



*** Social Studies**

Understanding through Story

Believe it or not, the story of *Rudolph's* adventure is unknown to many people throughout the world due to cultural differences.

Diverse cultures practice distinctive traditions, share their own stories and celebrate in their own special ways. The tale of *Rudolph*, when examined, communicates many insights into American culture.

Kentucky Social Studies

Culture and Society (2.16 & 2.17) Grades 4-6

Academic Expectations:

2.16 Students observe, analyze, and interpret human behaviors, social groupings, and institutions to better understand people and the relationships among individuals and among groups.

Ohio Social Studies Standards: People in Societies

Holidays, Customs and Traditions

Benchmark(s) Grades 4-5

A. Compare practices and products of North American cultural groups.

Grade 6

A. Compare cultural practices, products and perspectives of past civilizations in order to understand commonality and diversity of cultures. (Note: origin of cultural traditions)

Objective

Students will:

- Observe practices and purposes found in holiday celebrations and cultural traditions through role-play.
- Recognize similarities and differences in how people practice holidays and cultural traditions.

Assessment

Students will be able to:

- Identify similarities and differences within holiday and cultural traditions found in various cultures.

Sample selected response items to gauge student understanding.

1. Is every day a holiday? Yes or no? Why or why not?

Answer: No. (A holiday is a day that legally or through custom allows for celebration and time off from the daily activities of school or business.).

2. All cultures practice holidays or celebrations in the same way. True or False?

Answer: False. Cultural practices take into account specific beliefs and values that vary in cultures.

3. What are three things that people have in common when they celebrate holidays?

Answer: Festivity, food, sharing with others, etc.

Vocabulary

- Culture
- Tradition
- Practice
- Ritual
- Commonality
- Diversity

Materials

- An area for role-play
- Handouts

Activity

What Rudolph Teaches

Teacher will:

1. Have students share their favorite holiday and/or family holiday tradition. Survey responses to see if their favorites include the story of *Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer*.
2. Reflect upon the Children's Theatre's production of *Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer*. Share with students that for many families, watching television broadcasts of *Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, is a yearly tradition during the Winter Holiday season.
3. Facilitate discussion with students as to how holiday tales and traditions provide insight into cultural values by examining characters, events and practices and purposes.
4. Have students recall and reflect upon messages the production of *Rudolph* provides about the general American culture. List student ideas on the board.
5. Categorize the list into general ideas (e.g., the acceptance of others, belief in one's self, giving to others).
6. Review the vocabulary word definitions.
7. Distribute to students, the Handouts, "Role-play Scenarios" and "Observations and Conclusions."
8. Review each question on the observation worksheet and provide examples of your expectations for answers
9. Have student volunteers role-play the scenarios depicting familiar holidays and cultural traditions. Students will observe and record evidence to answer questions on the observation worksheet.
10. Facilitate with students discussion regarding observable similarities of the holiday and traditions, and insight gained into American cultural practices.
11. Conclude with how the identified practices, if any, are reflected in the tale of *Rudolph*, and were depicted in the staged production.



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Handout: Role-Play Scenarios

Easter Egg Hunt (Christian)

Four children and a mother are sitting at the kitchen table. The mother brings over a carton of hard-boiled eggs. Each child picks up an egg and begins to color the egg with crayons. The children proceed to drop the eggs into cups of dye. The children repeat the activity. Next, eggs are removed from the cups. The children admire the eggs and then place the eggs back into the carton.

The children turn into their beds for the night and sleep. The next morning all five family members awake. The children jump up and run to the table. They find baskets full of candy and eat it hurriedly. The children next begin to look around the room, in corners and under the table. One child finds an egg and places it in a basket. Other children begin to find eggs and place them in their baskets.

Holi, the Festival of Color (Hindu)

There is a full moon. Five children carry in large baskets of bread, corn, and vegetables and place them on the ground. Each sits down, takes out of their basket a few vegetables, and eat as they talk. They next gather wood and create a large bonfire. The children proceed to grab large bags of colorful powder (called gulal). They dance around and throw the powder at one another, mix the powder with water and proceed to squirt water at one another. The children laugh, dance, throw powder and shout, "Holi Hai," until their bags are empty in celebration of Winter's end.

Bar Mitzvah/Bat Mitzvah (Jewish)

A male (Bar) or female (Bat) child, coming of age, approach and stand at a podium, as four others sit as the audience. The child at the podium recites the words, "Today I am a man/woman," to begin a speech to the listening audience. Upon completion, all bow their heads, as in prayer. All walk to another building to a reception. All begin to chat, laugh, sing, and dance. All sit down and eat a feast. Gifts are given to the child "coming of age." The child then speaks again. The audience claps and cheers.



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Handout: Observations and Conclusions

	Scenario 1 Easter Egg Hunt	Scenario 2 Holi Celebration, Festival of Colors	Scenario 3 Bar/Bat Mitzvah
What was learned about the holiday or tradition, and its purpose?			
What items appeared to have great importance?			
What traditional practices were observed?			
What was the purpose of the traditional practice?			
What information do the traditional practices provide?			
How does the behavior of the character(s) in their practice of a tradition reflect upon American culture and society?			