



WELCOMING REFUGEES



Building Welcoming Schools

A Guide for K-12 Educators and After-School Providers

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Introduction

Arriving in a new country can be an overwhelming experience for refugees, especially those who may not yet know the language or how to navigate community systems. One of the first places that refugee and immigrant families have the opportunity connect with others is in schools. Ensuring refugee and immigrant students and their families feel welcome and accepted in their school environments is not only foundational for their academic success, but their longer-term economic and social success, as well. Welcoming Refugees has created this toolkit to offer schools and after school learning centers an easily accessible way to

promote a welcoming school and participate in Welcoming America's Welcoming Week, which is an annual series of events bringing together immigrants, refugees, and U.S.-born residents in a spirit of unity to raise awareness of the benefits of welcoming everyone, including new Americans. We encourage educators, community leaders, and volunteers to take these activities and adapt them to your local context as a way to participate in Welcoming Week and promote an inclusive school environment all year-round. When we have welcoming schools, our children succeed and our communities thrive.

How to Use This Guide

This toolkit is a set of activities that can be done in K-12 classrooms and with after-school programs, including programs at resettlement agencies that serve refugee youth, to understand, share, and welcome cross-cultural similarities and differences inherent in immigration past and present. In celebration of Welcoming Week, this toolkit aims to avoid broad and often oversimplified thinking about refugees and immigrants with the knowledge that a single story cannot stand in for all refugee and immigration stories. It specifically draws on lived experiences to increase learning, empathy, and dialogue based on the premise that through increased communication we can build stronger communities. Through these activities, students will learn and appreciate the many reasons people come to the U.S, the unique journeys they've undertaken, the contributions many have made, and the overall importance of feeling welcomed.

The six activities presented here engage students in multisensory and multilingual ways in order to broaden our awareness of one another and find commonalities while noting important differences. They call upon the skills needed to thrive in everyday life including but not limited to: critical thinking, reading comprehension, writing, and oral communication. In these activities, students are routinely asked to reflect, analyze, read and write independently and with others. We encourage the use of art and technology to enhance this learning.

Adaptations for the activities are provided so that all students, regardless of English language abilities and background experiences, are able to fully participate. Educators are skilled at adapting activities in many ways, and these activities may be modified for lower-level or higher-level learners and to incorporate a trauma-informed approach (in some places, we have made suggestions for this). While each activity targets a

specific grade range, educators can supplement or make adjustments to the rigor of the activities to meet the needs of individual student(s).

We know that time is valuable and that educators need to plan it carefully. As such, we have prepared activities that accommodate a range of timeframes, from one 40–60 minute class period to an extended learning experience of two-three classes. We have included reproducible to ease preparation time and instruction as well as an appendix of supplemental resources to augment activities as desired.

While we encourage the use of all the activities, we know that this may not be realistic given the demands of the school day. The toolkit is designed for educators to pick and choose activities and is not limited to a classroom setting. These activities would also be appropriate for after school learning, clubs, and other extracurriculars, including programs that serve refugee youth through resettlement agencies. We have also noted optional extensions for professional development and community engagement to encourage dialogue and understanding among school faculty and staff, families, and the surrounding local communities.

Finally, authentic learning and understanding does not happen without the teacher. The instructions we've written for each activity aim for a balance between clear guidance and openness to local adaptation for the context you are in. Using a standard format, we've introduced the activity's purpose, logistical needs, curriculum connections, and time-frame. Then we describe the steps for preparing, supporting, and extending activities that bridge classroom and community. We hope they are only the starting point, during Welcoming Week, for year-round collaborations that help us all understand and appreciate one another better!



Dreaming Together

Description: In this cooperative activity, students pair up to discover the similarities and differences in their hopes and dreams. Students are then prompted to consider what the hopes and dreams are for refugees and immigrants arriving to the U.S., noting again similarities and differences. Lastly, students reflect on what helps them to follow their dreams, and how they can be welcoming towards refugees and immigrants and their dreams in their school and community.

Objective: Students will be able to learn about each other in order to understand and welcome cross-cultural similarities and differences.

Time: 1 class period (approximately 40–60 minutes) *Elementary portraits may take 30 minutes additional time.

Curriculum Connections: Math, English, Social Studies, Art

Materials

For middle school and high school level: Venn diagram handout (or students make their own), #IWELCOME poster handout

For elementary level: colored pencils or crayons, multicultural crayons, large protractor, 18X24 white paper, handouts

Recommended books: *We Are Alike...We Are Different* (K-2), *The Color of Us* (3-5)

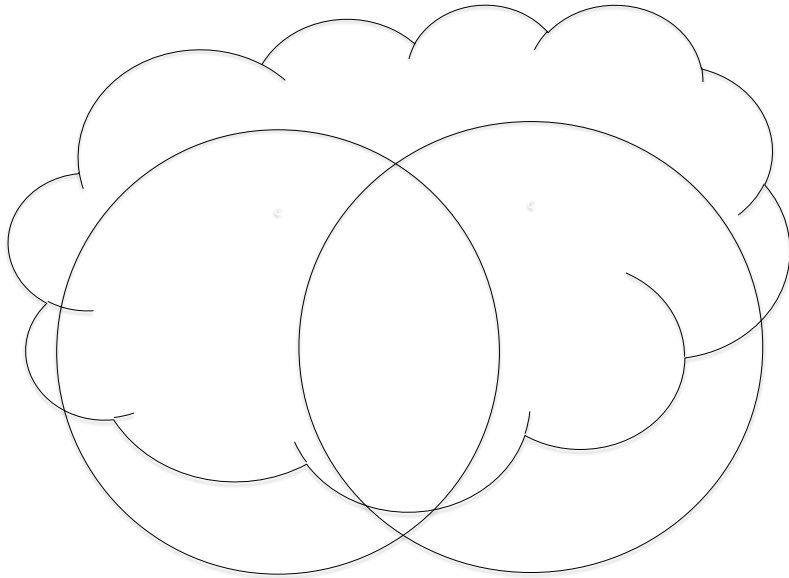
See Appendix for more books and resources.

Classroom Steps

Elementary Level

1. This activity is an excellent way to introduce the Venn diagram and differences/similarities to early learners, while thinking about the importance of diversity and individuality. The teacher may need to do a mini-lesson prior to the activity if students haven't learned the concept or if it needs to be reviewed. Reading one of the suggested books prior to the activity is recommended and modeling the similarities and differences in a class Venn diagram will prepare students to create their collaborative diagrams. *If you plan on doing the portrait version of the Venn diagram you may need additional class time and/or you can collaborate with the art teacher. (Use a protractor to create two overlapping 10 inch circles on white paper).
2. Explain to students that everyone has hopes and dreams; it's part of what makes us human. With that focus in mind, students in this activity will explore their own hopes and dreams as well as the hopes and dreams of their classmates. Have students partner with another student and ask each other questions (either the questions provided or questions they come up with their as a class). On a piece of paper they can list their answers and note which are the same or similar. When they are finished they can place answers into the Venn diagram handout.

Dreaming Together

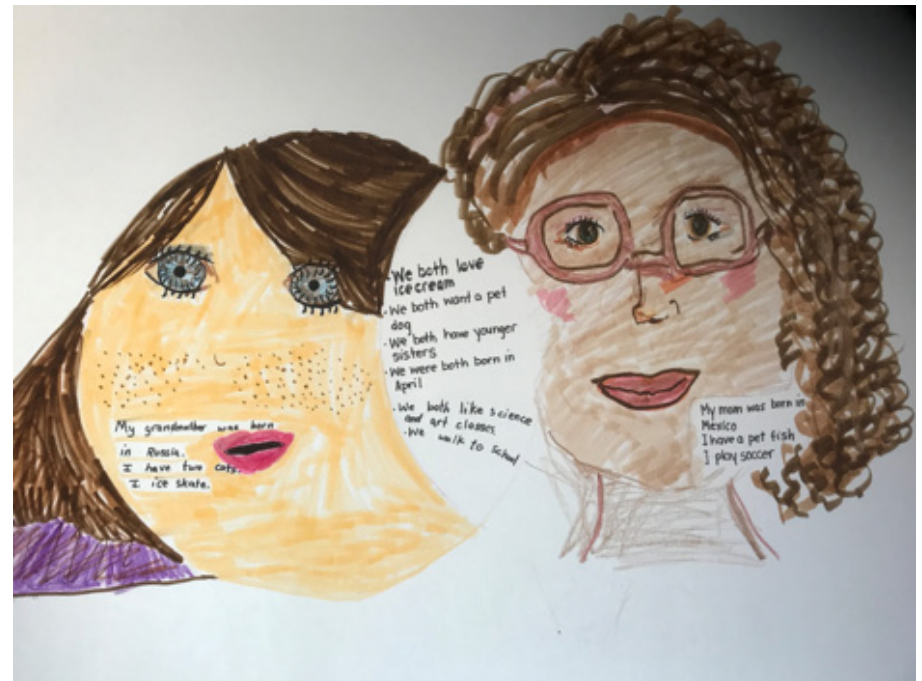


See Appendix.

Sample Questions: What is your favorite food? How many siblings do you have?¹ Where were you born? What do you like best about school? What is your favorite subject? What do you like to do after school? What do you want to be when you grow up? What are your dreams for the future?

3. Read aloud one of the suggested books. Ask students why having differences is important. Have they ever liked or done something different that made them feel isolated, embarrassed or weird? When have they felt okay about their differences? Have they ever felt unwelcome because of their age or gender? What does it mean to feel welcome? How is being a good friend helpful to those who may feel unwelcome? What are some things they can do to make somebody feel welcome?

4. Have students draw each other's portrait on one half of a large piece of paper, leaving space within the portraits to write their similarities and differences in the circles that make up their faces. Then they will transfer the information from the Venn diagram onto their portraits.
5. Create a bulletin board where other students and community members can see their drawings and ideas. Share the portraits and their suggestions for making everybody welcome on the #IWELCOME social media campaign during Welcoming Week (September 17-24, 2017) <https://www.welcomingamerica.org/programs/welcoming-week>.



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¹ It is important for educators to be aware that refugee children who are participating in this activity may have lost siblings due to war or violence or have a disappeared sibling. Please see the note at the end of this activity and the resources in the appendix for tips on incorporating a trauma-informed approach.

Middle School and High School Level

1. Explain to students that everyone has hopes and dreams; it's part of what makes us human. With that focus in mind, students in this activity will explore their hopes and dreams as well as the hopes and dreams of refugees and immigrants.
2. Have students look at one (or more) of the following photos of refugees and immigrants and ask them to consider the following: what might these refugees and immigrants have been thinking? What can students infer about their hopes and dreams? Share some responses aloud.
 - The steerage deck of an ocean steamer passing the Statue of Liberty
 - Italian immigrants
 - Emigrants coming to the "Land of Promise"
 - Refugees from Syria
 - Refugees from Ivory Coast
 - Refugees from Afghanistan
 - Refugees from Southeast Asia
 - Scottish immigrants
 - Latino immigrant family(All images freely available for noncommercial reuse.)
2. Have students think and write about their hopes and dreams for the future by making a list (aim for at least 8-10 items). If students are stuck or need some extra support, offer some sample questions such as: What is your favorite subject in school? What do you like to do after school? How do you help your family? What kind of work do you want to do when you grow up? Where do you want to live?

3. Pair students and ask them to each fill out one circle of a Venn Diagram (handout) with their hopes and dreams. Have students fill in the overlapping circles where their hopes and dreams align. If, at first, some students find no clear alignment, ask them to continue to think together to see if there are any dreams they have not thought of yet that do align and fill in the overlapping circles as appropriate. Additionally, if a student hears another's dream that they agree with, they can add it to their circle.
4. Next, ask students to consider the hopes and dreams of refugees and immigrants coming to this country throughout history. They can refer back to the photos and/or they can pull from their prior knowledge. Have students fill in the third circle, the dream cloud, together on the handout. Students should fill in the overlapping circles wherever immigrant dreams align with their dreams.
5. Have students return to their original brainstorm list and reflect on the following questions in writing: What helps them to follow their dreams? What challenges might they face? Who supports them to accomplishing their dreams?
6. Then have students return to their partner and discuss the challenges that get in the way of refugees and immigrants following their dreams. Who may be able to help them follow their dreams and how? Encourage students to write down their responses and share them as a class. Extend the conversation by asking students how it feels when a person's dreams are not supported. Does that mean a person won't realize his or her dreams? Why or why not?
7. A word or two of encouragement can go a long way to demonstrate support of another person's hopes and dreams. Ask students to think of a unique way to welcome refugees and immigrants by completing a welcoming poster (handout). Display posters around the class and/or school. Consider having your class and school participate in the #IWELCOME social media campaign during Welcoming Week <https://www.welcomingamerica.org/programs/welcoming-week>.

Optional Extensions

- Ask students to write about something they think others think about them, but is actually incorrect. What do they wish others knew about them?
- Have students reflect on the term “homesickness.” Have they ever felt homesick? What have they missed and how did it feel? Have students consider how refugees and immigrants may feel homesick at times.

Optional Educator Extension

Ask teachers to think about how they think their school is welcoming to all students. Are there specific populations of students (refugee, immigrant or otherwise) where they can be more welcoming? Brainstorm as a team how that can be done and implement a plan of action, which can be large or small in scope.

Trauma-Informed Concepts

- Discuss the differences between immigration and forced migration (e.g. refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants, etc.)
- Some refugee cultures consider extended families, such as cousins, as siblings. “My sister” may be referring to an aunt’s daughter, but the relationship can be just as close.
- Talk about what resiliency means and how students can help foster resiliency among one another.
- In addition to refugee youth losing siblings, they may have come to the U.S. as unaccompanied minors and have no known family left. If the teacher knows this, questions around the geography and landscape of home (rivers, trees, etc.) or a favorite sport can be a bit more neutral. In any case, careful monitoring of students’ reactions to questions is a good idea.

For high school/middle school students—if there are only one or two refugee or immigrant youth in the classroom, they may feel as though they stand out quite a bit in this activity. Consider giving them a heads up about what the activity will be to get their thoughts on how to proceed.



Welcoming Book

Description: How can we welcome newcomers to our school and community? In this activity, students will reflect on what it means and feels like to be welcomed and create an orientation book to the school for newcomers.

Objective: Students will be able to create a classroom and community welcoming project.

Time: 2 class periods (40–60 minutes each)

Curriculum Connections: English, Social Studies, Art

Materials

For elementary level: Shaun Tan's *The Arrival* (available at your library), art supplies such as colored pencils, crayons, etc.

For middle and high school levels: Selected welcoming stories: *Pasang's Story*, *Rifa's Story*, *Victor's Story* and the Welcoming Stories graphic organizer. See the appendix for additional resources.

Classroom Steps

Elementary Level

1. Introduce the activity to students by asking them to think about a time when they first arrived to a new place like school or a different home. Have them close their eyes to imagine and ask students to silently remember what it was like to be new to a place. Guiding

questions can assist them. For example, what did this new place sound like? Who was around them at the time? What were they doing? Did they want to go to this new place? Did they meet new people?

After students have imagined, ask them to share their story with a partner or with the class. Then ask the class: how did it feel to be a new person in a new place? Was there anything anyone did to help them feel welcomed?

2. Next, tell students that the feelings they expressed (loneliness, uncertainty, excitement, fear) can be similar to how it feels to be a newcomer to a new country. To help them understand, explain that they are going to read a few pages of a picture book, *The Arrival*, together. If you can, project an image of the cover, make copies, or hold the book up for students to see. Explore the cover together by asking questions such as: How old do you think this story might be? What is the man on the cover doing? Why might he be carrying a suitcase?

Repeat this process with the first three pages. The first page has nine images. What is each object? What do they tell you about the man? What might be important to him? What do you think he is doing? The second page shows him carefully wrapping family photos in a suitcase and the third page shows him saying goodbye to someone he cares for.

You can continue reading the first chapter (10 pages) with students or move ahead to the next step.

3. Tell students that they're going to "write" the next two scenes. The first scene is the man's arrival to the U.S., a new place for him. Where is he? What is he doing? Is there anyone with him? The next scene is a welcoming action. Imagine someone helping this man in a new country. What might they do to help feel welcomed or get him used to the country?

Have students share their pictures with another student and/or share with the class.

4. Explain that we can all be good "welcomers" because we've all been newcomers at some point in our lives. In order to practice being good welcomers, students are going to create a "welcoming book" for newcomers to the school who may or may not be immigrants like the man in *The Arrival*. Ask students: what kind of information would be helpful to know about school?
5. Have students create a class book for newcomers working individually or in pairs. Assign specific tasks using the following sample ideas and/or ones you and your students come up in. Encourage the use of multiple languages when possible. If desired, the final product can be copied, bound, and distributed to immigrant and refugee students, parents, and other community members.

Sample Welcoming Book pages:

- Draw a school map
- Create a crossword of key words
- Prepare a guide of "Who to go to for...?"

- Create a visual of clubs and activities with meeting locations and times
- Explain key school holidays using symbols and dates

6. To wrap up the activity, have each student create an author bio to include at the end of the book. In their short bio, student can share something about who they are, describe a new experience, and list one welcoming action they would like to do for someone new to the school.

I WELCOME

See Appendix.

Optional Extension

For younger students, create an A-B-C book of key words about school to know. Students can manipulate their bodies to form each letter of the alphabet while you take a photo. Each letter is a page in the book. Students can then add key words beginning with that letter, the meaning, and an example sentence. The books can be gifted to immigrant students and families.

Middle School and High School Levels

1. Introduce the activity to students by asking them to write using the following prompt: Describe the experience of arriving to a new place like a new school, a different home, or a foreign country. Was there any person who welcomed them, helped ease their transition or made them feel better about this new place? After writing, have students share with a partner or aloud. Have students make a list of welcoming actions that they've experienced.
2. Next, tell students that the feelings they expressed in writing (loneliness, uncertainty, excitement, fear) can be similar to how it feels to be a newcomer to a new country. Likewise, welcoming actions can have an enormous impact. To understand this from a refugee or immigrant perspective, tell students that they're going to read three stories written by newcomers to the U.S.

- Pasang's Story
- Rifa's Story
- Victor's Story

3. Divide students into groups of three. Have each student read a different story. After reading the story once on their own, have students annotate the text by identifying the following information in their "Welcoming Stories" graphic organizer:
 - What is one specific detail of the writer's journey to the U.S. that supports the idea that it was difficult?
 - How did someone help ease their transition to the U.S.?
 - What was one welcoming action that the writer did for someone else arriving to the U.S.?

Allow students time to read, write, and share information within their groups.

4. Ask students to provide a summary of each of the stories and share with the class. Discuss with students the nature of these three journeys. What made people leave their home country? What was it like coming to the U.S? What were some welcoming actions noted in each of the stories?
5. Explain that we've all been "newcomers" at some point in our lives. Tell students that they're going to create a "welcoming book" for the school specifically for refugees, immigrants, and their families. Discuss what information should go in it.
6. Have students create a class book for newcomers working individually or in pairs. Assign specific tasks using the following sample ideas and/or ones you and your students come up in. Encourage the use of multiple languages when possible. If desired, the final product can be copied, bound, and distributed to immigrant and refugee students, parents, and other community members.

Sample Welcoming Book pages:

- Draw a school map
 - Prepare a guide for "What to do if you arrive late, or are sick..."
 - Prepare a guide of "Who to go to for..."
 - Create a list of clubs and activities with meeting locations and times
 - Share the best restaurants, places to shop, etc.
7. To wrap up the activity, have each student create an author bio to include at the end of the book. In their short bio, student can share something about who they are, describe a new experience, and list one welcoming action they would like to do for someone new to the school.

Optional Extensions

- Consider a cross cultural classroom or school exchange with newcomer students in your community. Have students explore the idea of welcoming and what it feels like to be welcomed. If possible, partner students with ELL students in the same class or a different class. Facilitate a written dialogue between students. For a model, watch [New Immigrants Share Their Stories](#) (8:00).
- Create a refugee and immigrant student and/or refugee and immigrant parent panel and invite participants to talk about their immigration experiences, whether recent or historical. Educators should be aware that some students and parents may have a difficult time talking about their migration stories; therefore, it is important to incorporate a trauma-informed approach and language that focuses on resiliency and strengths when completing this activity.

Optional Educator Extension

Consider inviting a panel of refugee and immigrant parents to speak to teachers and staff about their immigrations stories, what supports would be helpful to receive from the school and/or community, and what are their hopes and dreams for their children.



Welcoming Stories

Whose story are you reading? _____ Where is their country of origin? _____

How was the writer's journey to the U.S difficult? Use at least one specific example to support the claim.	How did someone help ease the transition to the U.S.?	What was one welcoming action that the writer did for someone else arriving to the U.S.?
Summary: In one or two sentences, write a summary of the immigration story you read. Be sure to include the 5 Ws (who, what, where, when, and why).		



Literature Circles

Description: In this activity, students are introduced to literature circles, a collaborative student-led reading strategy, based on the topic of immigration. Literature circles are designed to increase student motivation for reading, foster intellectual curiosity, and enhance critical thinking, reading, and group skills. In groups of 4-6, students read and discuss an excerpt or a short book (as appropriate for grade and time) focusing on thematic discussion questions provided as well as answering those they come up with on their own.

Students guide and deepen the discussion by taking on individually assigned roles. These roles include: *discussion director* (a person who asks relevant questions), *summarizer* (a person who addresses the main points of the text), *connector* (a person who connects ideas from the text to the world around them) *visualizer* (a person who imagines how the setting or scene might look and feel), and *word finder* (a person who clarifies confusing or unknown words). We recommend that the teacher distribute and explain the discussion roles handout and answer questions students may have before breaking into groups. In some cases, the teacher may have to demonstrate what each role might look and sound like for students. Give students the opportunity to practice a few times and rotate roles as desired. Our appendix has additional resources for leading literature circles.

Middle and High School Level

Objective: Students will be able to read, discuss, and collaborate to build knowledge of refugees, immigrants, and immigration.

Time: Extended project (2 or more class periods)

Curriculum Connections: English, Social Studies, Art

Materials

Discussion roles sheet and selected books

Handout: “Literature Circles Discussion Roles”

Recommended Books: See the appendix for additional book lists or ask your local or school librarian for titles.

- *Under the Mesquite* by Guadalupe Garcia McCall [Mexico - US]
- *Stepping Stones: A Refugee Family's Journey* by Margriet Ruurs [Syria — Europe]
- *Behind the Mountain* by Edwidge Danticat [Haiti- US]
- *The Good Braider* by Terry Farish [Somalia — US]
- *American Born Chinese* by Gene Luen Yang (graphic novel) [China-US]

1. Explain to students that sometimes the best way to learn about immigration is through stories. You may decide to ask students if they know of any immigration stories from their families or share your own as an example. After sharing a story with students, introduce and talk through the focus questions with students eliciting their responses. Teachers can limit the number of questions and/or encourage students to develop their own questions. Alternatively, you may also decide to read one of the short books aloud with students, asking the focus questions provided as well as any additional questions you or students may have.

Focus Questions:

- Why do people migrate?
 - How do people migrate?
 - What challenges face newcomers to a country?
 - How do newcomers find balance between their heritage and American culture?
 - How are newcomers welcomed (or not welcomed) when they arrive in a new place?
2. Introduce students to literature circles and discussion roles. Provide students with a handout of the roles and check for understanding. You may need to model the roles with an example.
 3. Group students into literature circles of 4-6 members each. If greater than 4 members, allow for duplicate roles. The teacher or students can decide who gets each role.
 4. Pass out books and allow time for students to read. Students can decide how far into a text they will read or alternatively the teacher can decide and ask students to read independently for a set amount of time such as 20 minutes.

5. After the reading, ask students to prepare for discussion by taking notes on their handout or an index card. Then give each student 2-3 minutes to share with their group what they learned and rotate until every student has had a chance to share with their group.
6. Once everyone has shared, students can begin to discuss more informally. Have them start with the questions generated in their group by the Discussion Director and then proceed to the focus questions. Allow the conversation to run as appropriate.
7. Gather students back for a debrief. Have students choose a focus question they would like to answer. Each group can share out. Then have students write a response to another focus question of their choice in writing to turn in for feedback.

Optional Extension

- Have students give a book talk about their book to other students in a different class to share their knowledge. You could also pair a class of older students to read with a class of younger students.
- Continue rotating books and roles and answering different focus questions. On the last day of reading, have student lead a fishbowl class discussion to reflect on their cumulative knowledge.

Optional Educator Extension

Encourage teachers to form their own book club reading a book about immigration together. Your librarian may be able to recommend titles in addition to the ones available in the appendix.

Literature Circles Discussion Roles

Discussion Director

- Creates questions to increase understanding
- Asks questions like *who, what, when, where, how, and what if*

Summarizer

- Tells the most important pieces of information from the reading
- Often includes transition words like *first, then, next, and finally*

Connector

- Connects ideas from the text to a different source to increase understanding
- Includes connections such as: *text-to-self* (how does this text relate to my personal experience?), *text-to-text* (how does this text connect to something else I've read?), or *text-to-world* (how does this text relate to something I have seen or heard in the world?)

Visualizer

- Imagines how the setting or event in the reading might look.
- Uses the text and asks *what do I hear? what do I see? what do I feel?*
- Draws a visual for the group and is able to talk and connect to the text

Word Finder (optional)

- Clarifies word meanings, pronunciations, and often repeated words
- Closely examines a word by asking *why is this word important to understanding this text?*



“Where Our Nation is From...” Poem

Description: In this activity, students explore their identities and our nation’s identity through the art of writing poetry. This activity uses the poem “Where I’m From” by George Ella Lyon as a model. After reading the poem, each student writes his or her own version of “Where I’m From,” expressing his or her identity. Then students use both models to write new “Where Our Nation is From...” poems, recognizing the key role refugees and immigrants have played in shaping our country.

Objective: Students will be able to read and write in order to compare and appreciate cross-cultural similarities and differences.

Time: 1 class period (4–60 min)

Curriculum Connections: English, Social Studies

Materials: copies of “Where I’m From” by George Ella Lyon

Classroom Steps

Elementary Level (grades 3-6)

1. Introduce students to the activity by saying that today we’re going to find out about who we are by learning about where we’re from. To begin, pass out copies of the “Where I’m From” poem by George Ella Lyon.

2. Read the poem aloud to students while they follow on the page. Then ask a student or several students to read the poem aloud. After reading the poem at least twice, ask students what details stick out to them the most and why? Responses will vary, but students should be able to say how details bring the writing to life and allow a reader to see and *feel* what the writer is describing.
3. Tell students they are going to mimic the writing style of this poem by writing their own “I’m From” poems. Have students first make lists and then write a poem starting with the line “I’m From.” Lists can include: objects in their house, names of relatives, things in their neighborhood, food, sayings in their home, etc. Once students have their lists, ask them to write at least five lines for an “I’m From” poem. If time allows, you can extend to more lines. Additionally, whenever students get stuck writing, tell them to start again by writing “I’m from...”

example:

*I am from black beans and rice,
plátanos maduros y tostones.
I’m from speak English outside,
y habla español adentro.
I’m from Sábado Gigante
and Saturday morning cartoons...*

4. Have students share what they've written. Notice the new things you learn about your students through this activity and help students to appreciate differences and similarities as they arise. Close the share-out by suggesting that we've all learned a lot about each other based on where we're from.
 5. Think out loud with students and ask, can we learn about our nation based on where it came from? Ask students to draw on their prior knowledge of where our nation is from. Some of their responses will likely touch upon our rich immigrant heritage, but if not, the teacher can bring this into the conversation. After a brief discussion, tell students that you are going to challenge them to write another 5 line poem, but this time it begins with "Where our nation is from..." It is an option to have students write individually, in pairs, or in small groups for collaborative learning.
 6. Repeat step 4, having students notice and appreciate cross cultural similarities and differences as well as contributions from newcomers to the U.S.
 7. To wrap up the activity, have students submit their poem for a classroom display of "Where Our Nation is From" during Welcoming Week.
2. Read the poem aloud to students while they follow on the page. Then ask a student or several students to read the poem aloud. After reading the poem at least twice, ask students what details stick out to them the most and why? Why did the poet include such specific details and how does it affect their reading? Why didn't she just write "I'm from Kentucky" or "I'm from 160 Mailbox Rd"? How does that change what we know about the speaker? Responses will vary, but students should be able to see how the detail included helps them to extrapolate information about the speaker's identity.
 3. Tell students they are going to mimic the writing style of this poem by writing their own "I'm From" poems. Have students start with the first line "I'm From" and freewrite for 5 minutes. Whenever students get stuck writing, tell them to start again by writing "I'm from..." After freewriting, tell students they now have the opportunity to clean up their freewrite before sharing out. Give students another 5 minutes to add, delete, and revise lines, and encourage line breaks mimicking the style of the original poem or varying it to fit their poem.
 4. Have students share what they've written with a partner. Ask them to notice if there are new things they learn about each other through this activity and help them to appreciate differences and similarities as they arise. Allow students the opportunity to make edits if they like.
 5. Think out loud with students and ask, what can we learn about our nation based on where it came from? Ask students to draw on their prior knowledge of where our nation is from. Some of their responses will likely touch upon our rich immigrant heritage, but if not, the teacher can bring this into the conversation. After a brief discussion, tell students that you are going to challenge them to freewrite another poem, but this time it begins with "where our nation is from..." Give students another 5 minutes to write.
 6. Repeat step 4, having students notice and appreciate cross cultural similarities and differences as well as contributions from newcomers to the U.S.

Optional Extension

Have students create an "I'm From" or "Where Our Nation is From" poem using images cut and pasted from magazines. The resulting poem would be a collage. This extension can also be a modification for some ELL students as appropriate helping them to learn new words.

Middle and High School Level

1. Introduce students to the activity by saying that today we're going to find out about who we are by learning about where we're from. We will then apply that same reasoning to explore where our nation is from. To begin, pass out copies of the "Where I'm From" poem by George Ella Lyon.

7. To wrap up the activity, have students submit their poem for a classroom display of “Where Our Nation is From” during Welcoming Week.

Optional Extension

Invite students to combine lines from each student’s poems to make a class poem of “Where We’re From” to share broadly. The teacher can do this by creating copies of the student poems for a following class and have students copy and arrange the lines on a new piece of paper or cut

and paste with scissors and glue for new poems that express the rich identities that make up the classroom.

Optional Educator Extension

To open or close a staff meeting, ask teachers to write a short “I’m From” poem, and have them include something about their immigrant heritage in the poem. Allow teachers to share their writing aloud with others. Ask them what they learned about each other from this activity and how this new knowledge might help them reach out to newcomers at the school.



Where Does Your Name Come From?

Description: Many people's names have interesting origins. Participants will share the story of where their name comes from and what their name means. This activity can be used as an ice-breaker or with a group that knows each other well; it helps to build intercultural respect and understanding.

Objective: Students will be able to discover something important about their classmates in order to deepen peer understanding. High School students will better understand the importance of pronouncing names correctly and the tie between names and identity.

Time: 1 class period (40–60 minutes); for best results, a short in-class introduction and family participation (at home) is suggested.

Curriculum Connections: English, Social Studies, Art

Materials: The website, Teaching [Books.net](https://www.teachingbooks.net/), has many popular authors pronouncing their names and telling about their origins on video. Authors also speak about often heard mispronunciations and other facts about their names. There are several books about names that can be used to introduce or reinforce the lesson.

- For K-2: *The Name Jar* by Yangsook Choi
- For grades 3-5: *My Name is Yoon* by Helen Recorvits, *Hannah is My Name* by Belle Yang, *My Name is Sangoel* by Karen Williams and Khadra Mohammed

- For high school: blog post [How We Pronounce Names and Why it Matters](#) or articles from [My Name My Identity](#).

Classroom Steps

Elementary Level

1. Introduce the activity to students by explaining that everybody was given a name and many of our names have a connection to our families, our cultures, our religions and beliefs. We may have been named after a person, a place or something else significant to those who named us.
2. Explain to students that each culture has its own customs about naming individuals and that our last names may be hundreds of years old. Names are as unique as each person and getting to know more about our names will allow us to learn more about ourselves and each other.
3. Tell the students the meaning behind your own name as an example and have the class ask you questions about your name. Write the questions down and have students add questions they may have about their own names.

Suggested questions:

- Were you named after a person? If so, who was that person? When and where did they live? How many people in your family have the same first name as you?
 - What meaning does your name have?
 - What other names were being considered when you were born?
 - Do you like your name? Why or why not?
 - If you had to change your name which name would you choose and why?
 - Do you have a nickname? If so, how did you get it?
4. Have students go home and ask their parents, guardians and/or relatives the meaning behind their name (younger students can discover first names only; older students can explore both first and last names). Students should be prepared to share their discoveries in class. Use the suggested questions as well as the questions students come up with in class.
 5. Break students into groups of 4 or 6 and have the students share the meanings of their names within the small groups. Have the small group pick a partner that they will “introduce” to the whole class.
 6. Bring the class together and have each partner group introduce each other.

Optional Extension

Create posters or paint fabric squares with your name and portray the story behind your name artistically. Combine the squares and create a name quilt.

Middle and High School Level

1. Have students read the blog post [How We Pronounce Names and Why it Matters](#). There is also a podcast for students who may want to listen instead of read.
2. Have students define terms: *Fumble-Bumblers*, *Arrogant Manglers*, *Calibrators*, and *Micro-Aggressions* from the [blog post](#) or the [podcast](#) “How We Pronounce Names and Why it Matters”. Have students discuss why names are important to identity and why pronouncing names is so important. Have students discuss why having a good understanding of the meaning behind a name is important to a person’s identity.

Optional Extensions

- Read [The House on Mango Street](#) by Sandra Cisneros. Discuss the chapter “My Name.”
- There are a variety of articles on the importance of pronouncing names correctly at [My Name My Identity](#). Have students read one of the articles and give feedback about what they discovered from documented research and first person narratives.

Optional Educator Extensions

- Consider using this activity as an ice-breaker for staff to get to know each other or as a professional development exercise emphasizing the importance in taking the time to learn each student’s preferred name and to learn the correct pronunciation.
- Consider participating in the [My Name, My Identity Pledge](#) which affirms a commitment to learning and appreciating student names and cultural differences. Learn more about the My Name My Identity pledge: <https://www.mynamemyidentity.org/campaign/about>



Friendship, Food, Music and Games

Description: Introducing and sharing foods, songs, and/or games is a vehicle for learning and exploring about the world and its people. Students of all ages will find out how we are all wonderfully, uniquely different, but also fundamentally the same.

These activities will require research, collaboration, and planning but the payoff will be rewarding for the students, teachers, parents, and community. For best results, collaborate with the physical education, art, and music teachers to create a unit of study that will allow students to learn about one another and other cultures. Appreciation of other cultures is best done authentically in order to avoid stereotypes and cultural appropriation. Reach out to cultural community centers, parents of newcomers, or a nearby university or college. Reach out to staff members who may be immigrants or who have deep knowledge of the food, games, or music of another culture. We have listed a number of books and web-based resources to help get you and your students started in your adventure of exploration through your senses.

Elementary Level

Objective: Students will be able to gain deeper knowledge about, appreciate, and understand cultures different from their own.

Time: 1 class period (40–60min) for discussion and sharing. Unit of study and a culmination can vary.

Curriculum Connections: English, Social Studies, Art, Math, Music, Science

Materials

Classroom Items: Use what you have in the classroom and ask parents, colleagues, and the school community to share authentic games, instruments, and foods.

Some items you may already have:

- Balls
- Jacks
- Jump Rope
- Origami Paper
- Dice
- Tangrams

Books: Ask the school librarian to create a section of books that celebrate children around the world. Some suggested titles include:

- A Life Like Mine: How Children Live Around the World
- Children Just Like Me: A Unique Celebration of Children Around the World
- Clare Lewis' Around the World Series, Ann Morris' Bread, Bread, Bread, or Norah Dooley's Everybody Cooks Rice

Classroom Activities

Food Activities

1. Read the [book](#) or watch the video [How did That Get in My Lunch Box](#) by Chris Butterworth. Explain to students that our food comes from many places and that the tastes and flavors we enjoy have migrated along with the people. The [food chart](#) visually shows the interdependence of foods and the origins of popular food items. Assign small groups of students a food item and have them look at where the food comes from. Does it come from only one place? Most of our favorite foods require more than one ingredient. Have older students look at recipes and map out where the items may come from.
2. Share the video [School Lunches From Around the World](#) with students. How are school lunches similar or different from the lunches served at your school?
3. Read [Bread, Bread, Bread](#) and have students bring in a type of bread that represents their culture or assign a type of bread to small groups of students. What shape is the bread? What texture is it? What size is it? Have a tasting party.

Food Extension*

Set up a spice market. Have students bring in a small amount of a favorite and frequently used spice from their home kitchen. Have students describe the smell, color and texture. In the display of each spice have students write a sentence describing the taste and a sentence about the origin of the spice. Have students share a favorite recipe featuring the spice. Explain to students that many spices are used in different ways around the world. For example, cinnamon may be used in sweet baked items in some cultures but it may also be used in savory meat and vegetable dishes in other cultures. As a fun extension, leftover spices can be mixed with water and used to create watercolor paintings.

Music Activities

1. Explain to students that music and dance are a large part of one's cultural identity. Like food, instruments, sounds, rhythms, and movements have migrated with people, and many cultures share music. Music has been used to tell stories and has been passed on for centuries.
2. The classroom teacher and the music teacher can collaborate and have students listen to the same song recorded in different countries. They can be introduced to the sound of new instruments and perhaps have the opportunity to interact with those instruments.
3. Have students teach each other a favorite song or dance.

Music Extensions*

- If there is a cultural community center in your region, see if they would provide a musical and/or dance performance for your school community or if they can send an expert to introduce music and instruments to your students. Colleges and universities may also have resources and experts.
- If you don't have a music department or access to experts here are some websites to explore:
 - The [MamaLisa](#) website has a wealth of information and examples of songs from around the world.
 - [All the Musical Instruments of the World](#) is an interactive website housing sound samples, photos, and videos of thousands of instruments.
 - [Putumayo Kids](#) has resources for purchase and for free that explores music from around the world popular with young children.
 - [Dancing & Singing Games From Around the World and Back Again](#) from the Merit School of Music has fun songs and basic dance and movement instructions.

Game Activities

1. Go to the website: [Happy Children Playing](#). Print out the photographs and give the images to groups of two or three students. Have them discuss what they think the students are playing. Have students played something similar? Have students locate the country the photo was taken on a map or globe. Have students share what they discovered with the rest of the class.

What are some of the similarities students recognize in the photos?
Here are examples of what students may find:

- Wheels
 - Water
 - Pets
 - Running
 - Balls
 - Jump Rope
2. Ask students to explore and analyze the website [James Mollison's Playground](#), which provides a selection of images from his book about playgrounds around the world. Students can discuss what they liked and didn't like about the playgrounds they examined and design a playground of their own. They can also work together to figure out the games they see children in the photos playing.
 3. Project a selection of [Gabriele Galimberti's Toy Story photographs](#) for students. Explain that all children around the world have prized possessions - toys and objects that they play with and treasure. View the photographs and discuss the objects, toys and other possessions these children chose to display. Ask students if they have any of these items. Pin the location the photograph was taken on a map or globe. Have students take a photo of their own favorite items and share them on a bulletin board or on social media during welcoming week.

Games Extensions*

- Have an international game day at school. Set up age appropriate stations for students to explore games, crafts and activities both indoors and outdoors. If students designed playgrounds, or took pictures of their own favorite toys and items, showcase their work and create an interactive opportunity. The students' work can be displayed on bulletin boards or video montages with post-it notes or on a white-board for feedback.
- Have students donate gently used toys and books to a refugee resettlement program or a family shelter in the community.

*These extensions would work best with parent engagement, and for a more enriching experience, invite guests to visit the classroom and/or school during Welcoming Week for a celebration of the diverse school community.

Optional Educator Extension

Discuss appreciation versus appropriation and the dangers of stereotyping. Have staff read the [EdWeek](#) blog *Addressing Cultural Appropriation in the Classroom* and use the sample questions to engage in reflective discussion.

APPENDIX

1. Dreaming Together

Websites Used in the Activity

“Immigrant Photos by Augustus Sherman,” *National Park Service*

<https://www.nps.gov/media/photo/gallery.htm?id=6529EB6C-155D-451F-67DEBAD6F88DCF07>

Featured family photos from the early 20th century provide additional context for inferring immigrant hopes and dreams.

“Gateway to a New World: Rare Photos from Ellis Island,” *TIME Magazine*
<http://time.com/3517805/gateway-to-a-new-world-rare-photos-from-ellis-island/>
Photos in this collection depict the arrival of immigrants to Ellis Island in the 1950s which provides a wider lens to view immigration in waves.

“The New Globalist is Homesick” Susan J. Matt, *The New York Times*
<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/22/opinion/many-still-live-with-homesickness.html>

Susan J. Matt explains why homesickness is a persistent effect of global migration despite the use of modern technologies to mitigate it. This is a useful article to get students thinking about similarities and differences between immigration past and present.

Photos:

The steerage deck of an ocean steamer passing the Statue of Liberty
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3b49155/>

Italian immigrants
<http://www.latinamericanstudies.org/immigration/italians-1911.jpg>

Emigrants coming to the “Land of Promise”
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3a09957/>

Refugees from Syria
http://thefederalist.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/shutterstock_321583649-998x666.jpg

Refugees from Ivory Coast
https://c2.staticflickr.com/6/5172/5573546463_dc5ba97b3d_b.jpg

Refugees from Afghanistan
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5f/Afghan_women.jpg

Refugees from Southeast Asia

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/45/Southeast_Asian_refugees_enter_the_US_for_the_first_time%2C_1979.jpg

Scottish immigrants

<https://share.america.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/658FCB-CF-155D-451F-674392C2DBC3BEF0.jpg>

Latino immigrant family

<https://masvalesaber.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/familia-latina-imigrante-con-retrato.jpg>

Additional Resources

Book Suggestions grades K-4

“One Green Apple” *Eve Bunting*

<https://www.amazon.com/One-Green-Apple-Eve-Bunting/dp/0618434771?tag=viglink26775-20>

“Two Mrs. Gibsons” *Toyomi Igus*

<https://www.amazon.com/Two-Mrs-Gibsons-Toyomi-Igus/dp/0892391707>

“Lee and Low Books”

<https://www.leeandlow.com/> *Lee and Low Books* is the largest multicultural children’s book publisher. Their website provides book lists, teaching guides, and bilingual education resources for all ages.

“We Need Diverse Books”

<http://weneeddiversebooks.org/where-to-find-diverse-books/WNDB> has extensive resources and booklists for educators and students.

Book Suggestions grades 5-12

“Spare Parts” *Joshua Davis*

<https://www.amazon.com/Spare-Parts-Undocumented-Teenagers-American/dp/0374534985>

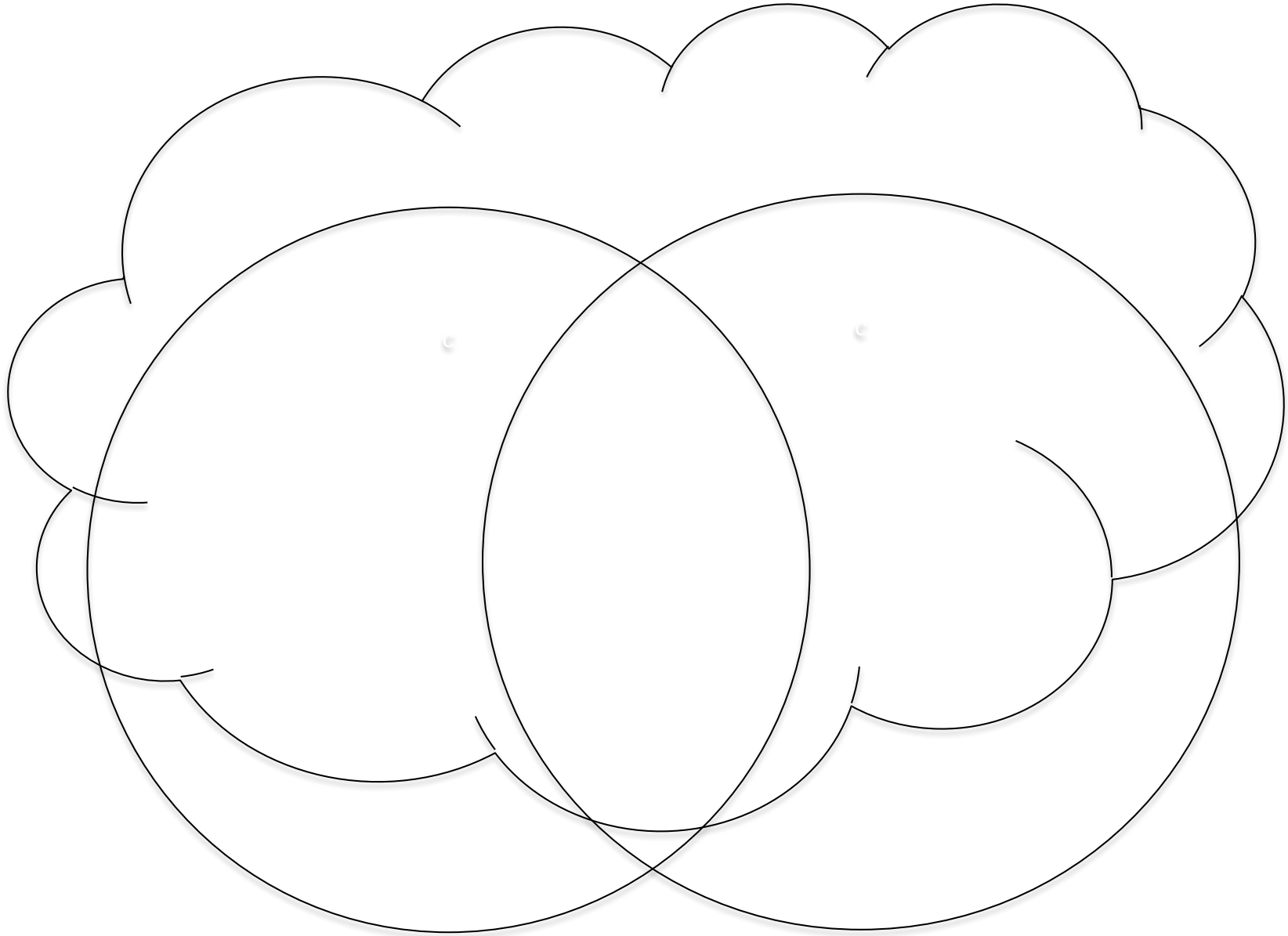
“Wonder” *R.J. Palacio*

<https://www.amazon.com/Wonder-R-J-Palacio/dp/0375869026>

“Outcasts United” *Warren St. John*

https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/51694.Warren_St_John

Dreaming Together



I WELCOME

2. Welcoming Book

Websites Used in the Activity

Selected Newcomer and Refugee Stories

“Pasang’s Story” by Pasang Sherpa, *The Immigrant Learning Center*
<http://www.ilctr.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Pasang.pdf>

“Rifa’s Story” by Rifa Yesmen, *The Immigrant Learning Center*
<http://www.ilctr.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Rifa.pdf>

“Victor’s Story” by Victor Solano, *The Immigrant Learning Center*
<http://www.ilctr.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Victor.pdf>

“New Immigrants Share Their Stories: The Students of Newcomers High School”
Not In Our Town

<https://www.niot.org/nios/newcomers>

This webpage details the Building Bridges project, a cross cultural exchange of writing and community between recent arrivals at Newcomers High School and students at St Luke’s, a private middle school in Manhattan.

Additional Resources

“Lesson Planning: Storytelling to Promote Equity, Acceptance and Leadership,”
The Immigrant Learning Center

<http://www.ilctr.org/promoting-immigrants/ilc-workshops/educators/>

A lesson with materials and guidance on how to create a cross cultural exchange of writing by educator Julie Mann of Newcomers High School

“Telling the Family Story” *Teach Immigration*

<https://sharemylesson.com/teaching-resource/telling-family-story-276825>

This lesson created by ELL teacher Angeline Sturgis details a welcoming project where students assist community members in telling immigration stories to build community inside and outside of the classroom.

3. Literature Circles

Additional Resources

Immigrant and Refugee Book Lists and Guides:

“Children’s Books about the Refugee/Immigrant Experience,” *Bridging Refugee Youth and Children Services*

<http://brycs.org/clearinghouse/Highlighted-Resources-Children-Books-about-the-Refugee-Immigrant-Experience.cfm>

This website catalogs and describes books that illustrate the refugee experience for a variety of ages and from around the globe.

I’m Your Neighbor: ‘New Arrival’ Children’s Books

<http://www.imyourneighborbooks.org/>

This website provides guidance and links to diverse books organized by age, group, setting, or theme.

“Lee and Low Books”

<https://www.leeandlow.com/> *Lee and Low Books* is the largest multicultural children’s book publisher. Their website provides book lists, teaching guides, and bilingual education resources for all ages.

Instructional Support Websites:

“Five Roles in Literature Circles” *Teaching Channel* <https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/literature-circles>

This brief video demonstrates a successful model of literature circles in action.

“Literature Circles: Getting Started” *National Council for Teachers of English*

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/literature-circles-getting-started-19.html?tab=4#tabs>

This lesson provides additional support for implementing literature circles with elementary students.

4. Where Our Nation is From

Websites Used in the Activity

“George Ella Lyon: Writer & Teacher”

<http://www.georgeellalyon.com/where.html>

The author’s website provides a copy of the poem as well as instructional tips and extensions.

Additional Resources

Instructional Support Websites

“Where I’m From: Inviting Student Lives into the Classroom,” *Rethinking Schools*

<http://www.rethinkingschools.org/static/publication/rhre/Where-I’m-From.pdf>

This document by Linds Christensen, author of *Rising Up and Teaching for Joy and Justice*, demonstrates the value of having students write about where they are from and provides additional methods for encouraging students to write along with several examples.

“Where I’m From Poem and Template,” *National Writing Project*

http://digitalis.nwp.org/sites/default/files/files/428/Where%20I’m%20From%20Original%20Poem%20&%20Template_0.pdf

This document provides an easy to follow template for students who may need additional support to write an “I’m From” poem.

5. Where Does Your Name Come From?

Websites Used in the Activity

“Author Name Pronunciation Guide,” *Teachingbooks.net*

<https://www.teachingbooks.net/pronunciations.cgi>

A collection of brief recordings of authors & illustrators saying their names.

“How We Pronounce Names and Why It Matters,” *Jennifer Gonzalez*

<https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/gift-of-pronunciation/>

A blog post and podcast exploring the importance and the impact of names in education, social and professional settings.

“My Name My Identity”

<https://www.mynamemyidentity.org>

Students share the story about how they were given their name and the meaning behind it.

6. Friendship, Food, Music and Games

Websites Used in the Activity

Food

“How Did That Get in My Lunchbox?”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2-xVZd-yN14>

This website is a read aloud of the book by Chris Butterworth, exploring the origin of popular foods and the migration of favorite flavors and tastes.

Music

“Mama Lisa”

<http://www.mamalisa.com/?t=hubeh>

The [MamaLisa](http://www.mamalisa.com) website has a wealth of information and examples of songs from around the world.

“All the Musical Instruments of the World”

<http://www.allthemusicalinstrumentsoftheworld.com/index.php?page=Moredetailsaboutinstruments>

All the Musical Instruments of the World is an interactive website housing sound samples, photos, and videos of thousands of instruments.

“Putumayo Kids

<https://www.putumayo.com/putumayo-kids/>

This website has resources for purchase and for free that explores music from around the world popular with young children.

“Dancing & Singing Games From Around the World and Back Again” *Merit School of Music*

http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:WX8zBFGyzPcJ:www.ww.edu/Documents/ce/camps/earlychildhood/2014Handouts/1223_Dancing_and_Singing_Games_from_Around_the_World_and_Back_Again.pdf+&cd=2&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us&client=safari

This website has fun songs and basic dance and movement instructions.

Games

Happy Children Playing

<http://www.boredpanda.com/happy-children-playing/>

“Playground,” *James Mollison*

<http://jamesmollison.com/books/playground/>

A selection of images from James Mollison’s book about playgrounds around the world.

“Toy Story,” *Gabriele Galimberti*

<https://fstoppers.com/portraits/>

[interview-toy-stories-photographer-gabriele-galimberti-3578](https://fstoppers.com/portraits/interview-toy-stories-photographer-gabriele-galimberti-3578)

A colorful collection of photographs showing children’s prized possessions from around the world.

Instructional Support Article

“Addressing Cultural Appropriation in the Classroom,” *EdWeek*

http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/global_learning/2016/12/addressing_cultural_appropriation_in_the_classroom_tools_and_resources.html

A reflective discussion and information about Appreciation versus Appropriation and the dangers of stereotyping.

Additional Resources

Books

Food

Kids Around the World Cook!: The Best Foods and Recipes from Many Lands

https://www.amazon.com/Kids-Around-World-Cook-Recipes/dp/0471352519/ref=pd_sim_14_1?encoding=UTF8&pd_rd_i=0471352519&pd_rd_r=7VN-4MADG4CZ7S3X1F9QP&pd_rd_w=G1VqQ&pd_rd_wg=dXz0v&psc=1&refRID=7VN4MADG4CZ7S3X1F9QP

Games

Multicultural Game Book

https://www.amazon.com/Multicultural-Game-Book-Grades-1-6/dp/0590494090/ref=pd_cp_14_1?encoding=UTF8&pd_rd_i=0590494090&pd_rd_r=TX-95J28V4GBNQQRH49T2&pd_rd_w=pZHEb&pd_rd_wg=cyGMi&psc=1&refRID=TX95J28V4GBNQQRH49T2

Acka Backa Bool: Playground Games from Around the World
https://www.amazon.com/Acka-Backa-Boo-Playground-Around/dp/0805064249/ref=sr_1_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1492100112&sr=1-2&keywords=playground+s+around+the+world

Jacks: Games Around the World
https://www.amazon.com/Jacks-Games-Around-World-Elizabeth/dp/0756501342/ref=sr_1_15?ie=UTF8&qid=1492096707&sr=8-15&keywords=games+around+the+world

Jump Rope: Games Around the World
https://www.amazon.com/Jump-Rope-Games-Around-World/dp/0756506778/ref=sr_1_3?ie=UTF8&qid=1492098650&sr=8-3&keywords=games+around+the+world+soccer

Websites

Games

Around the World in 80 Games
<http://digg.com/2014/around-the-world-in-80-games>
This infographic chronicles all the weird and wonderful games played around the world.

“Games Around the World,” *Scholastic*
<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/games-around-world/>
Early Childhood lesson plan (grades K-2) teaching several games and activities from around the world.

Amazing Playgrounds from All Over the World
<http://flavorwire.com/284670/15-amazing-playgrounds-from-all-over-the-world/5>

Music

Songs for Teaching
<http://www.songsforteaching.com/diversitymulticulturalism.htm>
Lessons and recorded songs that promote diversity of cultures

Instrument Gallery

<http://www.asza.com>
The world instrument gallery of this robust website shows images and has recordings of instruments both well-known and obscure from around the globe.

Incorporating a trauma-informed approach

Promoting Resilience and Reducing Risk Factors for Refugee and Immigrant Youth
<https://gulfcoastjewishfamilyandcommunityservices.org/refugee/2017/07/27/refugee-youth-discussion/>

Working Clinically with Traumatized Refugee Children and Families Guide
<https://gulfcoastjewishfamilyandcommunityservices.org/refugee/files/2012/05/Youth-Information-Guide.pdf>

A Risk and Resilience Perspective on Unaccompanied Refugee Minors
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Joanne_Cacciatore/publication/233955941_A_Risk_and_Resilience_Perspective_on_Unaccompanied_Refugee_Minors/links/02e7e52026d6ad9826000000.pdf



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