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Oklahoma State Department of Education

# Culture Connections: A Study in Language and Diversity

AREA OF SERVICE	Education
COMMUNITY NEED	Increased awareness of cultural diversity
TYPE OF SERVICE	Indirect, Direct, Advocacy
SUBJECT AREA/LEVEL	Foreign Language (Spanish)/9-12
CONCEPT(s)	Connections/Adaptations



## SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT SUMMARY

This secondary school project uses student learning from a study of Spanish language and culture to identify and address a community problem or need related to cultural diversity and tolerance.

## LEARNING STANDARDS

*Oklahoma Priority Academic Student Skills*

### ***World Languages***

Standard 1.1: Interpretative Communication – Listening/Reading/Viewing

Students will understand and interpret written and spoken languages on a variety of topics.

Standard 1.2: Interpersonal Communication – Speaking and Writing

Students will engage in conversations, and/or written correspondence in which they provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.

Standard 4.1: Language Comparisons

Students will demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied with their own.

## Culture Connections Implementation Outline

1. Under teacher direction, students will examine a variety of “adapters” and “connectors” encountered in daily life.

2. Under teacher direction, students will discuss and analyze the various uses of each of the adaptor or connector items identified in the previous activity.
3. Under teacher direction, students will imagine the meanings of adaptation and connection.
4. Teacher will deliver a unit on Spanish vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and culture using a variety of delivery systems including lecture, text, guest speakers, films, and other visuals.
5. Under teacher direction students will practice and demonstrate their new learning and understanding of the principles outlined in #4.
6. Students will identify a need in their community and design service project(s) that utilize the knowledge and skills developed in #4 and #5.
7. Students will refine their service project(s), and examine any public policies designed to address the community problem they have selected to address through their service project.
8. Students will implement their service project and share their accomplishments with the community.

## TEACHER'S GUIDE

### Culture Connections

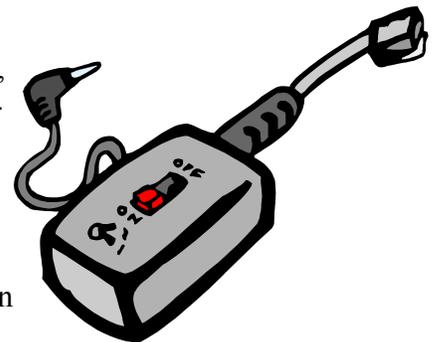
#### *Teacher's Note*

Using the concept of “connections and adaptations” the teacher will engage students in an active unit of study around the Spanish language and culture to identify and address a community problem. Teachers may collaborate with others to broaden student understanding of the concepts including physical science adaptations, musical interpretations, and solving mathematical equations.

1. Under teacher direction, students will examine a variety of “adapters” and “connectors” encountered in daily life.

Activity 1: Show students a variety of electric adapters (two-prong, three-prong, cell phone, computer etc.) and connectors (SCSI, paperclips, tape, staples, buttons. etc.) then ask them to identify any other items they use to adapt or connect one object to another.

Activity 2: Play the simulation game “Bafá Bafá” or “Rafá Rafá” to capture student attention about the use of language and culture in the context of adaptation and connections.



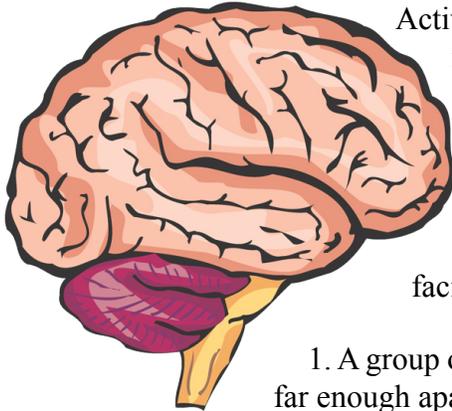
2. Under teacher direction, students will discuss and analyze the various uses of each of the adaptor or connector items identified in the previous activity.

Activity 1: Lead a discussion with the students about the uses of each of the items and describe the similarities and differences between the items. Discuss with students how the items work or don't work under various circumstances.

Activity 2: Debrief the simulation and encourage students to share their perceptions about culture and language with the class. Tell students to write a journal entry, essay or story about their experience in the simulation and include an anecdote about a time when they experienced similar feelings.

### 3. Under teacher direction, guide students to imagine the meanings of adaptation and connection.

Activity 1: Conduct a mind-mapping exercise with students around the concepts of adaptation and connection.



Activity 2: Conduct a brain-sketching exercise to generate even more ideas around the concepts of “adaptation” and “connections” relative to culture and language acquisition. This technique (VanGundy, Techniques of Structured Problem Solving, 1988) is a BrainWriting technique and a variant on Pin Cards, but you pass evolving sketches rather than growing written lists of ideas are passed around the group. As usual with most brain-writing techniques, only limited facilitation skill is needed.

1. A group of 4-8 people sit around a table or in a circle of chairs. They need to be far enough apart to have some privacy. The concept is discussed until understood.

2. Each participant privately draws one or more sketches (each on separate sheets of paper) that describe the concept, passing each sketch on to the person on their right when it is finished. Sketches should not take more than 5 minutes to draw.

3. Participants take the sketches passed to them and either develop or annotate them, or use them to stimulate new sketches of their own, passing the amended original and/or any new sketches on to their neighbor when ready.

4. After the process has been running for a suitable period and/or energy is running lower, the sketches are collected.

5. Display all the sketches and discuss them in turn for clarification and comment. Then move on to any appropriate categorization, evaluation and selection process.

Activity 3: Engage students in a scenario where they must complete a task or initiative without speaking or writing in English.

Activity 4: Ask students to brainstorm various forms of communication. Discuss the elements of effective communication (i.e. active listening, common language, eye contact, etc). Divide students into pairs and give each pair a topic to discuss. Students must discuss the topic using a nonverbal technique. Allow five minutes for the experience. Ask students to share communication methods used. Ask students to imagine what their lives would be like if they could only communicate with others through nonverbal cues or a second language.

Activity 5: Show a short clip from the movie “The Miracle Worker.” Ask students to talk about the language and communication issues that Helen Keller and her family and friends faced. Ask students to describe some of the ways that Helen and her teacher Anne Sullivan adapted to make communication possible.

**4. Teacher will deliver a unit on Spanish vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and culture using a variety of delivery systems including lecture, text, guest speakers, films, and other visuals.**

Activity 1: Provide students with information about current census data regarding the growing number of non-English speaking residents in the country and the state. Talk with students about the impact of those residents on the local culture.

Activity 2: Explain the importance of developing and maintaining proficiency in English and at least one other language and provide information about the Oklahoma World Languages Curriculum Goals and Standards.

Activity 3: Instruct students in appropriate Spanish vocabulary and grammar topics.

**5. Under teacher direction, students will practice and demonstrate their new learning and understanding of the vocabulary and expressions learned in #4.**

Activity 1: Students will complete all assignments and activities developed in Step 4.

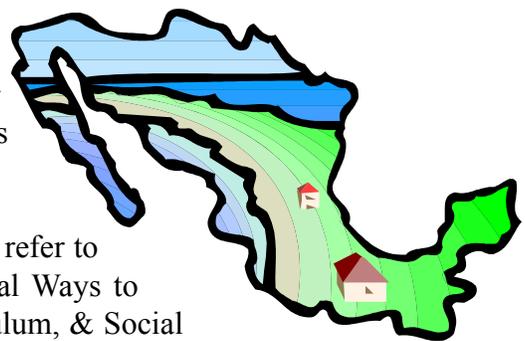
Activity 2: Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary and expressions through relevant standard materials including worksheets, text problems, workbooks, exercises, quizzes, and tests.

**6. Students will identify a need in their community and design service project(s) that utilize the knowledge and skills developed in #4 and #5.**

Activity 1: Students may identify a need in their community related to the acquisition and use of language, and to cultural adaptation for Spanish speakers in the local community. Once the need is identified, students will design a service project that utilizes their knowledge of vocabulary and idiomatic expressions. For general assistance in designing a service or action project refer to the resources listed at the end of this unit.

Activity 2: Students may apply their knowledge and skills of the Spanish language vocabulary and culture to tutor or mentor Spanish-speaking students enrolled in the school's English Language Learners (ELL) Program, formerly LEP.

Activity 3: For other ideas related to language and culture refer to "The Complete Guide to Service Learning Proven Practical Ways to Engage Students in Civic Responsibility, Academic Curriculum, & Social Action" by Cathryn Berger Kaye, M.A. pages 159-172.



**7. Students will refine their service project(s), and examine any public policies designed to address the community problem they have selected to address through their service project.**

Activity 1: Students will analyze and refine their project design. Students will develop a rubric for assessing the personal and community impact of their service. In small groups, students will take turns leading a session that critiques an assignment or a solution to the community need or problem addressed by their service project.

Activity 2: Students will explore the deeper civic and public meanings of their service and synthesize any formal or informal agencies, laws, or policies related to the causes or effects of the community need addressed in their project. Students will explore the role of community members from government, business, media, and non-profit domains related to the issue. Students will examine possible policy options and evaluate the costs and benefits of each.

Activity 3: Students will write a paragraph, essay, or journal entry that reflects their understanding of the concepts of adaptation and communication as they are related to world languages, government, and personal responsibility.

## **8. Students will implement their service project and share their accomplishments with the community.**

Activity 1: Students will implement their project(s).

Activity 2: Guide students to discuss what they learned through the service-learning project and to identify any personal or communal impact or change that occurred through the project. Teachers may use any number of reflection exercises, oral or written, formal or informal, to assist students in determining, discussing, and documenting the value of their experience.

Activity 3: Students will document their learning and their service in a reflective report or other manner suitable for the public.

## **INTERNET and OTHER RESOURCES**

### ***For information about designing a service or action project:***

<http://www.crf-usa.org/act/act.html>

<http://www.crf-usa.org/cityyouth/cityyouth.html>

[http://www.projectwild.org/materials/taking\\_action.htm](http://www.projectwild.org/materials/taking_action.htm)

[http://www.civiced.org/project\\_citizen.php?link=curriculum](http://www.civiced.org/project_citizen.php?link=curriculum)

<http://www.cns.org>

### ***For information about cultural diversity and using film to teach:***

<http://www.globalconnections-int.com/adapters.htm>

<http://www.scsita.org/aboutscsi/Pictures.html>

<http://www.simulationtrainingsystems.com/schools/rafa.html>

<http://www.teachwithmovies.org/guides/miracle-worker.html>