symbols) to represent themselves and what they value. Have them describe their selections to the class.

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# Olympic Opening Ceremony

## Research and Creative Project

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will learn about the cultural traits of a selected host country for the Olympic Games and another chosen country by participating in a mock Olympic Opening Ceremony.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2* Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.2* Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.

### National curriculum standard(s)

McREL Geography Standards

*Human Systems*

- Standard 10: Understands the nature and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.
  - Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 1: Knows the similarities and differences in characteristics of culture in different regions (e.g., in terms of environment and resources, technology, food, shelter, social organization, beliefs and customs, schooling, what girls and boys are allowed to do).
  - Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 3: Understands how cultures differ in their use of similar environments and resources (e.g., comparing how people live in Phoenix, Arizona, with how people live in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia).

*Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning*



## National Geography Standards

### *Human Systems*

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

*Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education*

## National Standards for Social Studies

### *Culture*

- Standard C [Early Grades]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can describe ways in which language, stories, folktales, music, and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture and influence behavior of people living in a particular culture.
- Standard E [Early Grades]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can give examples and describe the importance of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups.

*Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies*

### **Time requirement**

*Preparation:* 40 minutes

*In-class:* 2 hours

### **Materials**

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

Art materials—construction paper, scissors, glue, pens, etc.

### **Instructions**

1. Designate a country to be the host for an upcoming Olympic Games (it could be an actual upcoming host country, such as Brazil, South Korea, Japan, or China, or a hypothetical one). Have students prepare to hold a mock Olympic Opening Ceremony. Begin by having them learn more about the selected host country. Each student should access the [Kids Edition](#) and read through the relevant report. Have students write down the most interesting thing they discovered about the country as they read. Have them share their findings in a classroom discussion. Also, ask them what preparations they would make if they were a nation planning to host the Olympics.
2. Assign each student (or have each student select) another country in the Kids Edition series. Have them prepare to represent their country in the Opening Ceremony by reading that country's report. Students should prepare a short (one minute) presentation highlighting the country.
3. Using the [Flag Gallery](#), print the flag outline for each student's country. Have the students color in the flag. Alternatively, have them create their nation's flag out of art materials, using the flag image in the Kids Edition as a model.

4. Begin the Opening Ceremony by having one student or group of students act as a representative of the host country (in addition to their assignment for another country) to welcome the visiting nations. Then have each student present his or her assigned nation's flag (all of which should then be posted together in a prominent spot in the classroom) and give the short presentation. End the Opening Ceremony by "lighting the cauldron" (using orange tissue paper or other art materials).

#### **Extension Activity**

Have students research the past success of the Olympic athletes from the country they chose to research. By looking at the medal count from the last two to three Olympic Games, students should make projections about how well the countries will do in the upcoming games. If possible, have students follow their country during the Games to see how close their projections were.

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# Race Around the World

## Game and Research

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will learn about three to five selected countries in preparation for a class “race.”

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

### National curriculum standard(s)

McREL Geography Standards

*The World in Spatial Terms*

- Standard 2: Knows the location of places, geographic features, and patterns of the environment.
  - Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 3: Knows the approximate location of major continents, mountain ranges, and bodies of water on Earth.

*Human Systems*

- Standard 10: Understands the nature and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.
  - Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 1: Knows the similarities and differences in characteristics of culture in different regions (e.g., in terms of environment and resources, technology, food, shelter, social organization, beliefs and customs, schooling, what girls and boys are allowed to do).
  - Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 3: Understands how cultures differ in their use of similar environments and resources (e.g., comparing how people live in Phoenix, Arizona with how people live in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia).

*Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning*

National Geography Standards

*The World in Spatial Terms*

- Standard 2: The geographically informed person knows and understands how to use mental maps to organize information about people, places, and environments.

## *Human Systems*

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

*Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education*

## National Standards for Social Studies

### *Culture*

- Standard E [Early Grades]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can give examples and describe the importance of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups.

*Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies*

### **Time requirement**

*Preparation:* 40 minutes

*In-class:* 50 minutes, if reading is done as homework

### **Materials**

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

### **Instructions**

1. Select four or five countries you would like the students to study as a class. Then have the students read the [Kids Edition](#) report for those countries. This may be done during class time or as homework assignments, spread out over several days.
2. Have each student create quiz questions about his or her country based on the reading. The students should not make the questions too difficult, as the questions may be asked of members of their own team during the upcoming Race Around the World activity.
3. Compile the questions together and distribute them to the class to allow students to prepare. You may wish to have some as “questions of the day” in the lead-up to the activity.
4. Mark a number of cities as “pit stops” on a world map. The students’ hometown should be the first and final pit stop.
5. For the Race Around the World, divide the students into teams. Each team should be represented by a symbol on the world map (e.g., different-colored airplanes). In turn, ask each team a question from those the class has submitted. With each correct answer, the team’s marker should be moved to the next “pit stop” on the map. The first team to travel around the globe to the original destination wins the game.

### **Extension activity**

Compare the “route” the students traveled in their Race Around the World to some of the routes taken by early explorers around the globe (e.g., Magellan, Drake, Cook). How long did it take these explorers to complete their routes? How long would the students’ route take by airplane?

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# Rio de Janeiro 2016

## Problem Solving and Presentation

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students explore and familiarize themselves with the Brazilian city of Rio de Janeiro in preparation for the upcoming 2016 Summer Olympic Games.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

### National curriculum standard(s)

National Standards for Geography

*Human Systems*

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

*Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education*

McREL Life Skills Standards

*Working with Others*

- Standard 1: Contributes to the overall effort of a group.
  - Level IV [Grade K-12] Benchmark 2: Works cooperatively within a group to complete tasks, achieve goals, and solve problems.

*Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning*

### Time requirement

*In-class:* 50 minutes

### Materials

CultureGrams Kids Edition—[Brazil](#)

**Instructions**

1. Introduce the activity by discussing the concept of the Olympic Games. Explain that the upcoming 2016 Summer Olympics will take place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Spend some time discussing with the class what qualities and conditions a city or country must meet in order to be chosen to host the Olympic Games.
2. Break students up into groups and have each group read through the Kids Edition [Brazil report](#), paying particular attention to the sections that describe the factors that make it a good home for the Summer Games (e.g., the Land and Climate section) as well as the country's unique cultural and historical aspects that might play a role during the Rio de Janeiro Olympic Games.
3. Have each group summarize and present their findings. As a class, discuss what they have learned about Brazil and why Rio de Janeiro was chosen to host the 2016 Games.

**Extension Activity**

Have students discuss whether or not they think their state has a suitable city to host the Olympics. What would make it a good place? What would be some of its drawbacks? Have students write a letter to the International Olympic Committee, explaining why their state should or should not host the Olympic Games.

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# Tanzanian Life

## Discussion and Writing

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will analyze photographs to identify differences between Tanzanian and North American cultures.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2* Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.2* Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.7* Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7* Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

### National curriculum standard(s)

McREL Geography Standards

*Human Systems*

- Standard 10: Understands the nature and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.
  - Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 1: Knows the similarities and differences in characteristics of culture in different regions (e.g., in terms of environment and resources, technology, food, shelter, social organization, beliefs and customs, schooling, what girls and boys are allowed to do).
  - Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 3: Understands how cultures differ in their use of similar environments and resources (e.g., comparing how people live in Phoenix, Arizona with how people live in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia).

*Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning*

## National Geography Standards

### *Human Systems*

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

*Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education*

## National Standards for Social Studies

### *Culture*

- Standard C [Early Grades]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can describe ways in which language, stories, folktales, music, and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture and influence behavior of people living in a particular culture.
- Standard E [Early Grades]: Social Studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can give examples and describe the importance of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups.

*Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies*

### **Time requirement**

*Preparation:* 40 minutes

*In-class:* 1 hour and 30 minutes

### **Materials**

CultureGrams Kids Edition—[Tanzania](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Photo Gallery \(Tanzania\)](#)

### **Instructions**

1. Have the students access the [photos of Tanzania](#) in the Photo Gallery. Ask the students to write down their responses to the following questions about some of the photos. Have them identify some of the differences between life in Tanzania and North America. How do shopping, weddings, clothing, food, and work in Tanzania contrast with those aspects of their own families' lives?
  - a. "Fish Market" - How does this market differ from the places most North Americans buy their meat? Why do think this is?
  - b. "Maternity Ward" - In what ways do you think health care differs in Tanzania and North America? What do you think brings Tanzanians to the hospital? How often do you think most Tanzanians go to the doctor? Why do North Americans usually go to the hospital? How often do most North Americans visit a doctor?
  - c. "Music Festival" - What kind of music do you think these women perform? How are their costumes different from those of many popular North American performers?



- d. "Stone Town" - How much older do you think Stone Town is than the community you live in? What clues do you see that can help you guess at the age of this town? Why do you think the street is so narrow?
2. As a class, discuss some of the students' findings. What did they find surprising about Tanzania?
3. Then, have the students read the Lifestyle section of the [Tanzania report](#) in the CultureGrams Kids Edition. This section includes information on Games and Sports, Holidays, Food, Schools, and Life as a Kid. From their reading, have students identify at least three aspects of life in Tanzania that are different from their own life. Also have them identify three similarities. Ask the students if they can find in the text any of the characteristics of Tanzania they identified in the photos.

### **Extension Activity**

Based on the photos and their reading, have the students write a short essay about whether they would like to live in Tanzania. Why or why not? What aspects of Tanzanian culture would they find most difficult getting used to? What would they enjoy the most?

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# The World Game

## Research and Game

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will develop basic map skills and learn about the worldwide appeal of soccer.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
  - **Reading Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9* Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9* Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

### National curriculum standard(s)

McREL Geography Standards

*The World in Spatial Terms*

Standard 2: Knows the location of places, geographic features, and patterns of the environment.

- Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 3: Knows the approximate location of major continents, mountain ranges, and bodies of water on Earth.

*Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning*

National Geography Standards

*Human Systems*

- Standard 2: The geographically informed person knows and understands how to use mental maps to organize information about people, places, and environments.

*Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education*

### Time requirement

*Preparation:* 40 minutes

*In-class:* 1 hour and 30 minutes

## Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#)

CultureGrams Online World Edition regional maps:

- [North America](#)
- [South America](#)
- [Europe](#)
- [Africa](#)
- [Asia](#)
- [Oceania](#)

## Instructions

1. Divide the class into four groups, and assign each group one of four regions:
  - 1) North and South America
  - 2) Europe
  - 3) Africa
  - 4) Asia and Oceania
2. For each region, print out a list of the countries available in the Kids Edition. Have each group locate these countries on the regional maps (listed above).
3. Have students access the “Games and Sports” page for each country on their list. Have them determine in which countries soccer is popular and highlight these countries on their regional maps. What number or percentage of the countries on their lists play soccer?
4. As a class, discuss their findings. Explore some reasons why soccer is such a popular sport around the globe (inexpensive to play, introduced by colonial powers, etc.).
5. During an international soccer competition (e.g., World Cup, UEFA European Championship, Africa’s Cup of Nations) assign each student a country to follow during the competition. Use the success of particular teams to launch a discussion about those countries. Internet sites that may be useful include:
  - [International Football Federation](#) (FIFA)
  - [Union of European Football Associations](#)
  - [U.S. Soccer Federation](#)

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# Twenty Questions: United States

Game

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## Grade level

K-5

## Objective

Students learn about the states by playing a game of Twenty Questions. Each student represents one of the fifty states and the rest of the class tries to guess which state their classmate is “thinking of.”

## Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

## National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

*Places and Regions*

- Standard 4: The physical and human characteristics of places.
- Standard 5: That people create regions to interpret Earth’s complexity.
- Standard 6: How culture and experience influence people’s perception of places and regions.

McREL Geography Standards

*Places and Regions*

- Standard 4: Understands the physical and human characteristics of place.
  - Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 1: Knows how the characteristics of places are shaped by physical and human processes (e.g., effects of agriculture on changing land use and vegetation; effects of settlement on the building of roads; relationship of population distribution to land forms, climate, vegetation, or resources)
- Standard 5: Understands the concept of regions
  - Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 1: Knows the characteristics of a variety of regions (e.g., land form, climate, vegetation, shopping, housing, manufacturing, religion, language)

*Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning*

**Time requirement**

*Preparation:* 30 minutes

*In-class:* 150 minutes, spread over three class periods

**Materials**

CultureGrams [States Edition](#)

**Instructions**

1. Assign each student in the class to learn about one of the fifty states. The various assignments should be given in secret so that no one knows which students are assigned to which states. Students should not reveal to their classmates which state they are working on.
2. For a homework assignment, have each student carefully review the relevant report from the CultureGrams [States Edition](#) and become familiar enough with the content that they can answer yes/no questions about the state.
3. On the assigned days, have students get up in front of the class, one at a time, and say, "I am thinking of a state." The student then responds to yes/no questions from the rest of his or her classmates as they try to guess the state that the student represents. The class can ask about such things as climate, geography, resources and economy, population, historical events, etc. Once the class guesses the student's state, then that student sits down and the process begins with another student.
4. After all of the students have participated in this activity, lead a discussion about which questions were most successful in helping students come up with the correct answers.

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# Understanding Election Results

## Discussion and Research

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will learn about the Electoral College while understanding the numerical basis for election results and practicing various computations.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.7* Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

### National curriculum standard(s)

Principles and Standards for School Mathematics

- **Data Analysis and Probability Standard:** Instructional programs from prekindergarten through grade 12 should enable all students to formulate questions that can be addressed with data and collect, organize, and display relevant data to answer them.
  - [Grade 3-5]: All students should design investigations to address a question and consider how data-collection methods affect the nature of the data set.
- **Number and Operations Standard:** Instructional programs from prekindergarten through grade 12 should enable all students to compute fluently and make reasonable estimates.
  - [Grade 3-5]: All students should develop and use strategies to estimate the results of whole-number computations and to judge the reasonableness of such results
- **Connections Standard [Grade 3-5]:** instructional programs from prekindergarten through grade 12 should enable all students to recognize and apply mathematics in contexts outside of mathematics.

*Developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics*

### Time requirement

*Preparation:* 40 minutes

*In-class:* 2 hours, two different days; less, if some is done as homework.

### Materials

CultureGrams [States Edition](#)

## Instructions

1. Begin by handing out a printout of the [PDF outline map of the U.S.](#) to each student, along with coloring utensils. Give the students a list of which states voted for George W. Bush (color red) in the 2004 presidential election and which states voted for John Kerry (color blue) and have them color in the map accordingly.
2. When the students are done, tell them that the country was split fairly evenly in this election, with 51% of the nation voting for Bush and 48% voting for Kerry. Yet, from looking at the amount of red on the election map, they might think that far more people voted for Bush. Talk about how the Electoral College works, explaining that each state gets a number of electoral votes based on its total number of senators and representatives, the latter of which is based on population.
3. Using this formula (senators + representatives = electoral votes), have the students use the information in the Government section of the CultureGrams States Edition to fill in their map with the numbers of electoral votes each state has. Compare the sum of the blue states' electoral votes and those of the red states. Are they closer than the map makes them appear?
4. Explain to students that, typically, it is thought that states that are home to large urban populations (and are therefore more densely populated) tend to be democrat, while those home to rural populations (and therefore more sparsely populated) tend to be republican. Have students test this assumption using the [Create-Your-Own-Table](#) function in the States Edition. Have students create tables that display the population densities (population per sq. mi.) for both red and blue states. Using this data, have them create and compare averages for each group. What do their findings prove?

## Questions for further discussion

1. Why might more densely populated states vote democratic, while more sparsely populated ones vote republican?
2. The Electoral College has come under fire as being out of date and unfair. Do the students agree? Why or why not?

## Extension activity

Provide electoral maps for several past presidential elections. As they compare the maps, they should note which states should be classified as "swing states"; that is, which states alternate between voting for republican and democratic candidates.

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# What Is the American West?

## Discussion and Research

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will learn about the geographic similarities and differences among the western states of the United States and draw a physical map of the region.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2* Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2* Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.2* Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.6* Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.6* Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
  - **Reading Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9* Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9* Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

### National curriculum standard(s)

National Geography Standards

*The World in Spatial Terms*



- Standard 1: The geographically informed person knows and understands how to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information.

#### *Places and Regions*

- Standard 4: The geographically informed person knows and understands the physical and human characteristics of places.

#### *Environment and Society*

- Standard 15: The geographically informed person knows and understands how physical systems affect human systems.

*Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education*

### **Time requirement**

*Preparation:* 1 hour and 30 minutes

*In-class:* Up to 1 hour and 30 minutes, depending on the number of passages read and clips shown

### **Materials**

CultureGrams [States Edition](#):

- [Arizona](#)
- [California](#)
- [Colorado](#)
- [Idaho](#)
- [Oregon](#)
- [Montana](#)
- [New Mexico](#)
- [Nevada](#)
- [Texas](#)
- [Utah](#)
- [Washington](#)
- [Wyoming](#)
- United States ([outline map](#))

### **Instructions**

1. Assign students to read the CultureGrams reports for the western states listed above.
2. In class, read passages from novels and/or show clips from films that portray the West in stereotypical ways—such as depictions of cowboys, Native Americans, gunfights, mountain men, cattle drives, saloons, etc. There are several books and movies you could use (many are both), including *Shane*, *Riders of the Purple Sage*, *Lonesome Dove*, *O Pioneers*, *The Shootist!*, *High Noon*, *The Virginian*, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, *Lone Ranger*, *Gunsmoke*, etc.
3. Lead a discussion prompting the students to compare and contrast the West as it is commonly portrayed in literature and film with the West as it is portrayed in history and the present-day reality, which they read about in the CultureGrams reports. What similarities do the Western states share? How are they different?
4. Talk with the students about the importance of Western geography—the rugged frontier, wide open spaces, the climate, natural resources, limited water, etc. Using the [outline map](#) of the United States, have the students create their own physical maps of the West.

**Questions for further discussion**

1. When Europeans first arrived in the United States, they considered anything west of the Mississippi to be part of the frontier that was the “West.” As settlers spread out across the United States, the boundary of that frontier changed. What does this history tell the class about the way the West has been classified? Is it more than a geographic location?
2. Since the majority of the western United States is composed of desert, water is scarce in most western states. Do the students think that fewer people should live in these states or that water should be shipped in from other regions of the country? Should the amount of water the inhabitants of these states use be limited?

**Extension activity**

Hawaii and Alaska aren't typically thought of as being part of the West, even though they are both west of California. Have a class debate in which one half argues that Alaska should be classified as part of the West and the other half argues that Hawaii should be. Students may justify their reasons by drawing upon the stereotypes discussed or the historical and current-day information they read about in the CultureGrams reports.

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# Where Should We Go on Vacation?

## Research and Creative Project

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will gain a better sense of audience, visual rhetoric, and persuasive strategies, while comparing and contrasting South American countries.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7* Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7* Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

### National curriculum standard(s)

McREL Language Arts Standards

#### *Listening and Speaking*

- Standard 8: Uses listening and speaking strategies for different purposes.
  - Level II [Grade 3-5] Benchmark 7: Makes basic oral presentations to class (e.g., uses subject-related information and vocabulary; includes content appropriate to the audience; relates ideas and observations; incorporates visual aids or props; incorporates several sources of information).

*Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning*

### Time requirement

*Preparation:* 20 minutes

*In-class:* 1 hour and 40 minutes, two different days (making the brochure is assigned as homework)

## Materials

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#):

- [Argentina](#)
- [Brazil](#)
- [Chile](#)
- [Peru](#)

CultureGrams Online Edition—[Photo Gallery](#)

## Instructions

1. Introduce the lesson by explaining that countries try to attract tourists due to the money they bring in. Discuss the different ways a country might sell itself (i.e., beautiful beaches, friendly people, economic lodging, famous landmarks, unique cuisine, etc.). Then discuss which of these characteristics would appeal to various age groups.
2. Divide students into four groups and assign each group to represent a tourist board of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Peru (this lesson can be adapted to work for any region of the world).
3. Have each group read the CultureGrams report for their respective country and prepare a travel brochure in which they try to persuade tourists to come to their country for a visit. They may use the pictures from the CultureGrams online photo gallery and find other online sources to get more information on their country. Encourage students to follow the links in the Learn More section to find the official tourism sites for each country.
4. Assign the students to make their brochures for homework. The brochures should contain information that would bring tourists to the country and should be specifically aimed at others their age. Also as homework, have students prepare a presentation to give in class on their country.
5. The students then share their visual with the class in a 10-minute oral presentation.

## Questions for further discussion

1. Which group's presentation was the most convincing to each student and why? Do some countries have more challenges to attract visitors than others?
2. How did each group's visual (brochure or presentation) target a specific audience?

## Extension activity

Lead a follow-up discussion on how these four South American countries are similar and how they are different. The class can also explore some of the reasons for these similarities and differences—geography, history, economy, government, etc.

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# World Religions

## Research and Presentation

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### Grade level

K-5

### Objective

Students will learn about three of the world's major religions as practiced in India, Saudi Arabia, and Thailand.

### Common Core State Standards Initiative

- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1* Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1* Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1* Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- **Anchor Standards for Reading:** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.9* Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
  - **Reading Informational Text (Grade 4):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9* Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
  - **Reading: Informational Text (Grade 5):** *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9* Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

### National curriculum standard(s)

McREL Geography Standards

*Human Systems*

- Standard 10: Understands the nature and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.
  - Level II [Grades 3-5] Benchmark 1: Knows the similarities and differences in characteristics of culture in different regions (e.g., in terms of environment and resources, technology, food, shelter, social organization, beliefs and customs, schooling, what girls and boys are allowed to do).

*Developed by Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning*

National Geography Standards

*Human Systems*

- Standard 10: The geographically informed person knows and understands the characteristics, distributions, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.

*Developed by the National Council for Geographic Education*

## National Standards for Social Studies

### *Culture*

- Standard E [Early Grades]: Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can give examples and describe the importance of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups.

*Developed by the National Council for the Social Studies*

### **Time requirement**

*Preparation:* 40 minutes

*In-class:* 50 minutes

### **Materials**

CultureGrams [Kids Edition](#):

- [India](#)
- [Saudi Arabia](#)
- [Thailand](#)

### **Instructions**

1. Divide the class into three groups. Assign each group to research one of the following religions and have them read the appropriate CultureGrams Kids report for that religion:

<b>Religion</b>	<b>Country report</b>	<b>Section</b>
Islam	Saudi Arabia	Religion
Hinduism	India	Hinduism
Buddhism	Thailand	Buddhism

2. As they read, students should take notes, listing the major aspects of the assigned religion. Group members should prepare a brief presentation on the religion to give to the class. Each student in the group should present one aspect of the religion they researched.
3. After all of the groups have presented, discuss with the class similarities and differences between the religions. How do the religions affect the lives of citizens of each country? What differences might exist between countries in which most people share a religion and countries in which many religions are found?