

Curricular Package

Exploring Folk Traditions and Folk Beliefs Mary Marshall/ John F. Kennedy High School Course: American History Grade Level: Ninth Grade

Standards:

American Heritage:

- #1. Students will work forward from initiating event to its outcome recognizing cause and effect factors but also considering the accidental or irrational causal factor in history.
 - #4. Students will compare the perspectives of historical narratives
 - Synthesize multiple perspectives in the records of human experience.
 - Suggest how framing of questions, elements of argumentation and perspective influence historical interpretation.
 - #6. Students will be able to draw connections between ideas, interests, beliefs, and ideologies and their influence on individual and group historical actions.
 - #7. Students will trace the evolving American culture, taking into account contributions of various cultural groups, including African-Americans.
 - #9. Students will use the geographic themes of place, human relationships with environment, movement and regions to show the interrelationships between geography and historic events.
 - #10. Students will utilize Africentric/multicultural perspectives to evaluate historical issues in order to foster appreciation, respect and tolerance for people of all ethnic and cultural background.
- People in Societies
- #4. Students will describe the changing economic, political and social situations of immigrants, African-Americans and Native-Americans in the US from 1877 to present.
 - #6. Students will examine the contributions of representative individuals of various cultural groups, including African-Americans to American society.

1. Scope: Activity should last 7-8 days

2. Introduction

In this lesson students will be exploring the early formation of folklore and folk beliefs. This may include traditions, fables, stories, legends as well as regional beliefs. Students will choose an area they wish to explore and research. Examples of areas of research are: trickster tales, ghost stories, legends, folk beliefs, folk medicine, food and cooking, clothing, charms and amulets, witchcraft, voodoo, proverbs and regional stories. Students will be researching their chosen topic in order to gather data for a written report, an oral report to be accompanied by a Power Point Presentation.

3. Objectives:

- Students will be able to analyze data gathered from different types of research areas.
- Students will learn how to find information on the World Wide Web and to determine the usefulness of that information.
- Students will explore different cultural aspects of American History through books, interviews and the World Wide Web.
- Students will organize information into both written and oral presentation form.
- Students will learn how to use Power Point computer software.

4. Content Elements

Procedures for this lesson:

- A. Students will brain storm together possible topics to be used for this project. See above for initial ideas. Students may be given the choice of cultures they wish to explore regarding any ideas. For example if two students would like to do food it may be suggested that one student should do African-American food and another may do Native-American food. Make sure that there is flexibility in topics so that students do not get frustrated or are unable to locate information.
- B. Students will begin research. Initial research may be library based for possible books. Students should be able to find at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of a page of research per each research source. Please advise students that they need to sight their source. (See Sighting Sources). Following initial search in books at school library and/or public library students will begin to explore computer resources.
- C. The first type of computer resource that should be used should be any computer program available to the student either through their school or at home. Such sources may include Encarta, Encarta Africana, and World Book Millennium. Advise students that while these resources are good starting points they are just starting points. These resources should be sighted just as a book source would be sighted. (See Sighting Sources).
- D. The next type of computer resource will be the Internet. Be sure that each student has a signed release allowing them to use the Web. See your school administrator for this. Next advise students to be aware of what they are looking at. Unauthorized browsing will result in dismissal and failure of the class. Students must also be instructed in how to evaluate a web site. Students need to look at who put the site up, for what purpose, is the information accurate and unbiased. Make students aware that it is also possible to plagiarize information from the web and they must sight any site used. Before browsing begins have students come up with a list of key terms to begin their searches. This may make it easier when their most obvious key words do not bring forth usable information. Students will look for the who, what, where, when, why, how and the consequences of their topic.
- E. The oral interview part of this project may be tricky for students to do depending on their topic. Students will go and talk to people regarding their

- F. topics. Possible interviews would be grandparents, older relatives, nursing home members or older church members. Students will be asking about their specific topics to get the interviewees reaction, involvement and knowledge of the topic. Students will come up with a minimum of 10 interview questions before the interview. Students may wish to use an audio recorder or a video recorder during the interview to avoid missing any given information. Please be sure to ask the interviewee if recording them is acceptable. Students may also wish to explore outside the interview arena. Instruct students that a small camera may be used to gather photos. Again instruct students to check with authorities before taking pictures.
- G. Once students have gathered all information they need to organize the information. Initially students should use an outline to help them sort out the gathered information. Once this is done the students may transform their outline into paragraph form. This will include using their interviews and the information gathered there in. Students will also use this time to place any photos into the appropriate areas of their essay. While students are writing their essay they need to also be preparing for their Power Point Presentation with both photos and written statements and notes.
- H. The Power Point presentation should be a minimum number of slides to show content knowledge as well as use of Power Point. A minimum of 7 slides should be appropriate. Seven slides will give an introduction or title slide, a bibliography slide and 5 slides in between for information and pictures. A maximum number of slides maybe set at 20 depending on how long a presentation are going to be required to be. Presentations should include at least one slide of animation or a movie and two slides of sound. Slides may be automatic or student propelled. For further information on using Power Point see your school Technology Administrator.
- I. The written research paper for this project should be a minimum of 4 typed, double-spaced pages. The paper should reflect knowledge of the topic, a clear understanding of the beginnings of the topic as well as the continuing development of the topic. Also include what has become of the subject in the Twenty-first century. The paper should include information from all sources used including the interview. Be sure students understand that grammar, spelling and proper use of sentence structure is very important. The use of rough drafts are at the teacher's discretion.
- J. The oral presentation for this lesson will be presented at the same time as the Power Point Presentation. While the presentation is to have sound and motion the student will be presenting oral information regarding their topic. Instruct students to be ready for any questions that the class may have. This presentation should be about 5 minutes in length. The oral presentation will be graded on knowledge of information, speaking style, eye contact and any visual aides other than Power Point that are used.
- K. Sighting Sources
-Teachers may use any method of sighting they choose but here is one.

Books:

Title. Author. Publisher. Date.

If an encyclopedia is used be sure to list the volume number.

Magazines:

Title of magazine. **Title of Article.** Author. Date of publication.

Web Sites:

Http address. Name of web site. Page on web site. Author of website if available. Date and time on website. (This is very important if the website is to be visited at a later date.)

Interviews:

Name of person. Relationship. Time and place of interview.

5. Extending lesson

-This lesson may be extended into museums, genealogical societies and historic societies. There may also be field trips to be taken depending on what is available in your area. For group projects students may work on the same topics but in different ethnic areas in order to show similarities and differences in cultures.

Students may also be able to hold cultural exchange programs for the rest of the school by exhibiting their findings. For this students may want to use not only photos and essays but also artifacts and food from their culture or subject.

6. Bibliography

- A. **Folk Beliefs of the Southern Negro.** Newbell, Niles Puckett, Ph.D. Oxford University Press. 1926.
- B. **A Treasury of Afro-American Folklore.** Courlander, Harold. Marlowe and Company. New York.
- C. **Before Freedom: When I Just Can Remember.** Edited by Hurmence, Belinda. Winston-Salem. N.C. 2001.
- D. **Encarta Africana.** 2002.
- E. Interviews: Carol White: Gullah StoryTeller.
- F. Interviews: Alphonso Brown. Licensed Guide, Lecturer, and Author