

LESSON 5: Understanding Culture

MATERIALS:

- Read aloud: *The Ant and the Grasshopper* or *The Father of Indian Corn* (teacher copies)
- Folklorist Journals
- Folktale Recording Chart
- Character Type Cards (one per student, pre-cut if desired)
- Adjective Word Cards (one per student, pre-cut if desired)
- Tale Cards (one per student, pre-cut if desired)
- Formative Assessment 2 (one per student)
- Word Wall card (culture)
- Scissors (one pair per student, if cards are not pre-cut)

OBJECTIVES:



BIG IDEA

Oral Folklore is a literary genre that includes a variety of traditional tales, including folktales, fairytales, myths, legends, and fables.

Folktales have different purposes—to instruct and/or to entertain.

Folktales can help us feel empathy for others.

Students will be able to:

- read a wide range of literature to build an understanding of human experience.
- apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts.



LANGUAGE

Key Terms:

- culture
 - objective (seen)
 - subjective (unseen)

SEQUENCE:

READ ALOUD: *The Ant and the Grasshopper* (Fable) OR *The Father of Indian Corn* (Legend)



CLASS

Invite students to find a comfortable place for listening. Encourage students to think about the moral and/or the purpose of the story while you read.

Read *The Ant and the Grasshopper* or *The Father of Indian Corn*.

After reading, ask students to give a one sentence, verbal

TEACHER NOTES:

PLACE



Ask students to think about ways people in their community plan for the seasons, such as hunting or planting herbs and/or vegetables. Even shopping

summary of the moral (for the *Ant and the Grasshopper*) or the purpose (for the *Father of Indian Corn*).

Ask the students to consider: *Why would we need to warn others about the risks of not storing food for winter? As a class, list all the other ways you could prepare for the future (for example: next season, next year, or many years in the future).*

for back-to-school supplies can be a way of preparing for fall.



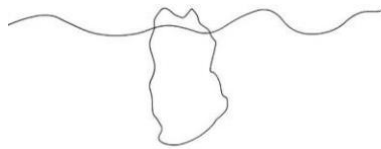
CLASS

CLASS DISCUSSION: What is Culture?

Tell students that many folktales are told to teach people about a cultural norm. Prompt students by asking them what “norm” might be short for (normal).

Ask students to brainstorm what a cultural norm might be. Ask groups to share out and write these responses on the board.

Next, draw a simplistic iceberg on the board:



Ask the students if they have ever heard the phrase “tip of the iceberg.” Ask: *Based on this picture, what do you think that phrase means?*

Next, label the parts of the iceberg:

Objective or “seen” iceberg

Subjective or “unseen” iceberg

Ask students to reflect on what the picture is showing: *How much of the iceberg would you be able to see if you were in a boat? Does what you can see give you an accurate idea of*



Culture is a difficult concept to define—it is the collection of experiences, beliefs, values, arts, knowledge, and so forth in a society. It’s important to understand that there are many different types of culture. There’s not one single “U.S. culture,” for example. There might be a comprehensive piece of culture that others recognize about the U.S. (e.g., form of government). However, within the U.S., there are many different types of cultural beliefs (e.g., different religions have different cultural beliefs).



For this unit, students should learn that stories passed down from generation to generation not only become part of the culture, but they also reflect beliefs held by a particular culture.

how big the iceberg really is?

Point out that the objective part of the iceberg is just the “tip” or a little hint of the iceberg. The unseen, subjective part of the iceberg is hidden, and is much bigger than what is seen: there is much more to the iceberg than meets the eye.



On the board, draw a two-column chart with the words *objective culture* at the top of the left column and the words *subjective culture* at the top of the right column.

Example:

Objective Culture	Subjective Culture

Explain that a **culture** is a group of people who share similar beliefs, traditions, and customs. Explain to the class that they are in a classroom culture right now, because the class is a group of people who share the same beliefs and ideas about school. Add the word **culture** to the Word Wall.

Ask the students: *What are some things we all believe about school in our classroom culture?* (i.e., do your best, be caring, show respect, etc.)

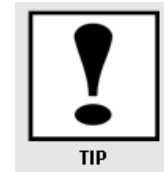
Then, point to **objective** on the chart. Ask students if they recognize the word. Remind students that they learned earlier that words can be broken down into word parts like suffixes and prefixes, which can give insight into a word’s meaning. Circle “ob-” and explain that is a prefix meaning “to, on, or toward.”

Ask: *Does the word “objective” sound like another word we know?* (Obvious, object) Objects are things can be seen, or are things that are obvious. Explain that **objective** culture is something seen and/or that people can agree on.

Tell the students to pretend they live in another country, and they are taking a trip to visit the United States. What kinds of objective things could they learn about the U.S. from searching on the Internet?



Students will likely need extra support during this activity, with lots of examples. The main point is to expose students to the terms **objective** and **subjective**. If students have difficulty with these terms, simply emphasize that culture can be “seen” or “unseen.”



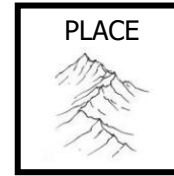
It might help to say to students that if we go to Italy, we might know that the people there speak Italian, have a type of currency called a euro, and that the capital is Rome. However, we might not know how two neighbors talk to each other if they pass each other in the street. Depending on your students, you can share that many people in the world think that everyone in America is rich. You can discuss why would others think that, and is it true? Sometimes we “see” parts of a culture but that seen culture might not tell the whole story or might not include the “unseen” parts.

Ask: *What parts of the U.S. culture can we see?* After students have an opportunity to think, write the class's ideas on the chart under *objective culture*. The list should include things like language, religions, holidays, music, government, money, etc. Point out that all of these things are obvious things that an outsider can easily see.

Then, ask students to think about the word **subjective**. Circle the prefix "sub-." Ask: *What other words start with sub?* (submarine, subtract, submerge)

Ask: *What do these words have in common?* All of these words deal with things that are under, lower, or are hidden beneath the surface. Reiterate that **subjective** is talking about the unseen parts of culture. These are the things that are there, but are often not obvious or easily seen. Ask: *What parts of a culture are unseen or harder to see?*

Ask students to again, pretend that they are taking a trip to the U.S. *What parts of the U.S. culture are subjective or unseen?* After students have an opportunity to think, collect class ideas on the board in the second column of the table under *subjective culture*. The list should include things like values, beliefs, traditions, etc.



Ask students to consider what parts of their culture an outsider may see. What things would that person see regarding their objective culture? Subjective culture?

JOURNAL PROMPT: Home Cultures

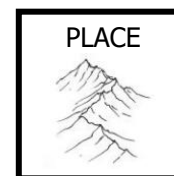


Ask students to draw an iceberg in their Folklorist Journals and to choose a culture they are familiar with. They can choose their families, school, church, neighborhood, etc. The seen (objective) culture might be where they live, their number of siblings, or their parents' name, whereas the unseen culture (subjective) might include the special traditions the family has (i.e., pizza or movie night, a family reunion, a special song or prayer they sing, a vacation spot they return to each year, etc.).



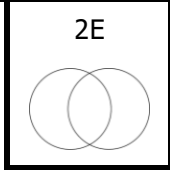

It's important to stress that everyone has a culture or cultures they belong to, and people can belong to many different cultures at the same time.



The teacher will need to model this assignment before the students begin, using a culture he/she belongs to that would be familiar to the students, like a family culture. Students who may struggle with this assignment can simply replicate this example with their own family.



Encourage students to take

	<p>their <u>Folklorist Journals</u> home. Students should observe their surroundings and the people around them, and record what happens. What parts of the evening show objective culture? What parts show subjective culture?</p>
<p>UNIT REVIEW: Characters</p> <div data-bbox="212 552 407 768" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">  </div> <p>Ask the students: <i>Who are some characters we've encountered in the tales we have read so far?</i> Display a list of the tales read so far or ask students to consult their <u>Folktale Recording Chart</u>.</p> <p>Ask children to group characters according to similar characteristics and then brainstorm adjectives to describe that type. If students have difficulty, display the <u>Character Types</u> from the last lesson and take volunteers to come underline examples of characters and adjectives on the overhead.</p>	<div data-bbox="1138 499 1295 663" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">  </div> <p>Remind students that adjectives are words that describe a noun (i.e., <u>beautiful</u> day, <u>chilly</u> morning).</p>
<p>REVIEW ACTIVITY: Adjectives</p> <p>Distribute the <u>Adjective Word Cards</u> and the <u>Character Type Cards</u> to each student. Ask students to cut out all of the cards or pre-cut them before this lesson. Ask the students to keep the cards in two separate piles (i.e., one pile of adjective cards, one pile of character types).</p> <p>Write these instructions on the board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Matching characters from the tales we have read to adjectives</i> (closed sort) 2. <i>Grouping words that go together</i> (open sort) 3. <i>Grouping words a way you invent</i> (open sort) <p>Students should sort cards starting with the closed sort. Tell students to see how far they can go.</p> <p>Students should record their sorts in their <u>Folklorist Journals</u>.</p> <p>Student results can be used as informal assessments to supplement the <u>Formative Assessment 2</u> that will be given at the end of this lesson to ensure that students are retaining the learned information.</p>	<div data-bbox="1127 1010 1295 1178" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <p style="text-align: center;">2E</p>  </div> <p>These sorts will provide insight into complexity of thought and/or analytical thinking. You may have students complete this task independently or in reciprocal peer tutoring pairs, where a student with a learning or emotional disability is paired with a comparably able student without a disability.</p> <div data-bbox="1138 1619 1295 1787" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">  </div> <p>For students who may struggle differentiating between the</p>



REVIEW ACTIVITY: Tales & Elements

Create two groups of students based on your last formative assessment:

- (1) The students who are below or on-level
- (2) Students who are above level

Distribute Tale Cards to each group.

- Group 1 will get the Tale Cards of the stories you have already covered in class (see the Master List in Introduction Resources).
- Group 2 will get Tale Cards of stories that are popular, but you have not discussed. It would be helpful to have copies of the stories or access to the Internet and appropriate websites in case they need to look them up.

Ask the students to cut the cards, or pre-cut them before the lesson. They should write brief (2-3 sentences) summaries of the stories on the back.

Come back together as a group and ask the students: *How many different ways might you sort these tales? Be creative!* It may be helpful to pair/group students, so that there are students from Group 1 working with students from Group 2.

Students should record their sorts and their sorting criteria on the same page in their Folklorist Journals.

adjective and character type cards, the teacher may wish to print these cards on two separate colors. To save time, the teacher may want to pre-cut the cards for the students, or they can cut the cards themselves. Blank cards are provided to encourage early finishers to create their own adjectives and characters.



These sorts will assess students' understanding and retention of tales from previous week. If you incorporated tales that are different from the curriculum, put them on cards as well.

CLOSE/ASSESS: Formative Assessment 2



Administer and collect Formative Assessment 2

PREPARATION: Review Formative Assessment 2

Score Formative Assessment 2 to ensure that students have grasped concepts about objective/subjective culture from this lesson, and that they understand what empathy is.

If results show that there is still confusion, use the beginning of the next lesson to reinforce these concepts and big ideas.