

Games People Play

Summary

Engaging in games played around the world, students will learn about other cultures.

Main Core Tie

Social Studies - 1st Grade

[Standard 1 Objective 1](#)

Group Size

Large Groups

Materials

Invitation to Learn

- *People*

In America

- *People*
- *America Words*
- *In America*

Games People Play

- [Friends Around the World](#)
 - [American Words](#)
 - [In America](#)
- Beans
- [Counting to Five in Different Languages](#)

Dice

Unifix cubes

Additional Resources

Books

People, by Peter Spier; ISBN 038513181X

Whoever You Are, by Mem Fox; ISBN 0152007873

The Colors of Us, by Karen Katz; ISBN 978-0805071634

Count on Your Fingers African Style, by Claudia Zaslavsky; ISBN 0863162509

This Is The Way We Eat our Lunch: A Book About Children Around the World; by Edith Baer; ISBN 978-0590468879

Count Your Way Through Africa, by James Haskins; ISBN 0876143478

Background for Teachers

The different and varied cultures represented in each classroom provide an opportunity for students to learn about others and themselves. Targeting specific cultures represented in individual classrooms validates student's backgrounds and gives them a chance to understand and appreciate one another. When teaching about cultures it is important to be sensitive and not to stereotype. Let the diversity of your class guide your decisions and discussions. It is important to integrate discussion about appreciating, valuing, and respecting differences of cultures. It would be wisest to teach this lesson sometime after the first few months of school. Students will be more responsive to learning about other cultures if they are secure in who they are individually. The beginning of the year you could start out by doing lots of writing and sharing activities that focus on what each student as an

individual likes and dislikes, what kind of families they come from, what they look like and other things that make them unique. This activity focuses on the people, traditions and specifically the games unique to different countries.

Intended Learning Outcomes

5. Demonstrate responsible emotional and cognitive behaviors.

Instructional Procedures

Invitation to Learn

Invite your students to look at the cover of the book *People*. Discuss and brainstorm with the class why there are so many people on the cover of this book. Ask what they think this book might be about. Read the book aloud to the class, ensuring that they can all see the pictures (Note: this could also be done as a power-point presentation with the pictures scanned in so that they are more accessible to the students).

Instructional Procedures

In America

Discuss the book *People*, by Peter Spier that was read during the introduction. Brainstorm with students what they noticed about the pictures. Were the people all the same? Were there things that you had never seen before? Let students know that now you are going to look at the book again and write some things down to help us remember what we read and saw.

Have students recall with you what they noticed in the book. On an overhead, or chart paper (you can make a poster of the *America Words*) list and categorize some of the characteristics the book talked about (e.g. physical features, clothes, what we do to "play," our homes, pets and holidays, food, religion, where we work, how we communicate/languages). Give students a chance to come and share the pen to write as you fill in the graphic organizer (by allowing the students to help you write they will be more engaged in the activity) and think of words that can go with each category to describe life in America (e.g. by clothes you could write shirts and pants, etc.). As you go through this list children will most likely want to continue to explore the book and see how what we do differs from other countries. Let them! Explain to students that just like people all over the world are different, each one of us is different and yet, in ways we are the same. Just like we read in the book *People*, sometimes when people come to visit America from other countries they think that the way we do things are interesting, just like we think that the things that they do, where they live, or what they eat might be interesting.

Refer to the list that was made during the *America Words* interactive writing activity and have students identify something under each category that they want to write more about, or that they think that someone reading a book about America for the first time would want to know. Have a few students share what they think is something important to them about living in America (e.g. a student might say, "I think it is important that in America we have national monuments or parks)."

Explain that if we were to go to a different country (e.g. Japan) there might be some traditions we recognize. For example, in Japan most children go to school. However, we wouldn't know or understand everything about their culture, like their money, language, favorite foods and even what games they like to play at school. Similarly, when people come to America from different countries, they have a lot to learn about our culture. So, we are going to create a book to teach visitors about our culture. (If there is someone in the class who has a friend or someone they know who has a unique cultural heritage, or possibly even someone in the class you could have that person be your target audience).

All students will start by finishing the open-ended sentence on the *In America* template: In America _____. This could be followed by a number of varied responses.

Encourage students to be creative and think of something unique and meaningful to them (e.g. In America there are mountains where I live. In America I play jump rope with my friends at recess. In America we have pets like dogs and cats that live in our houses and backyards. In America we go to school with boys and girls).

Children can add an illustration that matches the sentence(s) that they completed.

After completion students can read their pages to the class.

Pages can be compiled into a class book and kept in the classroom library or displayed.

After completion of class book, pick a country or place that you know a lot about (or have a student's parent or someone else that could help you to get information about a country) and repeat the process by discussing the culture of that country and making a class book.

Games People Play

Read the poem about games that people play: *Friends Around the World*.

Give each child a copy of the poem. Have students underline with you some of the names of different countries that are found in the poem. If you have a map or a globe, this would be a great time to locate those countries that are in the poem.

Make a list of games that the students in your class like to play. Make a list of games that are included in the poem. After the lists are made have students look at it and see if there are any games listed that are on both sides. Point out that some games are played in other countries, but they are just called by a different name.

Talk about numbers and how every child, no matter where they live, has to learn to count and know their numbers. Some numbers are written differently, and/or said differently. Just like we play games, and have rhymes to learn our numbers, so do children in other countries. Explain that they are going to learn and then be able to play some games from other countries. Instruct them to watch for things that might be the same or different about the games that they learn, and games that they are already familiar with. Teach children some of the number games below.

Number Games From Around the World

Africa

Skills practiced: counting, making sets

From the Mbundu tribe in Angola, West Africa, this number game is played by children as soon as they are old enough to count. The game is noncompetitive and encourages cooperation among the children. The numbers one, two, three, four, and five are called out in the Mbundu language as mosi, vali, tatu, swala, and talu. The children in East Africa, would use the language of Swahili to call the numbers as moja (MO-jah), mbili (mm-BEE-lee) tatu (TAH-too), nne (NN-nay), and tano (TAH-no.) It is best to play this game with the whole class. One student is designated as the Caller.

One player is chosen to be the Caller. The remaining children gather in a circle.

The Caller shouts out a number between one and five, then the players group themselves accordingly. For example, if the Caller calls out mbili (two), the players then scramble into groups of two.

If there are leftover players, they form their own group and shout their number to the Caller.

Play continues with the Caller calling out different numbers for three more games, then a new Caller is chosen.

For more of a challenge, play this game in several different languages to represent each culture in your classroom.

Odd Or Even: Greece

Skill practiced: one to one correspondence, even and odd

From ancient Greece, the idea for this game is simple: correctly guess whether a player holds an odd or even number of beans in their hand.

Each player needs one partner.

Each player needs 5 or 6 dried beans.

The object of the game is to guess correctly whether a player holds an odd or even number of beans.

The first players hide several beans in their closed hands. They ask their opponents, odd or even?

The opponents make their guess and the other players must open their hands to show the beans.

If the opponent's guesses are right, they win one bean. If their guess is wrong, they must give up a bean. Now it is their turn to hide their beans and the other player's turn to guess.

Play continues until a player is out of beans. (Note: When there are several pairs of children, the players can change partners after each game. At the end of a specified time (ten minutes, for example) everyone stops and counts their beans. The player who has the most beans is the winner.)

To check their answers, encourage the students to try to pair up the beans which are held in their hands. If each bean does not have another bean to form a pair, then the set is odd.

Jan Ken Po: Japan

Skill practiced: probability, cooperation

Known as Paper, Rock, Scissors, in the United States, Jan Ken Po has been played in Japan for centuries. Many times it has been used to settle disputes or to decide who goes first. The outcome is almost always accepted without question!

Each player needs at least one partner.

The object of the game is to win the match with a superior hand. The combinations and the winners are shown below:

Paper & Rock = Paper wins (paper covers rock)

Scissors & Paper = Scissors wins (scissors cuts paper)

Rock & Scissors = Rock wins (rock crushes scissors)

Players sit facing each other and begin by chanting Jan, Ken Po! They pump their hands up and down on the first two syllables, then on Po! They make a sign for one of the following: Rock is a closed fist, paper is a flat hand, and scissors is a 'v' with the index and middle fingers.

Whoever wins three times in a row becomes the leader. All players try to beat the leader.

Whoever beats the leader three times in a row becomes the new leader.

Going To Boston: United States

Skill practiced: counting, addition, comparing more than and less than.

Dice games exist all over the world in many different cultures. Dice have been designed in many different styles: the two-sided dice used by the Native Americans, the four-sided dice used by the Egyptians, and the pyramid-shaped dice of other cultures. Going To Boston, history tells us, started in the United States on a train ride to Boston. It uses six-sided dice. (If you don't have six sided dice a four sided dice can be used.)

Each group consists of two or more players. Using three dice and a cup to shake and spill the dice, and a set of Unifix cubes or paper and pencil for keeping score.

The object of the game is to score the highest total after five rolls.

Players take turns throwing one die to determine the order of play. The person with the highest number goes first. The first player puts all three dice into the dice cup, gives it a shake and spills out the dice.

The player saves the die showing the highest number and places the two remaining dice back into the cup.

For the young learner, direct the player to snap together Unifix Cubes into a train to equal the number showing on the saved die.

The player then shakes and spills the remaining dice in the cup, saving the die showing the highest number. Direct them to add this number of Unifix Cubes to their original train.

Once this player has finished shaking, spilling, and snapping, it is the next player's turn.

When the partner is finished, tell the pair to compare their Unifix trains. The player with the highest score after three rolls wins. Tell them to compare their trains: who has more and by how many (students can identify their trains as more than and less than if they cannot count)?

Extensions

Curriculum Extensions/Adaptations/ Integration

Make up verses and sing the song: I am from _____ (name of country) I _____ (something that is done in that country) sung to the tune of I am the Music Man.

Advanced Learners could research another country and make their own book (all about book) for that culture. They could be required to find three examples of things that the children or persons within that culture would like or do.

Have students find a shape with their bodies that shows something about who they are. What kind of poses and shapes would people from another country have?

Learners with special needs could work with a buddy or work with the teacher during games.

Using a Venn diagram you could compare and contrast games we play and games that children in other countries play.

Have students journal about what they learned about numbers by playing the number games.

Ask them to write about which number game they thought was easiest, hardest, or most enjoyable.

Family Connections

Where do our names come from? Send a note home with students to research where their name comes from (country of origin). They can come back and share with the class where their name is from, and how they got it. You could also use a map and put the students pictures showing where their country of origin is located.

Send home the games that were played in class for students to teach their parents and play at home.

Discuss different family cultures, and have them complete a "family culture page" where they would fill out a paper: In our family we _____. This will spark discussion about how families, not just cultures are different from one another.

Assessment Plan

Before beginning the activities, have students write what they know about games from different countries. Following the teaching, have students write again and see if they are able to express, in words, what they know now. A KWL chart could be used to do this as a whole class.

For the *In America* book, assess based on whether or not children were able to generate a sentence that made sense and included something about the culture of America.

If games are played over a span of days, or in the same day in centers or another type of rotation you could have a checklist of the games and have students make sure they have played each game and then journal about their favorite game and why.

Bibliography

Research Basis

Cornett, C.E. (3rd ed.). (2007). *Creating Meaning Through Literature and the Arts: An Integration Resource for Classroom Teachers*. New Jersey: Pearson Education.

This book outlines the growing trend toward arts integration in the curriculum. With an emphasis on differentiation and integrating multiple disciplines into classroom instruction this book provides hands on ideas for each of the different art disciplines. Content across five art disciplines is included -- literature, visual arts, drama, dance and music.

Livingston, N., Kurkjian, C. (2005). *Circles and celebrations: Learning about other cultures through*

literature. *The Reading Teacher*. 58(5) 696-703.

This research article outlines how we can appropriately develop cultural awareness through literature in our classrooms. It discusses how teachers can utilize literature, not just for what the text says, but also to explore the artwork and underlying themes. It proposes that there are two types of culture. One of them is culture as we traditionally see it -- music, fine arts, and philosophy and the other is culture including social issues and beliefs of people. The article shows that both types of culture are important to discuss and that through literature this can easily be accomplished.

Authors

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