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English as a New Language Teacher

## **Lesson Plan for Cross-Cultural Comparison Workshop**

### **I – Reflective Essay**

The Cross-Cultural Comparison Workshop could not have been better timed. Here we are, the entire world collectively experiencing COVID-19. This commonality stresses that as humans we undergo many shared experiences – everyone faces sickness, fear, obstacles, yet we are also able to assess, problem-solve, and heal. Our approaches may not always be alike, but we can definitely learn from one another and lean on each other for support and join in collaborative efforts.

I signed up for this workshop because Korea has always been a part of my life – albeit more in the periphery. I would not exist if it were not for Korea, as it is the country where my parents met. My father spent six years in Korea during and after the Korean War, as part of the United Nations contingency (representing Peru). My mother lived in Korea for two years, arriving shortly during reconstruction. Both my parents loved Korea, and throughout their lives they kept in contact with Korean friends and made new ones, bringing into our house the culture, food, and even expressions that became part of our family vocabulary. Since my parents passed, I have sadly been distanced from that part of my life (I have yet to visit Korea, but it is at the top of my bucket list), and this workshop was the perfect opportunity to take Korea off the backburner and put it front in center in my life and bring it into my teaching.

Probably the biggest takeaway from the workshop was the reminder and added knowledge of the richness of Korea's culture, history, customs, and nature. I think the best way for me to incorporate the information is to use Korea as one of my go-to examples when teaching lessons about other places, and continue to bring it back as a spiral review. For example, if we are learning about physical features, show examples of Korea's mountainous regions, or for literature, choose examples of Korean folktales. If I incorporate Korea as an example of what we are teaching, then it will not be a "one and done" type of study for my students, but rather a country that they will be able to describe and inform others about at the end of the year.

I especially enjoyed hearing about Korean schools and teachers. I really got a sense of a common bond that we educators share in terms of our dedication to our profession and especially to our students and their families. Suddenly, I did not feel so alone, knowing that others also had to improvise and change their schedules quickly. It is always interesting to see how situations are handled in other places. Culturally, I cannot imagine being allowed to take my students' temperatures here in the United States, but I felt that Korea was on the right track letting their educators do so. I also appreciated the insights of some of the workshop participants who had more knowledge of Korea. The collaborative and communal bonding is a great morale booster. I came away with more energy and ideas of what and how I wanted to teach moving forward.

## **II – Opportunities to Teach Cross-Cultural Awareness**

I teach in an International Baccalaureate school, and an area we emphasize in our lessons is international mindedness. Education for international mindedness values the world in the broadest context for learning, develops conceptual understanding across a range of subjects, and offers opportunities to inquire, act, and reflect. The International Baccalaureate program also has

a Learner Profile, in which the following traits - knowledgeable, open-minded, reflective, caring, and balanced - highlight international mindedness. Students learn to consider the world, and gain curiosity, respect, inclusiveness, and a deeper understanding of cultural perspectives.

The general framework of the International Baccalaureate Units of Inquiry for the Primary Years Program also lends itself to incorporate cross-cultural lessons. The six units of inquiry study are: Who We Are, Where We are in Time and Place, How We Express Ourselves, How the World Works, How We Organize Ourselves, and Sharing the Planet. Receiving the training from the Cross-Cultural Workshop allows me to use South Korea as a case study for multiple lessons. South Korea offers versatility and examples across so many domains – language, music, history, fashion, media, among others, that make it perfect to use in my lessons. Since I work with students in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grades, I will be collaborating with their classroom teachers to develop lessons in reading, writing, and social studies.

I am currently moderating a Facebook page for Indiana Teachers (ISTA EdTalk) which began during our COVID-19 school shutdown in March. In it, educators contribute and collaborate ideas of what has worked in their teaching. We have continued the group, especially since we are now in our second shutdown and back to virtual teaching and learning, and will continue no matter where or how we teach. I plan to share my lesson about Children’s Day (see Section III for lesson plan details – I would love to have more students write to their president!).

Through my preliminary research after the Cultural Cross-Comparison Workshop, I have decided that my first lesson with a non-student group is to teach my fellow teachers about the Korean language. Many people are unaware that there are isolate languages, of which Korean is one. Other characteristics of Korean, such as the fact that there are seven levels of respect, how

“our” often replaces “I,” and that there are two number systems, will bring a new perspective to language and culture for my colleagues. I hope to next October (though now it seems so far away!) to do a multi-grade lesson and celebration of Hangul Day. I know other activities will develop as I dig further into my research of Korean culture. This workshop has definitely started me on the right path!

### **III – Specific Cross-Cultural Lesson Plans for 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade**

**Reading** - Though students have heard fairy tales and folktales in previous years, it is in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade when they begin to analyze their characteristics and compare and contrast a variety of stories of these genres so that they can better comprehend the structures of literature. The first part of the cross-cultural lesson would be to compare and contrast traditional (for the United States) fairy tales the students know with Korean fairy tales. We will spend one week (45 minutes daily) learning about fairy tales, and another week learning about folktales. In both, we will see how oral traditions have created these stories, and pick out general universal themes, such as good versus evil. We will also explore universal human emotions that appear in these stories, such as courage, love, hate, cruelty, joy, surprise, sadness, and loneliness, among others.

Together, the class will read two similar fairy tales. In this case, we will read a traditional Cinderella story, and *The Korean Cinderella* by Shirley Climo. Students will then be able to:

- State a simple definition of a fairy tale
- Identify some typical characteristics of a fairy tale using literary terms such as character, setting, and plot.
- Compare and contrast common versions of tale types
- Recognize universal feelings and emotions that appear in fairy tales
- Restate the plot of a fairy tale

Folktales – students will see how animals are used in different ways to portray human strengths and weaknesses and as a manner to pass down wisdom and caution from one generation to the next. Students will notice how different animals are used according to the fauna of the folktale’s origin. Students will be able to identify that folktales are:

- very old stories
- contain repeated words and sentences
- have foreshadowing
- involve a problem and a solution

We will look at a traditional folktale commonly taught in U.S. schools (Aesop’s tales) and Korean folktales to provide an opportunity to compare and contrast (refer to resources in next section).

**Writing** – In 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, students are required to write a persuasive letter. Before engaging in this activity, students are first going to familiarize themselves with Children’s Day in South Korea. Through a variety of short videos and readings (see bibliography) they will learn about the origins of South Korea’s Children’s Day and of its founder and child advocate, Bang Jeong-hwan, and when and how this holiday is celebrated. Students will then read about Children’s Day in the United States, how the date has been moved around by several presidents, and why it is not as celebrated or well-known in this country as it is in South Korea. (One argument is that the United States has enough celebrations and holidays – we shall see how the students feel about that.) Students will then choose a date they think the United States should celebrate Children’s Day. Students will write a persuasive letter to President Biden stating:

- Why Children’s Day should be celebrated
- Why Children’s Day needs to be given more importance in the United States
- When it should be celebrated (and why we stick to that one date)

- How we can all get the word out and participate in the celebration

Students will need to back up their reasoning with persuasive examples. They will sign and mail their letters, also learning how to properly address a letter and envelope and mail it. The background information and reading, writing, and revising will take place over a five-day period of the writing block (45 minutes).

**Research** – The last component for this cross-cultural lesson involves comparing and contrasting similar animals that exist in South Korea and the United States. Students will learn that one of the most popular activities on Children’s Day in South Korea is to go to the zoo, a park or nature preserve. Students will learn about 10 animals native to South Korea (see resources section). We will then divide the animals, and small groups will research a specific animal. Then they will compare and contrast it to a similar animal found in the United States (for the tiger we will look at the Florida panther). Students will learn about the two animals’ characteristics, habitat, diet, adaptations, and interesting facts. Students will make posters or do an oral presentation (recorded video). This will take place during the reading and writing blocks (45 minutes spread out over two weeks).

#### **IV – State Standards Addressed in the Lesson Plans -3<sup>rd</sup> Grade (Indiana)**

For lesson on Korean Folktales and Fables:

##### **Literature**

**3.RL.2.2** Recount folktales, fables, and tall tales from diverse cultures; identify the themes in these works. Further guidance for support will be provided in the Literacy Framework.

**3.RL.2.3** Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the plot.

**3.RL.3.2** Distinguish personal point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

**3.RV.3.1** Determine how the author uses words and phrases to provide meaning to works of literature, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language, including figurative language (e.g., similes).

For lesson on Children’s Day:

## Speaking and Listening

3.SL.2.2 Explore ideas under discussion by drawing on readings and other information.

## Writing

3.W.3.1 Write persuasive compositions in a variety of forms that:

- State the opinion in an introductory statement or section.
- Support the opinion with reasons in an organized way
- Connect opinion and reasons using words and phrases.
- Provide a concluding statement or section.

For Research and Writing about animals found in Korea and comparing and contrasting to similar animals found in the United States:

### The Research Process: Finding, Assessing, Synthesizing, and Reporting Information

3.W.5 Conduct short research on a topic.

- Identify a specific topic or question of interest.
- Locate information in reference texts, electronic resources, or through interviews.
- Recognize that some sources may be more reliable than others.
- Record relevant information in their own words.
- Present the information, choosing from a variety of formats.

## VI – Resources:

For Korean Folk and Fairy Tales lesson:

- Three Korean Fairy Tales – Beloved Stories and Legends, by Kim So-un
- Korean Folk and Fairy Tales, retold by Suzanne Crowder Han
- Korean Children’s Favorite Stories by Kim So-n
- The Korean Cinderella by Shirley Climo

For Children’s Day:

Videos explaining Children’s Day -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=miR3GzLRNKU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=auA1f4UVXg>

Reading about Children’s Day in South Korea -

<https://www.90daykorean.com/childrens-day-in-korea/>

<https://koreancultureblog.com/2015/05/05/may-is-a-family-month-in-south-korea/>

<https://www.google.com/doodles/bang-jeong-hwans-117th-birthday>

Reading about Children’s Day in the United States -

<http://every-day-is-special.blogspot.com/2013/06/june-9-childrens-day-in-usa.html>

<https://nationaldaycalendar.com/childrens-day-second-sunday-in-june/>

General information about animals of South Korea (introduction prior to in-depth research):

<https://theculturetrip.com/asia/south-korea/articles/10-animals-native-to-south-korea-and-where-to-see-them/>