English Language Arts and Ethics and Religious Culture

Integrated Learning and Evaluation Situation

Celebrations

Elementary Cycle Two

**English Language Arts**

Competency 1

**To read and listen to literary, popular and information-based texts**

Competency 3

**To represent her/his literacy in different media**

**Ethics and Religious Culture**

Competency 2

**Demonstrates an understanding of the phenomenon of religion**

Competency 3

**Engages in dialogue**

**WORKING DOCUMENT**

**June 2011**

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**PRESENTATION OF THE SITUATION**

For the **Ethics and Religious Culture component** of this learning and evaluation situation, students are encouraged to explore the main aspects of weekly or annual community celebrations including where they take place, their meaning, and the objects and symbols associated with these celebrations. For the **English Language Arts component** students will be encouraged to use a response process when reading information-based texts as they gather information on the celebrations. They will also use a production process when creating a media presentation. Throughout the LES, students will be encouraged to use various information-based text types, such as planning texts and descriptive texts, in order to help them gather and organize their information.

**WHAT IS EXPECTED OF STUDENTS**

A pamphlet of a weekly or annual religious or spiritual celebration for a religious tradition or other current of thought, depicting the place of worship or celebration, as well as the objects and symbols associated with the celebration.

EVALUATION

The following can be taken into consideration when evaluating students’ work:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| In religious culture | Corresponding tasks |
| **Appropriate treatment of forms of religious expression**   * Description of the forms of religious expression * Explanation of the meaning of forms of religious expression   **Appropriate consideration of diversity**   * Presentation of different ways of thinking and acting in society | Worksheet 1-Main Aspects of the Sun Dance Celebration  Worksheet 3- Research Record  Worksheet 4- Interview Sheet  Pamphlet  Assessment Tool 1B- Buddha’s Birthday |
| In dialogue |  |
| **Appropriate practice of dialogue**   * Interaction that fosters dialogue | Teacher Tool 7 –Observation Checklist  Class discussions  Interviews |
| In reading and media |  |
| **Constructing meaning**   * Use of reading strategies to construct meaning according to purpose and text type | Class discussions  Assessment Tool 2- Key Words in Epiphany |

**Note:**

These indicators can be found in the rubrics on pages 10 and 11. These are the most easily observable indicators in order to determine the success of the requested tasks. The teacher could target other criteria and indicators, depending on his/her adaptation of the LES.

**CONNECTIONS WITH THE QUÉBEC EDUCATION PROGRAM**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Cross-Curricular Competencies** | Uses information |
| **Subject-Specific Competencies Evaluated in English Language Arts** | * To read and listen to literary, popular and information-based texts * To represent her/his literacy in different media |
| **Subject-Specific Competencies Evaluated in Ethics and Religious Culture** | * Demonstrates an understanding of the phenomenon of religion * Engages in dialogue |
| **Targeted Program Content** | |
| **Theme and related content Religious Culture:**  Religious practices in the community   * A time for celebrations * Places of worship, religious objects and symbols   **Subject-specific knowledge targeted in the Progression of Learning:**   * Describes places of worship, objects or symbols connected with one or more religious practices * Describes religious celebrations experienced in the community | |
| **Related content in English Language Arts:**  Language-Learning processes   * Response Process   Text Types, Structures and Features (Information-Based Text Types)   * Planning Texts   **Subject-specific knowledge targeted in the Progression of Learning:**   * Uses a variety of reading strategies to make meaning of different text types * Identifies and gathers material, resources, expertise for the production * Uses images and/or print to produce a familiar media text * The student writes/produces different planning texts, specifically: Graphic organizers, outlines, timelines, graphs and diagrams to organize ideas and information coherently | |
| **Content related to Dialogue:**   * Forms of dialogue: discussion, interview * Means for developing a point of view: description, comparison, synthesis * Means for examining a point of view: recognize judgments that form the basis for developing a point of view and processes that may hinder dialogue | |

**SUGGESTED LEARNING CONTEXT**

On Sunday Sara and her family go to mass at the Notre Dame Basilica in Montréal. The church has stained-glass windows and tall towers on each side; there is also organ music and singing. Sara wonders if all children go to church to celebrate on Sunday. She thinks about her friend Anita whose family is from India and her friend Kyle who is Jewish. Where do they go? How do they celebrate? Like Sara, many people all over the world have weekly celebrations where they gather together with people from their communities to pray and give thanks. Usually, there are special words, objects, symbols or rituals associated with these celebrations. In addition, many people go to a special place to celebrate, while others stay in their homes. In this LES, you will explore the main aspects of weekly or annual community celebrations and the places of worship, as well as the objects and symbols associated with these celebrations for a religious tradition or other current of thought. To help us get started we will look at some familiar celebrations, religious or secular, of which you are aware.

**OVERVIEW OF TASKS**

Duration: About 6 hours

|  |
| --- |
| **PREPARATION–60 minutes** |
| **Whole class**  Become familiar with the learning and evaluation situation, the tasks to be completed, and the rubrics found on pages 10 and 11.  Become familiar with the subject of dialogue by reading and discussing the suggested learning context as presented on page 4.  Discuss some of the celebrations that the students have attended or are aware of; these could be cultural, social, or religious. Define the terms *celebration, object, symbol, place of worship.* |
| **PERFORMANCE – 270 minutes** |
| **TASK 1**  **Whole class**  Study the Sun Dance celebration from Native Spirituality as an example. Identify the important aspects of the celebration.  *(Worksheet 1-Main Aspects of a Celebration )*  **TASK 2**    **In groups or pairs**  Choose one religious tradition or other current of thought and devise a plan to gather information on a weekly or annual celebration. Carry out the research.  *(Worksheet 2- Group Research Plan)*  *(Worksheet3 - Research Record)*  **TASK 3**  **In groups or pairs**  Interview a peer who has researched a celebration from a different religious traditon or current of thought.  *(Worksheet 4 - Interview Questions)*  **TASK 4**  **In groups or pairs**  Create a pamphlet of the celebration that has been researched.  *(Worksheet 6 - Pamphlet Planner)* |
| **INTEGRATION – 30 minutes** |
| **Individually**  Review process and take stock of reflections.  *(Worksheet 7 - Reflection on Process and Learning)* |

**SUGGESTED PROCEDURE**

**PREPARATION**

|  |
| --- |
| **Discuss some of the celebrations that the students have attended or are aware of; these could be cultural, social, or religious. Define the terms *celebration, object, symbol, place of worship.***  *60 minutes* |
| **Whole class**   * Give students an overview of the learning and evaluation situation: the competencies that will be worked on and evaluated, the evaluation criteria, the themes that will be addressed, the procedure, and the work methods. * Explain to students that they will be asked to create a pamphlet of a weekly or annual religious or spiritual celebration for a religious tradition or other current of thought, depicting the place of worship, as well as the objects and symbols associated with the celebration.   + *Note to teacher: The* ***forms of religious expression*** *studied in this LES are the celebration as well as the place of worship, the objects and the symbols associated with the celebration.*   + *In order to evaluate student work (see rubrics on pages 10 and 11), the teacher should ensure that students are able to:*   ***In religious culture****:*   * + - *Describe the celebration, the place of worhsip, and the objects and symbols associated with the celebration.*     - *State the meaning (what it means, what it represents) of the celebration, the place of worship, and the objects and symbols associated with the celebration.*     - *Describe different ways of conducting a weekly or annual celebration.*   ***In reading***   * + - *Use reading strategies to construct meaning when reading information-based texts describing the celebrations.*   ***In media*** *(A rubric has not been provided for media and writing. Therefore, teachers may choose to evaluate this component using tools familiar to them)*   * + - *Select relevant information on the celebrations from various resources and research.*     - *Use standard structures (graphic organizers) to plan and develop a pamphlet.*     - *Produce a pamphlet for an audience of peers for the purpose of providing information on a celebration.* * Discuss the learning context.   + Note*: If available, show a picture of the Notre Dame Basilica to help students conceptualize the place. The Basilica’s website has a collection of photos.* [*http://www.basiliquenddm.org/*](http://www.basiliquenddm.org/)   **Whole class**   * Invite students to reflect on a birthday celebration that they have had or have attended. * Ask them to think about the place where the celebration took place and the objects or symbols that were part of the celebration.   + *Note to teacher: It may be necessary at this point to ensure that students have a good grasp of the meaning of* ***objects*** *and* ***symbols****.* ***Teacher Tool 1-A Glossary of Terms,******Teacher Tool 2 – Background Notes for a Birthday Celebration,*** *and* ***Teacher Tool 3- A Birthday Celebration- Possible Student Answers****, have been provided. The tools will assist the teacher in helping students to understand these concepts and to identify things at a birthday celebration that are objects or symbols in order to prepare students for Task 1 and their research.* * Inform students that this exercise is to prepare them to carry out the next task on the Sun Dance celebration in Native Spirituality. * Note student responses on chart paper or board to be kept for reference throughout this LES. |

**PERFORMANCE (4 hours 30 minutes)**

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| **Study the Sun Dance celebration from Native Spirituality as an example. Identify the important aspects of the celebration.**  TASK 1 *60 minutes* |
| **In groups or pairs**   * Introduce the strategy of key words to the students by following the explanations in **Teacher Tool 4- Reading Strategy: Key Words.** * Inform students that they will be reading a text about the Sun Dance in order to:   + Describe the celebration   + Identify the place, the objects and the symbols   + Explain the meaning of the celebration, the place, the objects and the symbols   + Use the reading strategy of **“key words”** to help them find the important facts in the text * Invite students to read **Student Tool 1-The Sun Dance Celebration** individually, in pairs or as a group. * Ask students to complete **Worksheet 1- Main Aspects of the Sun Dance Celebration**.   + ***Note to teacher****:* ***Teacher Tool 5-******Main Aspects of the Sun Dance Celebration*** *-****Possible Student Answers*** *has been provided to help teachers when evaluating student answers.* |
| **Choose one religious tradition or other current of thought and devise a plan to gather information on a weekly or annual celebration. Carry out the research.**  TASK 2 *60 minutes* |
| **In groups or pairs**   * Ensure that students have access to varied resources for research. (See **Suggested Resources** section). * Assign each group or pair a religious tradition or other current of thought; alternatively you may allow the students to choose (however, verify to make sure that a variety of religious traditions or currents of thought are covered). **Teacher Tool 6-Suggested Celebrations for Student Research** has been provided to assist teachers in assigning topics for research. * Invite students to plan their research by using **Worksheet 2- Group Research Plan**. Alternatively, if students are familiar with graphic organizers they may be encouraged to devise their own plan. * Remind students that the aim of the research is to find information on the following:   + The celebration, the place of worhsip, and the objects and symbols associated with the celebration.   + The meaning (what it means, what it represents) of the celebration, the place of worship, and the objects and symbols associated with the celebration.   + The different ways of conducting a weekly or regular celebration. (Ex. Different ways of celebrating Easter in different Christian communities.) * Remind students to apply the **reading strategies** they have learned in Task 1 to help them read the information-based texts they use in their research. * Give students time to conduct their research and record their findings. Invite them to use **Worksheet 3- Research Record**. |

**PERFORMANCE (continued)**

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| **Interview a peer who has researched a celebration from a different religious tradition or current of thought.**  TASK 3 *60 minutes* | |
| **In pairs**   * Review means for developing and examining a point of view, and types of judgments, in order to help students organize their discussions.   + Ex. **Means for developing a point of view**: Comparison of different celebrations and where they take place; **Means for examining a point of view**: Judgment of reality with regard to the validity of information exchanged.   + A **point of view** is a student’s understanding of the different celebrations and what they mean for the participants. * Invite students to find a peer who has researched a religious tradition that is different from the one he/she has researched. * Direct students to interview each other on one of the religious traditions or other currents of thought that they have researched. (**Worksheet 4- Interview Sheet**) * Encourage students to discuss and identify the similarities and the differences of the celebrations for each of the religious traditions studied and to consider the different ways of celebrating in different cultural communities.   + *The teacher may use this task to evaluate dialogue*. *Use* ***Teacher Tool 7- Observation Checklist.*** * Invite students to complete **Worksheet 5- Peer Evaluation on Dialogue**. | |
| **Create a pamphlet for the celebration that has been researched.**  TASK 4 *90 minutes* |
| **In groups or pairs**   * Inform students that they will create a pamphlet that synthesizes the information they have gathered over the course of the LES. * Instruct students to include the following in their pamphlet: (see **Worksheet 6- Pamphlet Planner**. * *The name of the religious tradition or current of thought researched* * *The name of the celebration* * *A description of the celebration including the time it is celebrated and the country of origin* * *A description of the place where the celebration takes place* * *A description of the symbols and objects used in the celebration* * *Information on the meaning of the celebration* * *A description of how the celebration is conducted differently in a culture or society different from the one he/she has researched (Ex. Christmas is celebrated differently in Sweden and the United States; Christian Sunday services are celebrated differently by Anglicans and Baptists).*    + ***Evaluation Note to teacher:*** *This task may be used to evaluate all three of the observable elements for religious culture according to the rubric on page 10.*   **Whole class**   * Invite students to share the pamphlets with the class. |

**INTEGRATION**

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| **Review process and take stock of reflections.**  *30 minutes* |
| **Individually**   * Encourage the students to reflect on their learning. * Invite students to think about their process, as well as their interactions with their peers during discussions and research (**Complete Worksheet 7**- **Reflection on Process and Learning**). |

**FURTHER ASSESSMENT**

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| --- |
| **Knowledge Verification Exercise(s)**  **Assessment Tool(s)** |
| * **The assessment tool(s) at the end of the LES** havebeen provided in order that teachers may verify a student’s acquisition of knowledge: * The exercises are based on content from the Progression of Learning. * The exercise(s) may be used to verify the acquisition of knowledge once the student has completed the LES. * The exercise(s) may be evaluated according to the evaluation label at the top of the worksheet. * **These activities are not in and of themselves enough to make a judgment on a student’s overall performance on the LES or on the student’s competency development. The activities are meant to verify knowledge acquisition and not competency development.** * There should be a certain balance between tasks used to verify knowledge acquisition and tasks used to evaluate the student’s ability to apply that knowledge. |

Ethics and Religious Culture Elementary Cycle Two

Rubric C2-C3 RELIGIOUS CULTURE AND DIALOGUE

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Title of the LES: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| **Criteria** | **The elements evaluated in this task are checked off below.** | **Observable Elements** | **Performance Requirement** |  | Meets the requirements to an outstanding degree.    Meets the requirements in a satisfactory manner.  Meets a minimum number of requirements.  Meets few of the requirements.  Meets none of the requirements. | | | |
| **Appropriate treatment of forms of religious expression** | 🗷 | The student provides an appropriate **description** of forms of religious expression**.** | *An appropriate description includes:*   * the main characteristics of the form of religious expression studied   (who, what, when, how, where)   * the use of accurate vocabulary to designate these main characteristics * reference to a reliable and valid source supplied by the teacher | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| □ | The student **makes appropriate connections** between forms of religious expression and their traditions of origin. | *Appropriate connections involve:*   * associating the forms of religious expression studied with their traditions of origin * associating the forms of religious expression studied with other forms of religious expression from the same tradition | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 🗷 | The student **accurately** **states** the meaning of a form of religious expression. | *An accurate statement presents:*   * information on the meaning (it means, it represents) of this form of religious expression according to the religious tradition of origin | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| □ | The student **makes relevant connections** between forms of religious expression and elements of the environment. | *Relevant connections involve:*   * identifying the forms of religious expression (signs, symbols, heritage elements, etc.) found in the environment * relating these forms of religious expression to aspects of culture and society | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| **Appropriate consideration of diversity** | 🗷 | The student **describes** various religious or secular ways of thinking and acting in society. | *An appropriate description features:*   * a variety of religious and secular ways of thinking (concepts, ideas) and acting evident in society   *e.g. Presents various ways of conducting a weekly celebration within a single religious tradition.*  *e.g. Presents different ways of becoming involved in his or her community.*   * the influence of culture on various forms of religious expression | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| **Appropriate practice of dialogue**  **Commentaires de l’enseignant :** | 🗷 | The student **interacts in a way that fosters** dialogue. | *Appropriate interaction, orally or in writing, can be observed in one or more of the following actions:*   * correctly using means for developing a point of view *(p. 350)* * correctly using forms of dialogue *(p. 349)* * complying with conditions that foster dialogue *(p. 349)* | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| □ | The student **questions** points of view **in an appropriate manner**. | *Appropriate questioning, orally or in writing, can be observed in one or more of the following actions:*   * using relevant resources (related to the subject of dialogue) * distinguishing between essential and secondary elements * identifying and examining processes likely to hinder dialogue *(p. 353)* * identifying and examining judgments that express a point of view *(p. 352)* | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Result:

Strong points: STUDENT’S REFLECTIONS Points in need of improvement:

Teacher’s comments:

English Language Arts Elementary Cycle Two

Meets the requirements to an outstanding degree.

Meets the requirements in a satisfactory manner.

Meets a minimum number of requirements.

Meets few of the requirements.

Meets none of the requirements.

Rubric C1-C3 READING AND MEDIA

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Title of the LES: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **The elements evaluated in this task are checked off below.** | **Observable Elements** | **Performance Requirement** |  |  | | | |
| **Constructing Meaning** | 🗷 | The student uses **appropriate reading strategies** to construct meaning according to purpose and text type. | *Appropriate reading strategies:*   * vary, and include: the four cueing systems; self-correcting strategies; strategies for locating information and/or ideas in a text * are suited to the text type (i.e. self-expressive, narrative, literary, information-based, etc). * suit the purpose for reading (i.e. information, interest, ideas, etc.) * help to clarify understanding | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| □ | The student **accurately integrates** new information to construct meaning. | *Accurate integration involves:*   * applying new information to enhance and clarify meaning * listening to others’ views and interpretations * using information gathered from discussions with peers and /or teacher | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| □ | The student provides an **accurate** **interpretation** in order to supportideas when responding to texts. | *An accurate interpretation includes:*   * own views and ideas integrated with those suggested in the text * references to structures and features of the text that influence the meaning | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| □ | The student **provides an adequate justification of his/her interpretation** of the reading and/or viewing with reference to the text. | *An adequate justification presents:*   * a clear explanation of own ideas and views * accurate references from the text * logical reasons for impressions that are related to own or general life experiences | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| **Making connections** | □ | The student **clearly identifies** similar characters, issues, and events common to different texts**.** | *A clear identification includes:*   * a description of the characters, issues and events found in the main text with: * references to characters, issues, or events found in a similar text | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| □ | The student **recognizes** similar ideas, themes, or content among text types. | *Accurate recognition involves:*   * a description of the ideas, themes or content found in the main text with: * references to ideas, themes, or content found in a different text type | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| □ | The student establishes **relevant** text-to-text, text-to-self and text-to-world **connections.** | *Relevant connections involve:*   * coherent comparisons of the structures and features of a text (characters, issues, events, ideas, themes, content, etc.) with: * another text (text-to-text), ; a personal experience or idea (text-to-self); a broader, more common idea or experience (text-to-world) | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| **Using structures and feature of texts**  **Commentaires de l’enseignant :** | □ | The student uses **relevant structures and features** to gain meaning and interpret text. | *Relevant structures and features include:*   * those structures and features (characters, dialogue, theme, organization, etc) that contribute to the construction of meaning * structures and features that support his/her ideas | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| □ | The student provides an **appropriate explanation** of the purpose for structures and features of different texts. | *An appropriate explanation includes:*   * an identification of the structures and features of a text that reveal the author’s meaning * an identification of the structures and features of a text that enhance meaning | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| **Reading critically**  Result:  Strong points: STUDENT’S REFLECTIONS Points in need of improvement:  Teacher’s comments:  Result:  Strong points: STUDENT’S REFLECTIONS Points in need of improvement:  Teacher’s comments:  **(Judgment)** | □ | The student determines the author’s purpose and intended audience and uses this to **accurately interpret** texts. | *An accurate interpretation includes:*   * an identification of the purpose of the text * an identification of the intended audience * an identification of how the author has tried to influence the reader /audience | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| □ | The student provides an **adequate explanation** **and synthesis** of ideas common to different texts when comparing written and media texts. | *An adequate explanation and synthesis include:*   * an identification of the main ideas that are similar and different in the texts * a description of how these ideas enhance meaning * inferences on the author’s meaning and intended purpose that are supported with references to the texts | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

**Glossary of Terms Teacher Tool 1**

Use this glossary as an aid during the preparation phase activity to introduce concepts that may be unfamiliar to students.

**What is a celebration?**

**Celebrate** is defined as: to observe a notable occasion with festivities.

Therefore **Celebration** may be defined as: An event to mark a notable occasion with festivities.

**What is a place of worship?**

**Place** is defined as: a building or locality used for a special purpose.

**Worship** is defined as: to honour or reverence as a divine being or supernatural power.

Therefore **place of worship** may be defined as: a locality used to honour a divine being or supernatural power.

**What is an object?**

Something that may be seen or felt “I see an *object* in the distance.”

*Objects can become symbolic if a religious, cultural or social group agrees upon it and it becomes accepted over time.*

**What is a symbol?**

Something concrete (an object or a picture) that stands for or suggests another thing that cannot in itself be pictured or shown.

**For example:** The Star of David is a symbol of Judaism. The cross is a symbol of Christianity.

A symbol is usually something that has been agreed upon by members of a cultural, religious or social group.

Examples of objects and symbols from **birthday celebration**:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Object** | **Symbol of** |
| **Gifts** | **Caring and giving** |
| **Cake** | **Honour and respect for the celebrant** |
| **Candles** | **Hope and good wishes** |

SOURCE: The Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 1997.

**Background Notes for a Birthday Celebration Teacher Tool 2**

* The following text and information on birthdays may be used when introducing the concept of a celebration in the preparation phase. Use it to gather information and steer the discussion to help students understand the meaning of a celebration, objects and symbols. Teachers may also choose to give the text and the information to students as a separate reading task.

Without calendars there never would have been any birthdays at all. Long ago people had no way to mark the passage of time. Eventually calendars were invented and the passage of time was divided into years, months, and days. Slowly the custom of celebrating one’s birthday began.

At first only very powerful people were honored with birthday celebrations. The Roman emperor Caesar Augustus held a birthday celebration each month! But the common people began celebrating too. In those days just living to your next birthday might be cause for rejoicing. Or perhaps people wanted to take every opportunity to give their loved ones good wishes or gifts to keep evil spirits away. In some cultures a mock spanking is given to the birthday person. This custom probably began as a tribal rite to make the body pure. Once the spanking was over, the person was welcomed back to the group and offered congratulations, well wishes, and good luck.

Early Christians believed it was sinful to rejoice on a birthday. Church festivals were centered, not on birthdays, but on the death of the saints. Saints are people who performed great services for Christianity. In some cultures, when a child is born, at least one of his or her given names is a saint’s name. A child may be named after a saint whose feast day, or day of celebration, coincides with the day on which the child was born. The child honors, or celebrates, his birthday on the Saints’ Day, or Name Day.

The ancient Greeks traditionally honored the birthday of Artemis, goddess of the moon, marriage, and childbirth, by placing a moon-shaped cake topped with candles on an altar in her temple.

Years later, Germanic people celebrated birthdays with a cake and candles, but the candles were not put on the cake. Instead these first birthday candles were set on a plate or on the table, surrounding the cake in a circle of light. The candles burned throughout the day, until the evening meal.

Blowing out the candles and making a wish is another way of wishing ourselves good luck.

Certain birthdays are considered special in some countries. In Japan, children’s third, fifth, and seventh birthdays are celebrated on November 15, the holiday *Shichi-go-san*. Many cultures have a birthday that signifies the move from childhood to adulthood. For example, a Latina girl celebrates her fifteenth birthday party with a party called a *quinceañera.*

SOURCE: Lankford, Mary. *Birthdays Around the World*. New York: Harper Collins, 2002. pp. 8-9.

**Background Notes for a Birthday Celebration (continued) Teacher Tool 2**

**Main Aspects of a Birthday Celebration**

**Time and Place:** A party is usually held on the day of the person’s birthday. Friends and relatives may be invited. The party may take place at home or in a place such as a restaurant or reception hall, a bowling alley, a movie theatre, a recreation hall or just about any place people wish.

**Birthday Cake:** The origin of the traditional birthday cake may date back to the ancient Greeks who made offerings to the goddess Artemis. The cake was shaped like a circle to represent the moon. The concept of the cake may have also originated in Germany. People would bake sweet bread and hide objects in it that were meant to predict a person’s future. For example, a coin meant that the person would be rich; a thimble might mean that the person might never marry. Today birthday cakes come in all shapes and sizes.

**Birthday candles**: Candles were often placed on the cake offered to Artemis to represent the glowing moon of which she was goddess. The candles may have also been added because people believed that their wishes would be carried up to the gods in the smoke from the candles. In Germany, candles were placed in the center of the cake to represent the light of life. Today the custom is to place one candle for each year and an extra candle for good luck. People sometimes make a wish and blow out the candles to make it come true.

**Birthday presents**: Long ago, some people believed that evil spirits surrounded people all the time; these spirits were considered the most powerful on a person’s birthday. People believed that giving the person presents would protect them from the spirits. Today people do not believe in evil spirits, yet the tradition is still preserved as a way to wish the birthday person a happy birthday; greeting cards may also be given as presents.

**Birthday songs:** The traditional birthday song “Happy Birthday to you” was written by two American sisters, Patty and Mildred Hill, in 1893. It is often sung at a person’s birthday party to wish him or her Happy Birthday.

**Different ways of celebrating birthdays**

**Finland:** Children sing happy birthday at the door as soon as they arrive at a birthday party. The cake is made of three layers and filled with fruit and whipped cream. Children play a birthday game called *Onginta*, which means Fishing. Children use a fishing rod to fish for prizes behind a cloth held by two adults.

**Malaysia:** People give tiny red paper packets or envelopes filled with money. A game called Pass the Box is played. A box wrapped in bright colors is passed around until someone says “Stop!” at which time the person holding the box has to sing a song.

**Mexico:** Children at a birthday party try to break a piñata-a papier-mâché container shaped like an animal or other object and filled with candy. Since many people in Mexico are Catholics, children might celebrate two birthdays: one on the day they were born and one on the day of the saint who they were named after.

**The Netherlands:** A birthday chair at the dinner table is decorated with paper flowers and garlands. The birthday child is allowed to choose what he or she would like to eat and to stay up past his or her bedtime.

**Sweden:** Family members sing “Happy Birthday” and bring the birthday child hot chocolate in bed.

SOURCES: Arnold, Caroline. *Everyone has a Birthday*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1987.

Lankford, Mary. *Birthdays Around the World*. New York: Harper Collins, 2002.

**A Birthday Celebration –*Possible Student Answers* Teacher Tool 3**

* The information in italics is an **example** of what might be found in a student’s answer when asked to describe a birthday celebration and state its meaning.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name of the religious tradition or current of thought researched | *Secular* | | |
| **MAIN ASPECTS (or parts) OF THE CELEBRATION** | **DESCRIPTION** | | **MEANING** |
| What is the name of the **celebration** and what are its origins? | *NAME: Birthday*  *ORIGIN: ancient Greece; Germany*  *A birthday celebration might include a party where everyone sings and plays games. Friends and relatives are invited and many bring gifts for the person celebrating the birthday. A cake with candles is served and the person often blows out the candles making a wish for good luck.* | | *A birthday marks the day that a person was born. It is usually celebrated as a reminder of the person’s important place in the world.*  *Long ago people had parties to keep away evil spirits.* |
| Where does it take **place**? | *Usually the home, but sometimes it could be at a restaurant or place where people can have fun such as an amusement centre.* | | *The home or the places are chosen so that everyone can have fun and participate in the birthday celebration.* |
| What **objects and symbols** are associated with the celebration? (Try to find at least three.) | * ***Presents*** *are usually given to the birthday person. They can be anything that suits the person and makes them happy. .* | *Presents show the birthday person that people care about him or her, not because of the gift but because of the act of giving.* | |
| * ***Cakes*** *are usually served. They can be all shapes, sizes and flavours depending on what the person likes.* | *In ancient Greece, the tradition was begun to honour Artemis. Today the tradition continues and it honours the birthday person.* | |
| * ***Candles*** *are placed on the cake- one for each year.* | *People blow out the candles and make a wish believing that it will come true. This is linked to the ancient belief that the candle smoke would carry the wish up to the gods.* | |
| Describe a **different way** of conducting this celebration in another society or culture (different city, country or community).  There are many possible answers: Ex. *In Sweden the children are served hot chocolate in bed for their birthday*. | | | |

**Reading Strategy: Key Words in the Sun Dance Celebration Text Teacher Tool 4**

Adapted from: Baltas, Joyce Graham and Nessel, Denise. *Content Area Reading Skills*. New York: Scholastic Professional Books, 1999, pp. 23-25.

**Summary of Strategy:**

The **key words** strategy is used before reading an informational text. Students are shown several key words that are found in the text. They discuss the words and come up with some ideas as to what the words may mean or how they may be connected to the topic. The students then read the text and modify their ideas accordingly depending on what they learned form the text. The strategy helps students preview words that they may not be familiar with and also allows them to gather prior knowledge before reading. This enhances understanding and facilitates meaning making.

**Pre-Reading:**

* Select between five and ten words or key phrases from the text that students will be reading. Write the word Sun Dance on the board. Display the words and phrases around the word Sun Dance on the board or overhead projector. Inform students that these words are related to the topic of the Native Spirituality Sun Dance celebration. Words should be chosen according to student abilities and prior knowledge. Some suggestions might be: spiritual, wisdom, longhouse, encampment, Great Spirit, lodge, symbolizing, purified, ceremonial pipe, sacred, ceremony, ritual, traditional, carving, thunderbird, misfortune, stare, radiating, steadfastly, vision, memorial, prayers.
* Encourage students to form small groups and to discuss the words, their meaning and their possible connection to the topic of the Sun Dance. Answers may be shared with the whole class.
* Ask students to explain the reasoning behind their responses. Students should not be given the answers right away. This may also be a good time to remind students to be aware of possible obstacles to dialogue when responding to their peers’ answers.
* Use the following questions to stimulate discussion:
  + What do you think that term has to do with the topic?
  + Do you all agree, or has someone thought of a different possible connection?
  + That’s an interesting connection. What train of thought led you to that idea?
  + Explain why you have changed your mind on that point.
  + Which of the ideas we are discussing seems the most plausible? The least? Why?
* Direct students to read the text and to highlight or underline the key words as they read.

**After Reading**

* Invite students to discuss the key words in their groups now that they have read the text.
* As a class, review the meaning and connection to the topic of the key words and phrases identified before reading.
* Ensure that students have a clear understanding of what the words mean by asking them to complete **Worksheet 1- Main Aspects of the Sun Dance Celebration**.

**The Sun Dance Celebration Student Tool 1**

* Read the following text on the Sun Dance from Native Spirituality tradition. Use the strategy of **key words** to help you understand the terms that are unfamiliar to you.

Think of fasting and dancing for hours in one place, with your eyes fixed on a sacred symbol. What a lot of discipline it must take! That is what native people do in the Sun Dance, in the hope of gaining spiritual wisdom. The Iroquois hold their Sun Dance in their longhouse, in the late spring. In Saskatchewan, the Plains Cree Sun Dance is held in a special encampment for about four days every summer, during the full moon.

Many native people direct their prayers to the Great Spirit through the medium of the sun. They say the sun is the nearest thing to the Great Spirit that humans can see. It causes the grasses and trees to grow; it causes the animals, which feed on the grasses, to grow; and so it causes the humans to live, because they feed upon both the plants and the animals. The Sun Dance is really a prayer.

The Plains Cree offer their prayers every year in a newly built Sun Dance lodge. The lodge is a shelter made of cottonwood poles, with a centre pole symbolizing the sun. This pole is carefully chosen from trees in the woods, then prepared for its eventual position in the dance. While still in the forest, a red circle is painted around it. Next, its trunk is wrapped with bright cloth. On the second day, the tree is purified by burning sweetgrass and everyone smokes the ceremonial pipe around it. Then the sacred tree is cut, stripped of most of its branches and dragged to the centre of camp. There the symbols of moon, thunderbird, and buffalo are cut into the bark, and the whole tree is draped with coloured cloth. After this, 28 other poles are cut to construct the lodge itself. At noon a ritual meal of rice and raisins is made and served to everyone, for the sharing of food and tobacco is a traditional sign of goodwill.

Finally, it is time for the ceremony of raising the centre pole. Offerings of tobacco and black cloth are put into a hole in the ground, and a prayer is said, asking the tree to preside over the camp. Near the top of the sacred tree where it forks into a “V,” a bundle of cottonwood branches is tied to represent the thunderbird’s nest. Then the branches are shaken, as if to drive the thunderbird from his nest. A shrill whistle is blown to sound like him, and the tree is quickly raised into position. Men and boys pull on the attached ropes while the women shout:

“Hurry! Hurry! May the tree go up safely and remain firmly in the ground, Great Spirit, for we do not wish misfortune for the coming year!”

[…]

Ceremonial drumming, dancing and singing begin on the third day and continue through the fourth. Dancers gaze steadfastly at the pole, perhaps fixing their eyes on the carving of the thunderbird, and move in time to the music. Some hold firmly to the ends of brightly coloured material radiating down from the centre pole. That way they hope to establish a connection between themselves and the source of spiritual power. All the dancers pray to receive a vision or a dream to strengthen or guide them in their lives. The vision ends the ceremony.

SOURCE: Parry, Caroline. *Let’s Celebrate!* *Canada’s Special Days*. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 1987.

pp. 172-175.

**Main Aspects of the Sun Dance Celebration Worksheet 1**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* Complete the table below after reading the text on the Sun Dance of the native people.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name of the religious tradition or current of thought researched |  | | |
| **MAIN ASPECTS (or parts) OF THE CELEBRATION** | **DESCRIPTION** | | **MEANING** |
| What is the name of the **celebration** and what are its origins? | Name:  Origin:  Description: | |  |
| Where does it take **place**? |  | |  |
| What **objects and symbols** are associated with the celebration? (Try to find at least three.) |  |  | |
|  |  | |
|  |  | |
| Describe a **different way** of conducting this celebration in another society or culture (different city, country or community). | | | |

**Main Aspects of the Sun Dance Celebration – *Possible Student Answers* Teacher Tool 5**

* The information in italics is an **example** of what a student might respond when asked to describe the Sun Dance celebration and state its meaning.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name of the religious tradition or current of thought researched | *Native Spirituality* | | |
| **MAIN ASPECTS (or parts) OF THE CELEBRATION** | **DESCRIPTION** | | **MEANING** |
| What is the name of the **celebration** and what are its origins? | *NAME:* ***Sun Dance***  *ORIGIN: Canada- Iroquois, Plains Cree*  *The ceremony takes place in the summer and people pray to the Great Spirit. A sacred tree is cut down in the forest, carried to a cleared space and a structure is built around it. The tree is raised and decorated with carvings of the moon, the thunderbird and buffalo. A sacred meal is eaten and a ceremonial pipe is smoked. When the tree is raised, prayers are offered and people dance around it, hoping to get a vision or dream.* | | *The ceremony is really a prayer to the Great Spirit so that no misfortune or bad luck comes to the community. The native people honour the Great Spirit through the sun, who they believe to be the giver of life. People hope to gain spiritual strength by establishing a connection to the Great Spirit.* |
| Where does it take **place**? | *In a longhouse or in a lodge made from the poles of the sacred tree and 28 other trees.* | | *Trees are considered to be givers of life because they feed animals and humans. They also provide shelter.* |
| What **objects and symbols** are associated with the celebration? (Try to find at least three.) | * ***Tree:*** *The sacred tree is the pole that is the centre of the lodge.* | *The tree respresents the sun because it is in the middle of everything.* | |
| * ***Carvings of the moon, the thunderbird and buffalo:*** *These images are carved into the tree.* | *The symbols represent the things that are important to the native people.* | |
| * ***Food:*** *Rice and raisins are served to everyone at the ceremony.* | *The sharing of food represents community and goodwill.* | |
| Describe a **different way** of conducting this celebration in another society or culture (different city, country or community).  *The Iroquois celebrate the dance in a longhouse whereas the Plains Cree celebrate in a special encampment or clearing.* | | | |

**Suggested Celebrations for Students to Research Teacher Tool 6**

The following are suggestions for celebrations that may be assigned to students for research. There may be others you wish to consider.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Religious Tradition** | **Celebration** | |
| Catholicism | * Sunday Mass * Advent * St. Lucia Day * St. Nicholas Day * Christmas * Ash Wednesady | * Lent * Palm Sunday * Easter * Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin |
| Protestantism | * Sunday Worship * Shrove Tuesday * Ash Wednesday * Lent | * Palm Sunday * Easter * Pentecost * Candlemas |
| Judaism | * Shabbat * Chanukah * Purim * Sukkoth | * Passover * Shavuot * Rosh Hashanah * Yom Kippur |
| Native Spirituality | * Powwow * Sweat lodge ceremony * Pipe Ceremony * Toonik Tyme (Inuit) | * Potlatch * Dances * Iroquois Midwinter Festival * Iroquois Green Corn Festival |
| Islam | * Friday Prayer * Mawlid-al-Nabi * Ramadan * Lailat-al-Isra’-wal-Mi’raj | * Eed-ul-Fitr * Eed-ul-Adha * Ras-Al-Sana |
| Buddhism | * Nirvana Day * Songkran * Therevanda (New Year) | * Ohigan * Magha Puja |
| Hinduism | * Puja * Pongal * Sarasvati Puja * Divali | * Shiva Ratri * Holi * Ram Navami |
| Sikhism | * Prayer at the gurdwara * Birthday of Sikh Guru Nanak | * Baisakhi * Nanakshahi (New Year) |
| Secular | * New Year’s Eve /Day * Valentine’s Day * Haru Matsuri (Japan) * Now Ruz (Middle East) * Thanksgiving | * Mother’s Day * Solnal (Korean) * Chinese New Year * St. Patrick’s Day * Kwanza |

**Group Research Plan Worksheet 2**

Name of Religious Celebration: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Our names: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* Decide who will be responsible for each of the following aspects of the research. Then, write their name in the table below:
* the description of the celebration
* the objects and symbols (at least three)
* the place of worship

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Task and**  **task description** | **How will the task be carried out?**  **(Internet, books, ask someone, etc.)** | **Evaluation**  **(Did the person get sufficient information?)** |
|  |  |  |  |
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**Research Record Worksheet 3**

Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* Use the following table to record your findings on celebrations. In the **description** column, use your own words to describe the main aspects of the celebration. In the **meaning** column state what this aspect or part of the celebration represents or means for the people involved. Refer to your notes on birthdays and the Sun Dance. Use the reverse of this page if you need more space.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name of the religious tradition or current of thought researched |  | | |
| **MAIN ASPECTS (or parts) OF THE CELEBRATION** | **DESCRIPTION** | | **MEANING** |
| What is the name of the **celebration** and what are its origins? |  | |  |
| Where does it take **place**? |  | |  |
| What **objects and symbols** are associated with the celebration? (Try to find at least three.) |  |  | |
|  |  | |
|  |  | |
| Describe a **different way** of conducting this celebration in another society or culture (different city, country or community). | | | |

**Interview Sheet Worksheet 4**

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* Use this sheet to interview a partner about one of the religious traditions or currents of thought that he/she researched.

Person interviewed and religious tradition or current of thought researched: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |
| --- |
| What **is the name of the celebration**? |
| Where does the celebration **originate**? |
| Where does the celebration take **place**? |
| What **objects or symbols** are used in the celebration? What meaning do they have for the people involved? |
| What are the **different ways** of conducting this celebration in a different society or culture? |
| Other questions you might want to ask: |

**Peer Evaluation of Dialogue Worksheet 5**

My name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ My partner \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* Use this sheet to evaluate your interaction with a peer after the **Interview on Celebrations.**

(Do this together with your partner. Put a check in the appropriate box.)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Me** | | **My partner** | |
|  | **Yes**  **How?** | **No**  **Why?** | **Yes**  **How?** | **No**  **Why?** |
| We decided the rules for sharing ideas and followed them. |  |  |  |  |
| We took turns sharing our ideas and we listened to each other’s ideas. |  |  |  |  |
| During our discussion we gave reasons for our points of view. |  |  |  |  |
| We asked questions if we didn’t understand something. |  |  |  |  |
| When we had a disagreement about something we stopped and figured it out together. |  |  |  |  |

**Something I need to work on is:**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Observation Checklist for Dialogue Teacher Tool 7**

*Note to teacher: This checklist may be used several times and for different tasks. Teachers may also choose to target one group of students at a time and complete their observations over several tasks.*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Student’s Name   * = exceeds expectations * = meets expectations   ∅ = does not meet expectations | * Applies procedures that foster dialogue | | | Questions points of view in a relevant manner | | |
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**Pamphlet Planner Worksheet 6**

Group members’ names: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* Use the boxes to plan your pamphlet with the rest of your group. Use the back if you need more space.

**Description** and the meaning of the celebration

Title page

**Include:**

* religious tradition
* name of celebration
* group members’ names

Place where celebration takes place

Description of the **Objects and Symbols a**nd their meaning

Description of the **Objects and Symbols a**nd their meaning

**Include:**

* A description of the celebration and the possible meaning for the people involved.

**Include:**

* Pictures and descriptions of the symbols and objects and what they mean in the celebration

**Include:**

* Words associated with the celebration that you think may be important for people to know. Include the definitions.

**Include:**

* A drawing and description of the place where the celebration takes place

Glossary

**Reflection on Process and Learning Worksheet 7**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* Answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper.

**Reflection on Celebrations**

1. What is one thing you have learned about why people have **celebrations**?
2. Why are **objects and symbols** important aspects of some celebrations?
3. How is the **place of worship** important in a celebration?
4. Why do you think the same celebration might be **conducted differently** in a different society or culture?
5. What is one celebration that you have learned about that you had not heard about before?

**Reflection on process of dialogue**

1. What are some of the strategies that you used to ensure that conditions were favourable to dialogue?

**Reflection on work methods**

1. What worked well in your group when deciding on who would carry out each task?
2. What did not work so well?

**Buddha’s Birthday Celebration Knowledge Acquisition Activity 1**

Also known as: Visakha Puja; Buddha Day; Hana Matsuri (Flower Festival); Feast of the Lanterns

Read the following text on the Buddha’s birthday. Use the strategy of key words to help you understand the terms that are unfamiliar to you. Then complete **Assessment Tool 1B- Main Aspects of the Buddha’s Birthday Celebration.**

In Thailand and other countries where Theravada Buddhism …is practiced, Visakha Puja (pronounced vie-SOCK-uh POO-jah) commemorates not only Buddha’s birthday but also two other important events in his life: his attainment of enlightenment (spiritual knowledge) and his death. Buddha’s birthday is celebrated on the day of the full moon of May. Buddhists believe Buddha attained enlightenment exactly thirty-five years later on the same date and that he died on the same date at the age of eighty. […]

Visakha Puja is a public holiday in many southeast Asian countries, including Thailand. It is one of the happiest days of the Buddhist year. People clean and decorate their houses for the celebration. Sacred books are dusted off and aired out. People visit temples at Buddhist monasteries to hear monks preach about the life of Buddha and to make offerings and receive blessings. The temples are beautifully decorated with flowers in many designs.

Statutes of the Buddha, many covered with gold leaf (thin sheets of gold), are taken from their resting places and washed with scented water, or with hydrangea tea in Japan. This practice symbolizes purification and faith in goodness and peace on earth. After an image of Buddha is bathed, it is dressed in a new robe contributed by a worshiper. People also water bodhi trees at monasteries in remembrance of Buddha’s achieving enlightenment under such a tree.

On the evening of Visakha Puja, statues of the Buddha in temples are decorated with lights and candles to celebrate Buddha’s enlightenment. Monks and crowds of worshipers holding candles or lamps, decorated with flowers in many beautiful designs, walk around the statues in a clockwise circle. This practice, called *wien tien* (circling with the candle) in Thailand, began as a ritual to secure a peaceful death and safe passage to nirvana, the Buddhist paradise. […]

**Knowledge Acquisition Activity 1 (continued)**

Buddha Day is a time of rejoicing in Sri Lanka. People decorate their houses and place offerings of flowers and fresh fruits before statues of the Buddha. After the ceremonies, the fruit is eaten by Buddhist priests. Homes and temples are also adorned with lights and paper lanterns, lighting up the night and filling the air with the sweet smell of coconut oil. Loudspeakers play music and stories about the Buddha’s life. Huge paintings depicting the life of Buddha are displayed.

In the evenings, the celebrants sit outside in the moonlight and listen to long sermons by the priests. The “sermons” are actually readings, however, and are usually taken from the Jataka Tales.

In many countries, such as Japan, there are lantern processions in the streets. […]The lights symbolize hope, and the festival is sometimes known as the Feast of the Lanterns.

In Japan, the festival is also known as Hana Matsuri…or the Flower Festival because the cherry trees are in blossom. People who visit temples and shrines are expected to carry offerings of cherry blossoms. […]

In South Korea, families go to Buddhist temples to worship. People decorate their homes and display paper lanterns. They used to build towers to hang the lanterns from, one for each member of the family. It was believed that the brighter the lanterns burned, the luckier the family would be. As is Japan, the lanterns were in the shape of carp (a fish), turtles, and other animal designs as well as flowers.

SOURCE: Griffin, Robert H. and Ann H. *Junior Worldmark Encyclopedia of World Holidays*, volume 1, “Buddha’s Birthday.” Detroit: U.X.L., 2000. pp. 2, 9-10.

**Proficiency of knowledge related to religious culture.**

The student describes places of worship, objects or symbols connected

with one or more religious practices.

Meets the requirements to a outstanding degree

Meets the requirements in a satisfactory manner.

Meets most of the requirements.

Meets few of the requirements.

|  |
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**Main Aspects of the Buddha’s Birthday Celebration Knowledge Acquisition Activity 1B**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* Complete the table below after reading the text on the Buddha’s Birthday.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| What is the name of the **celebration** and what are its origins? | Name:  Origin |
| **Main Aspects of the Celebration** | **DESCRIPTION** |
| Where does it take **place**? |  |
| What **objects and symbols** are associated with the celebration? (Try to find at least three.) | **Name of object or symbol:**  **Description:** |
| **Name of object or symbol:**  **Description:** |
| **Name of object or symbol:**  **Description:** |

**Main Aspects of the Buddha’s Birthday Celebration- *Possible Student Answers***

* Complete the table below after reading the text on the Buddha’s Birthday.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| What is the name of the **celebration** and what are its origins? | Name: *Buddha’s Birthday; Visakha Puja; Buddha Day; Hana Matsuri (Flower Festival); Feast of the Lanterns*  Origin: *countries in Southeast Asia* |
| **Main Aspects of the Celebration** | **DESCRIPTION** |
| Where does it take **place**? | *In people’s homes, the streets, and in the Buddhist temples and shrines.*  *People decorate these places with flowers and light and go there to pray and listen to the monks preach about Buddha’s life.* |
| What **objects and symbols** are associated with the celebration? (Try to find at least three.) | **Name of object or symbol: *Buddha’s statue***  **Description:** *A statue of Buddha is purified with scented water or hydrangea tea. Then it is dressed in a new robe. People circle around the statue holding candles or lamps and sing songs or chant.* |
| **Name of object or symbol: *Flowers***  **Description:** *Flowers are used to decorate people’s homes and the temples. They are also used to array statues of the Buddha. In Japan people carry cherry blossoms as offerings to Buddha when they go to temples. They are shaped in many beautiful designs.* |
| **Name of object or symbol: *Lanterns***  **Description:** *Lanterns are used to decorate homes and temples. They are also carried in the streets in a procession during the Feast of the Lanterns. They are shaped like animals such as fish, turtles and also like flowers. Lanterns are a symbol of hope.* |

**Proficiency of knowledge related to reading.**

The student uses a variety of reading strategies to

make meaning of different text types.

Successful

More or less successful

Needs work

|  |
| --- |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |

**Reading Strategy: Key Words in Epiphany Text Knowledge Acquisition Activity 2**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

In the table below you will find five words that are related to Epiphany. Before reading the paragraph on Epiphany, write how you think the words might be related to the celebration. When you are done, your teacher will give you the text on Epiphany. Read it and then go back and fill in the column on what you now think about how the words might be related.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Word or Phrase | Before reading | After reading |
| Epiphany |  |  |
| Baptism |  |  |
| Three Wise Men |  |  |
| Gifts |  |  |
| Befana |  |  |

When you are finished filling in the “before reading column” ask your teacher for the Epiphany text.

**Epiphany Text Knowledge Acquisition Activity2B**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* Read the following text. Look for the key words:

**Epiphany Baptism Three Wise Men Gifts Befana**

* Underline or highlight them as you read.

Epiphany is the Twelfth Day of Christmas and the end of the Christmas season. […]

Epiphany comes from a Greek word referring to the baptism of Jesus and the arrival in Bethlehem of the Three Wise Men who came to worship Jesus. Greek Orthodox priests visit all the households in their parish on this day to bless the homes and the family members with holy water. […]

Although Ukrainians do not celebrate Epiphany until January 19, their customs are similar. They have a big church ceremony to bless the water that will be used by the priests to bless the people, and the whole congregation has a procession. They call January 19 Little Christmas or Jordan Day, which refers to the Jordan River where Jesus was baptized. […]

In the Maritimes, Acadians call the Twelfth Day the Feast of Kings and treat it as a second Christmas. Spanish-speaking people call it Three Kings Day, and some families have three people dressed as kings to bring gifts for the children, instead of Santa.

Some Italian-Canadians also give gifts to each other on Epiphany […]. The gifts are brought by an old woman called Befana. She was so busy cooking and cleaning when the Three Wise Men went by in search of the baby Jesus that she couldn’t stop to help them. When she finally was ready, the kings were far beyond her, and she has been wandering the earth trying to catch up ever since. She carries her broom and a basket of gifts, and she leaves something for every child, in the hope that he or she might actually be the Christ Child.

SOURCE: Parry, Caroline. *Let’s Celebrate!* *Canada’s Special Days*. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 1987.

pp. 57-58.

**SUGGESTED RESOURCES**

**Suggested books for students that have information about religious celebrations:**

* **Barron’s Educational Series- *This Is My Faith***

(told from a child’s perspective, each book contains basic information on celebrations, festivals, family life and symbols).

* Dalton, Davis. *This Is My Faith: Sikhism*. London: ticktock Entertainment, 2006.
* Wallace, Holly. *This Is My Faith: Buddhism*. London: ticktock Entertainment, 2006.
* Wallace, Holly. *This Is My Faith: Islam*. London: ticktock Entertainment, 2006.
* Wallace, Holly. *This Is My Faith: Hinduism*. London: ticktock Entertainment, 2006.
* Wallace, Holly. *This Is My Faith: Judaism.* London: ticktock Entertainment, 2006.
* Wallace, Holly. *This Is My Faith: Christianity.* London: ticktock Entertainment, 2006.

Arnold, Caroline. *Everyone has a Birthday*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1987.

Buller, Laura. *A Faith Like Mine*. New York: Dorling Kindersley, 2005.

Glossop, Jennifer. *The Kids Book of World Religions*. Toronto: Kids Can Press, Ltd., 2003.

Griffin, Robert H. and Ann H. *Junior Worldmark Encyclopedia of World Holidays*, volume 1, “Buddha’s Birthday.” Detroit: U.X.L., 2000.

Kindersley, Barnabas and Anabel. *Celebrations!* Bolton, Ont.: Fenn Publishing, 1997.

Lankford, Mary. *Birthdays Around the World*. New York: Harper Collins, 2002.

Osborne, Mary Pope. *One World, Many Religions*. New York: Knopf Books for Young Readers, 1996.

Parry, Caroline. *Let’s Celebrate!* *Canada’s Special Days*. Toronto: Kids Can Press, 1987.

Wilkinson, Philip. *Illustrated Dictionary of Religions.* New York: Dorling Kindersley, 2006.

* **Dorling Kindersley Eyewitness Series on Religions**
* Langley, Myrtle. *Religion*. New York: Dorling Kindersley (Eyewitness Books*)*, 2005.
* Charing, Douglas. *Judaism*. New York: Dorling Kindersley (Eyewitness Books*)*, 2003.
* Wilkinson, Philip. *Christianity*. New York: Dorling Kindersley (Eyewitness Books*)*, 2003.
* Wilkinson, Philip. *Islam*. New York: Dorling Kindersley (Eyewitness Books*)*, 2005.
* Wilkinson, Philip. *Buddhism.* New York: Dorling Kindersley (Eyewitness Books*)*, 2003.

**Suggested Books For Teachers:**

Department of National Defence Canada ( 2003). *Religions in Canada.* Directorate of Human Rights and

Diversity. (includes extensive bibliography with Web sites)

Bowker, John. *World Religions*. New York: Dorling Kindersley, 2006.

Schade, Johannes P., ed. *Encyclopedia of World Religions*. Amsterdam: Foreign Media Books, 2006.

**Suggested Web Sites for Teachers:**

<<http://wri.leaderu.com/>> (table index of many world religions) (last accessed June 10, 2011)

<[http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/index_flash.html) > (extensive lesson plans for teachers)

(last accessed June 10, 2011)

**Suggested Web Sites for Student Research:**

**Places of Worship**

<<http://pow.reonline.org.uk/videos.htm>> (virtual tours of places of worship) (last accessed June 10, 2011)

<<http://juniors.reonline.org.uk/juniors_vtours.php>> (virtual tours of places of worship)

(last accessed June 10, 2011)

<<http://www.educhurch.org.uk/index.html>> (virtual tour of places of worship) (last accessed June 10, 2011)

**Suggested Web Sites about Celebrations**:

( While the sites included here are educational sites, teachers should make sure that they are suitable for the reading level of their students)

**All religions**

<<http://www.cleo.net.uk/resources/index.php?ks=2&cur=15>> (video clips of various celebrations)

(last accessed June 10, 2011)

<http://library.thinkquest.org/28505/articles.html> (last accessed June 10, 2011)

<<http://www.mrdowling.com/zip/605westr.pdf>> (a downloadable study file on Western Religions)

(last accessed June 10, 2011)

<<http://www.uri.org/kids/world.htm>> (last accessed June 10, 2011)

<<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/>> (last accessed June 10, 2011)

<<http://juniors.reonline.org.uk/juniors_topicheads.php>> (last accessed June 10, 2011)

**Christianity**

<<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/homework/religion/christian.htm>> (last accessed June 10, 2011)

<<http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/carolrb/christianity/>> (last accessed June 10, 2011)

**Judaism**

<<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/homework/religion/jewish.htm>> (last accessed June 10, 2011)

<<http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/carolrb/judaism/judai1.html>> (last accessed June 10, 2011)

**Native Spirituality**

<<http://www.elements.nb.ca/Theme/ethics/pow/wow.htm>> (powwow) (last accessed June 10, 2011)

<<http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/pub/rc/rel/ns-sa-eng.asp>> (last accessed June 10, 2011)

**Islam**

<<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/homework/religion/Islam.htm>> (last accessed June 10, 2011)

<<http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/carolrb/islam/islamintro.html>>(last accessed June 10, 2011)

**Hinduism**

<<http://www.hindukids.org/>> (last accessed June 10, 2011)

<<http://www.hinduism.co.za/tilak.htm>> (About the tilak) (last accessed June 10, 2011)

<<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/homework/religion/hinduism.htm>> (last accessed June 10, 2011)

<<http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/carolrb/hinduism/hindui.html>> (last accessed June 10, 2011)

**Buddhism**

<<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/homework/religion/buddhism.htm>> (last accessed June 10, 2011)

**Sikhism**

<<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/sikhism/>> (last accessed June 10, 2011)

<<http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/carolrb/sikhism/sikhism1.html>> (last accessed June 10, 2011)