

# Traditions in Our Family

## Summary

This lesson gives the students an opportunity to see that every family has traditions they participate in throughout the year.

## Main Core Tie

Social Studies - 1st Grade

[Standard 1 Objective 1](#)

## Materials

- *When This Box is Full*  
Large colorful box  
Items representing each month
- [Tradition Rap](#) (pdf)
- [Month Cards](#) (pdf)
- [Season Cards](#) (pdf)
- [My \\_\\_\\_\\_\\_ Season](#) (pdf)  
Name Sticks
- [Rubric Checklist for Months & Seasons](#) (pdf)
- [Months Assessment Match](#) (pdf)
- [1st Grade Writing Assessment Form](#) (pdf)
- [Family Questionnaire](#) (pdf)

## Additional Resources

### Books

- *A House for Hermit Crab*  
, by Eric Carle; ISBN 0-590-42567-6
- *A Busy Year*  
, by Leo Lionni; ISBN 0-590-47273-.
- *A Child's Calendar*  
, by John Updike; ISBN 0-8234-1766-2
- *Too Many Tamales*  
, by Gary Soto; ISBN 0-698-11412-4
- *Thunder Cake*  
, by Patricia Polacco; ISBN 0-399-22231-6
- *Dear Rebecca, Winter Is Here*  
, by Jean Craighead George; ISBN 0-06-021139-3
- *When this Box is Full*  
, by Patricia Lillie; ISBN 0688120164

## Background for Teachers

This activity is called Traditions in Our Family. This lesson gives the students an opportunity to see that every family has traditions they participate in throughout the year. The ideal time to begin this activity is within the first two weeks of school. Do steps two to four first, at the beginning of the school year, when discussing what each child did in the summer. Then repeat this activity as each new season begins. This gives the student a sense of belonging to a family and a community. Before

teaching this lesson, the months of the year and the names of the seasons need to be reviewed in oral and/or written form. You may choose to teach the steps of this lesson all in the succession of a day or over the span of many days, as your schedule and preference dictates.

In the book, *When This Box is Full*, by Patricia Lillie (illustrated by Donald Crews), a child fills a box with things that represent each month of the year. There are several repetitions of the months in the story. Therefore, the students can read along. The story ends with the character (child) wanting to share what is in the box with you, the reader. After reading the book, the teacher will ask the students to name each month of the year and each of the four seasons. The teacher will then present his/her box to the class and the students will have a chance to see if they can match an item in the box (items may or may not be the same objects as in the book) with the appropriate month of the year.

### Intended Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate a positive learning attitude.
6. Communicate clearly in oral, artistic, written, and nonverbal form.

### Instructional Procedures

#### Invitation to Learn

Within the first two weeks of school is the ideal time to do this activity. Students will sit on the rug as you discuss their understanding of a tradition. Then teach them the "Tradition Rap". This rap should be a part of the classroom repertoire throughout the year. Next, you will read *When This Box is Full*. The repetition of this book lends itself to shared reading as the students read the months of the year with you.

#### Instructional Procedures:

Read aloud the book *When This Box is Full*. The repetition of this book lends itself to shared reading, as the students read the months of the year with you.

Students will be in their seats for this activity. You will want to have prepared name sticks, months of the year/seasons word strips, and a box of items that represent each month. Name sticks lend themselves to giving every student the opportunity to participate in this activity. Select a name stick and ask that student to recall a month of the year. When the student says a name, she will place that month card on the board in the right order beginning with January. After all the months are named, ask a student to name a season. Discuss what months go with that specific season and place the season above the appropriate three months in the northern hemisphere. Then continue using the name sticks to select a student to come and pick an item out of the box and match the item with the appropriate month. Continue this process until all 12 items are matched with a month.

Ask the students to tell about some of the things they did in the summer with their family. Write these things on the board. Give each child a chance to tell you something, even if it is as simple as watching T.V. Tally items that are repeated. You might want to let a student tally for you.

Give students *My \_\_\_\_\_ Season* paper. Have the students fill in the blanks of "In the summer I \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_." (e.g. In the summer, I went camping with my cousins.) The student will illustrate a picture to go with the writing. As the year progresses into Fall, Winter, and Spring, repeat this activity. Most students should begin to write with fewer prompts.

Put pages into a class book and have the student read what he/she wrote, to the class. This gives the student a sense of ownership.

### Extensions

Practice *The Tradition Rap*, then follow instructional steps two thru four at the beginning of fall, winter, and spring.

Do interactive writing about the months of the year and the seasons.

Put a "This Box is Full" box in a writing center. Students will pull an item from the box and write about it.

Share other books with the students about the months and seasons of the year and traditions some families enjoy (see additional resources below).

#### Family Connections

Copy the *Tradition Rap* and have each student take it home and share it with his/her family.

Send the *Family Questionnaire* home with each student and have the students sit down with their family and answer questions about traditions they share in their home. Students will return with the black-line paper and share their family traditions with the class.

#### Assessment Plan

Use the Rubric Check List for Months and Seasons where the students will name the months of the year and the seasons as the teacher marks the correct answers.

Use an assessment where the students will match the appropriate item to the appropriate month. Teachers will check the students' writing using the writing assessment rubric for writing competence.

#### Bibliography

##### Research Basis

Goodlad, J. I., Soder, R., Sirotnik, K. A., (1990). *The Moral Dimensions of Teaching*. Jossey- Bass Inc. Publishers, San Francisco, California.

Classrooms contain children of enormous diversity in family background, culture, language, and preparation for school activities, as well as huge variations in both readiness and the ability to learn. Teachers must ask: "How can I meet the needs of every student, regardless of his/her learning style or disposition?" This lesson lends itself to helping every child feel a part of a community by recognizing that all families, schools, and communities have traditions and they can be a part of traditions that surround them.

#### Authors

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