

**Intended for Grades:** 6-8      **Est. Time:** 60-75 min.

**Lesson Title: CULTURE COLLAGE - Who We Are**

**Lesson Purpose:**

- \* Build group bonds to foster collaboration and friendships
- \* Learn about everyone’s interests, connections, and cultures
- \* Develop appreciation for diversity by learning about layers of culture

**Materials & Preparation:**

- Overhead or group handout: “Creating a Culture Collage“ (See below)
- Paper and pen/pencils
- Large paper or poster and art materials\* to create a group collage (\*pens, paper, glue, magazines, etc.)
- Prior to teaching this lesson, explore your own connections to the four layers of culture being discussed. Prepare to share as a model and a way to connect with students.

**Background Information:**

This lesson can help students learn about and develop increased respect for diversity in general, and specifically for the uniqueness of each person in their class. Deepening understanding about the many facets of culture can help students understand the importance of accepting and respecting *all* people. True aloha can be defined as genuine caring and concern for everyone and everything, as everything is connected.

Culture plays a critical role in shaping our understandings about life. We are comfortable with what is familiar to us - our home and local culture. We feel secure, knowing what to expect. When we encounter something or someone who is unfamiliar, people can become less comfortable, even fearful. Criticizing or bullying another who is different is also how some people feel more powerful. Helping students develop awareness and appreciation of what is not familiar can help them choose acceptance instead of rejection due to individual differences.

Belonging and acceptance are basic human needs. For middle school students, this is of paramount importance. Fostering a culture of respect built on appreciation for diversity can encourage a social/emotional environment where actions like bullying are not acceptable behaviors, and students are strong in their conviction to deal with issues that surface.

**Steps:**

1. Introduce that students will be creating a large Culture Collage that represents who they are as a class.
2. Ask students to share what culture means to them, and then briefly discuss definitions of culture: *The behaviors and beliefs characteristic of a particular social, ethnic, or age group; the youth culture; surfing culture; Chinese culture; plantation culture.*

**“Culture – a way of being unique to place and people”**

-Dr. Manulani Aluli Meyer

3. Review and discuss “Creating a Culture Collage” handout (below). Explain that these Layers of Culture can help students understand culture and their own connections. Share examples for each category.
4. Stress the importance of group diversity, and how everyone can honor and learn from the unique life experiences of people in their group.
5. Invite students to work with one or two classmates so they can share ideas as they create their own lists. Review what students are to do, set amount of time they have, and clarify where supplies can be found.
6. Figure out how to organize the artwork and word art being collected and invite students to put the collage together.
7. Have students do a reflection on what they learned about themselves and each other by doing this project.
8. Celebrate the Collage when complete. Discuss how the many aspects of each person’s *mana* (energy) and *mana’o* (thoughts) enhance the group. Hang the Collage in an appropriate place and encourage others in the school community to explore the details.

**Reflection Questions:**

- \* *What did you learn about yourself as you explored connections to culture?*
- \* *What might happen if everyone respected and appreciated all cultures around the world?*

**Resources:**

<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ877617.pdf> - Article by educator Anna Sumida explaining Layers of Culture (see page 7)

## **CREATING A CULTURE COLLAGE**

**What to do:**

- Create a class collage using words and pictures that represent your group’s connections to the four “Layers of Culture”. See descriptions below.

**How to do it:**

1. Individually write down how you and your family connect to each layer of culture.
2. Discuss your connections with others; then pick ideas to include on the collage.
3. Create representations of your different connections to each layer. You can:
  - \*Find and draw pictures
  - \*Design word art and symbols
  - \* Be creative!

**Supplies needed:**

- Notebook paper and pencil for all students
- Supplies to draw, write, cut paper
- Large fadeless paper and a place to hang it in the classroom or on the campus
- Construction paper, magazines that can be cut
- Computers and a printer (*optional*)

### **IDENTIFYING CONNECTIONS TO LAYERS OF CULTURE**

**1. HOME CULTURE: Who we are as unique individuals and families**

- \*Ethnicity
- \*Cultural Traditions
- \*Personal & Family Interests
- \*After Work & Weekend Activities
- \*Skills, Hobbies, Sports, etc.

**2. HOST CULTURE: What we do that relates to Hawaiian culture**

- \*Hula
- \*Chanting
- \*Lua
- \*Surfing
- \*Paddling
- \*Making Lei
- \*Fishing
- \*Weaving
- \*Farming/Gardening
- \* Hawaiian Herbs
- \* Practicing Ho’oponopono
- \*Cooking in an imu
- \*and more....*

**3. LOCAL CULTURE: Activities and interests**

- \* Groups, teams, and clubs in the community
- \* Community values
- \* History of the area
- \* Any other connections to community
- \* Important places (past & present)
- \* Local events & activities
- \* What people do for jobs
- \* What people do to play

**4. GLOBAL CULTURE: Extended connections**

- \* Ancestral homes
- \* Global causes
- \* International music, dance, celebrations
- \* Family and friends in other countries
- \* Disaster support
- \* Any other global connections