



Embracing Tradition

Background Information for Teachers

Rituals, traditions, and celebrations are an important part of everyone's cultural identity. They are perpetuated within families, by ethnic and racial groups, and by communities. Rituals range from daily, routine activities to elaborate, once-in-a-lifetime ceremonies.

Wisconsin's landscape, climate, and geography combine to create a variety of time-honored rituals based on agricultural or environmental cycles. These rituals include hunting, fishing, winter sports, and harvest festivals.

Viewing "Embracing Tradition" and engaging in some of the supportive activities suggested here will help your students reflect on rituals and traditions that are important to them. They also will consider differences and similarities between private rituals and public celebrations.

Note: Miss Martha White serves as the series host for programs 6 through 10.

Synopsis

Children in the Exploratorium think about private traditions when they see three families engage in variations on a theme: an extended family's birthday celebration; a Mexican-American girl's 15th birthday, called a *quinceañera*; and a family's observance of the day their adopted son arrived from Russia, which they call Coming Home Day.

Later, a visit to a family's hunting cabin illustrates the importance of regional rituals that are derived from Wisconsin's climate, landscape, and geography. Finally, an example of a public celebration spotlights the African World Festival in Milwaukee.

There, African Americans, people from many African nations, and others gather to express and observe African and African-American culture and heritage.



Program Goals

Correlations with Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Social Studies appear in italics following each goal.

After viewing Program 6 and engaging in supportive classroom activities, students will

- discover why rituals are important to families, communities, and other groups.
Grade 4: E.4.4
Grade 8: E.8.3
- understand the difference between public and private manifestations of culture.
Grade 4: A.4.7, E.4.9, E.4.11
Grade 8: E.8.3, E.8.9, E.8.10
- compare and contrast rituals and traditions among groups.
Grade 4: E.4.3, E.4.4, E.4.8, E.4.13
Grade 8: E.8.3
- explore the connection between regional rituals and Wisconsin's landscape, climate, and geography.
Grade 4: A.4.4
Grade 8: A.8.4, A.8.8

Vocabulary

Words preceded by an asterisk () were introduced earlier in the series and are included here for review.*

camaraderie — A warm, friendly feeling of companionship.

celebration — A happy gathering to mark a special event.

ceremony — Formal actions, words, and music performed to mark an important event.

Chucaba (chew-kah-bah) — A masked West African spiritual leader who combats evil spirits, nurtures positive spirits, and helps people remember their ancestors.

converge — To come together as one.

***culture** — A way of life; something everyone has. It includes the behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought. Culture is complex and ever evolving.

dimensions — The characteristics or traits that make something unique.

***ethnic** — A group of people sharing a common and distinctive racial, national, religious, linguistic, or cultural heritage.

masquerade — A party or dance at which masks and costumes are worn.

Mayan — One of a group of American Indians of Central America.

Projects (The Projects) — Government-sponsored housing, usually in urban areas.

quinceañera — (**kin**-say-ah-nair-ah) A Latina girl's 15th birthday celebration. From the Spanish *quince* = 15 and *años* = years. (Also *quinceaños*.)

ritual — Certain activities or actions always performed the same way, often to mark a special occasion.

***spiritual** — To do with religion or faith.

***tradition** — The handing down of customs, ideas, and beliefs from one generation to the next.

Before-Viewing Activities

It will be helpful to first discuss and define the terms ritual, tradition, and celebration with the class.



Focus Questions for Class Discussion

- What rituals are part of our classroom culture?
(*Examples:* taking attendance in the morning, reading time, special observances of good grades or birthdays)
- What rituals and traditions are important in families, in communities, and in Wisconsin?
- Which traditions are passed along to generations in private?
- How do groups choose to present their culture to the public?
- How are celebrations different among ethnic groups? How are they the same? What are some examples among groups represented in our class or community?

Focus Questions for Students' Culture Journals

- Which daily rituals are part of my life? (What things do I do the same way every day?)
- What annual rituals are important to me and my family? (What events do I look forward to every year?)

Teaching note: These activities are referenced in the [Teacher Summary](#) on page 15.

Viewing Activities

Birthday Variations Segment

Relevant Academic Standards for Foreign Languages

Grade 4: 4.D.2, 4.D.3, 4.I.1, 4.I.2, 4.I.3

Grade 8: 8.D.2, 8.I.1, 8.I.2, 8.I.3

This segment is composed of three scenarios. The first visits a child's traditional birthday party. Part two shows a Mexican-American girl's 15th birthday celebration, called a *quinceañera*. The final scene visits a family that created an annual celebration to observe a special occasion. The event marks the day when a Russian orphan came to the United States to become the adopted child of a two-dad family.

When discussing variations on birthday celebrations, it is important to note in an affirmative way that birthdays are celebrated in many ways, and some people don't celebrate birthdays at all. This may be true for economic reasons, an example of which is mentioned in the first scenario.

Rather than celebrate birthdays, some people, including many groups in African nations, observe different milestones important in their cultures. Some religious groups abstain from birthday observances, such as Jehovah's Witnesses (see pages 8 and 9, under Extension Activities).

Teaching note: See References and Resources on page 11 for materials that can assist you in discussions that may arise from topics addressed in this program.

Scene 1: The first scene visits Mahkayla and her family, who, along with several friends, are celebrating Mahkayla's birthday. In addition to following widely observed customs such as playing games and serving cake and ice cream, Mahkayla's family has its own unique birthday rituals. Mahkayla's parents also describe what their birthday celebrations were like when they were growing up.

Scene 2: Lorena, a Mexican-American girl, is celebrating her 15th birthday, called a *quinceañera*. Many historians believe this celebration has roots in Aztec and Mayan cultures, and the event once symbolized a girl's readiness for marriage. Today, the *quinceañera* still is an important milestone for many Latinas, marking the end of their childhood. Although customs vary, the most important aspect of the *quinceañera* is a thanksgiving Mass attended by family members and close friends.

The quinceañera celebrant wears a white or pale pink gown. She also carries a bouquet of flowers, which she leaves at the altar as an offering. Often, she wears a ring-shaped headpiece, which represents the Biblical Crown of Life, to signify her commitment to Christ. The celebrant may be accompanied by *damas* (maids of honor) and *chambelanes* (chamberlains, or male escorts). A festive reception or feast follows the church ceremony.

Dancing also is an important part of the quinceañera, with the first dance customarily reserved for the celebrant and her father. In some places, a mariachi band serenades the girl in front of her house the night before her 15th birthday.

Scene 3: Nicholas spent the first two years of his life in a Russian orphanage. Now, he celebrates his Coming Home Day, which marks the day he came to the United States to form a family with his two dads. Nicholas's Coming Home Day ritual includes looking at photographs and a video of him taped in Russia, as well as sharing pizza and a cake with his best friend, his younger brother, Dad, and Papa. Many adoptive families commemorate Coming Home Day, Arrival Day, or Airplane Day each year.

Teaching note: Research suggests that 3,000 to 6,000 children in the United States have parents who are gay. These numbers likely will increase as more gay couples choose to create families. You may wish to remind students that families come in all shapes, sizes, and combinations.

Viewing/Observation Points

Pause the video before this segment begins and ask students to keep the following questions in mind as they watch. At the conclusion of the segment, pause the video and ask the questions again to assess students' observations.

- What do these three celebrations have in common? (Responses might include family participation; each marks a special anniversary; sharing the day with friends; private rituals to make the celebrant feel special.)
- What differences did you observe among the celebrations? (Responses might include comparing ethnic traditions with family traditions; some have been celebrated for centuries and some are newer; some involved special clothing and some did not; some traditions have been passed along for generations and some were created recently.)

Deer Camp Segment

Relevant Academic Standards for Environmental Education

Grade 4: B.4.10

Grade 8: B.8.12

Fifteen-year-old Patrick, his dad, grandfather, and his uncles get together every fall for their annual deer hunting trip. Deer hunting is an important Wisconsin tradition because it involves many people at one time. Each November during Wisconsin's gun deer hunting season, 600,000 to 700,000 hunters take to the woods. In some areas, schools close. Many businesses also are affected because many workers request time off. The annual hunt helps manage game populations and contributes hundreds of millions of dollars to the state's economy.

Wisconsin's climate, landscape, and geography created this yearly ritual by providing the environment that supports a large population of deer and other game animals. For many people, hunting is part of a long-standing, intergenerational family tradition. Camaraderie, enjoying the outdoors, and passing along traditions are important aspects of the hunting season.

Teaching note: This segment focuses on passing along family traditions and learning hunter safety, not the deer hunt itself.

Viewing/Observation Points

Pause the video before this segment begins and ask students to keep the following questions in mind as they watch. At the conclusion of the segment, pause the video and ask the questions again to assess students' observations.

- What rituals are part of this family's hunting trip? (Responses might include packing up their gear, wearing special clothes, staying at the cabin Grandpa built, playing cards, elders teaching children about tracking and hunter safety.)
- What are some of the things this family enjoys about their hunting trip? (Responses might include relaxing, being outdoors, spending time with family, passing knowledge and traditions from one generation to the next.)

African World Festival Segment

Relevant Academic Standards for Music Education

Grade 4: F.4.3, F.4.6, I.4.2, I.4.5

Grade 8: F.8.3, I.8.1, I.8.3

Relevant Academic Standards for Dance

Grade 4: F.4.1, H.4.1, H.4.2, H.4.4, I.4.5, J.4.3

Grade 8: G.8.1, G.8.2, H.8.1, I.8.3, J.8.3

Relevant Academic Standards for Foreign Languages

Grade 4: E.4.2, E.4.3, K.4.3, K.4.4

Grade 8: E.8.2, K.8.3, K.8.4

The African World Festival, held annually in Milwaukee, has celebrated African-American life and culture since 1983. Organizers focus on traditional cultural elements, as well as sports and children's activities. The festival's opening ceremony reflects the importance of spiritual rituals among African-American people. Other features highlight the cultural traditions of many African tribes and groups, including artwork, dancing, and drumming. It also showcases exceptional African-American cultural contributions, such as gospel music and the blues.

Although all ethnic festivals are important avenues for celebrating cultural heritage, they take on increased significance for groups that have historically been marginalized by dominant cultural groups. For many years, African Americans maintained cultural traditions mainly within the family and within church groups. Today, the African World Festival helps both participants and visitors publicly express their racial pride.

Viewing/Observation Points

Pause the video before this segment begins and ask students to keep the following question in mind as they watch. At the conclusion of the segment, pause the video and ask the question again to assess students' observations.

- What are some of the benefits of holding public celebrations like the African World Festival? (Responses might include providing African Americans and Africans from all over the world a place to visit together; giving people of other races the opportunity to learn more about African cultures; young people have the opportunity to learn from their elders; many performers, food vendors, and artists can participate; children who are in a minority in their community or classroom can visit with others who have a similar background.)

After-Viewing Activities



Questions for Class Discussion

- How does your family celebrate birthdays?
- What special privileges does your family grant to the family member celebrating a birthday?

- What personal rituals do you engage in on your birthday?
- Which birthdays does your family observe as being extra-special?
(*Examples:* first, sweet 16, 50th)



Class Activity

Ask students to brainstorm new rituals that might make good additions to the classroom culture. Examples could include rituals to welcome new classmates or to celebrate special student accomplishments. Have students vote on their favorite idea and then adopt it.

Students' Culture Journals

Ask students to re-read the responses they wrote in their Culture Journals to the Before-Viewing focus questions (page 3). Have them update their journals with this question in mind:

- What have I learned about rituals?

Technology Link

Guide students to visit tourism-related Web sites. Have them compile a list of annual public events that are dependent upon on Wisconsin's landscape, climate, or geography. Post a Wisconsin map on the bulletin board. Ask students to create small paper icons for the events and pin the icons to the appropriate location on the map.

Teaching note: For tourism-related Web sites, visit the Wisconsin Department of Tourism's Web site at www.travelwisconsin.com.

Student Activity for Assessment

Students individually explore the rituals and traditions of their own culture, as well as those of a friend and a cultural group of the student's choice. Details about the activity are provided in the [Teacher Summary](#) on pages 15 through 17.

Extension Activities

These activities correlate to the video segments cited in Viewing Activities (pp. 4-7) and allow for follow-up on particular themes.

Birthday Variations Segment

- Lead a discussion about the importance of respecting people and groups who are unable to, or choose not to, celebrate birthdays. Examples include families in certain economic circumstances, cultural groups that celebrate certain milestones but not annual birthdays, and religious groups such as Jehovah's Witnesses.

Remind students that Jehovah’s Witnesses respect the rights of others to follow their own beliefs, just as they hope others respect theirs. The following explanation, provided by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, may help students understand why Jehovah’s Witnesses do not celebrate birthdays:

“Did you ever see one of your classmates leave the room when someone had a birthday party in class? Or maybe he or she didn’t join in singing ‘Happy Birthday.’ Did you wonder why? That classmate might be one of Jehovah’s Witnesses. This is a Christian religion, which means that its members try to worship God by following the teachings and examples of Jesus Christ.

From studying history and the Bible, Jehovah’s Witnesses learned that Jesus and the first Christians did not celebrate birthdays. The Bible does not even tell the date when Jesus was born. Only two birthday parties are mentioned in the Bible, but they were both given by people who did not worship God. At each party something terrible happened — somebody was murdered.

Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that these stories were written in the Bible to show how God feels about birthday celebrations. So Jehovah’s Witnesses don’t join in birthday parties. But they are happy when children are born, and they give presents to their friends and family and have parties any time of the year.”

- Guide students through an investigation of birthday customs from a variety of cultural groups. Here are some examples:
 - In some African nations, children don’t celebrate birthdays. Instead, when they reach a certain age, they have special ceremonies to welcome them into the tribe.
 - In Vietnam, some people celebrate special birthdays for one-month-old babies. They give thanks for the baby’s good health.
 - In the United States, people sometimes celebrate “sweet 16” birthdays in special ways.

For additional suggestions, see References and Resources on pages 11 and 12. If appropriate, invite ESL students to your class or school to share their traditions.

Art Education Connection

Share with students the book series “Birthdays! Celebrating Life Around the World,” by Eve B. Feldman (see page 11), which features children’s artwork from a variety of places. Ask students to create a picture of

their family celebrating a birthday. For those who don't wish to or are not able to create a personal picture, give them the option to create artwork based on another group's traditions or about another important personal or family ritual in their lives.

Deer Camp Segment

Divide the class into small groups. Ask the groups to each compile a list of rituals or celebrations in their community or in Wisconsin that are dependent on climate and geography. Instruct them to classify the events into one of two categories: Private Rituals (e.g., a family going hunting or fishing) and Public Rituals (e.g., sweet corn festival, cow-chip throwing contest, ski race, threshing).

Art Education Connection

Ask students to create posters promoting an annual community ritual or celebration.

African World Festival Segment

- Discuss the statement Mr. Ologboni, an African storyteller, made at the beginning of this segment: "There's an old African saying that we don't stop dancing because we grow old, we grow old because we stop dancing." Ask students to collect sayings and proverbs from other cultural groups, and have them share their collections with the class.
- Share with students the following statements made by Mr. Clay, one of the organizers of African World Festival, when he was asked how African-American people kept their cultures alive during years of oppression on this continent:
"I think that oppression forces creativity. The core to African Americans maintaining their tradition was the family reunion. At times you'd have people from three, four, five generations. Grandmothers, grandfathers, and little ones would get together, and there would be storytelling. I also think the church has always been a good place to perpetuate culture. We are a musical people, as we were even in the times of slavery. We use music as a way of communicating."
- Ask students to think of ways culture is preserved in their own families, as well as in ethnic or racial groups. Guide a discussion encouraging them to share their ideas. What commonalities emerge? Do they have other ideas about how individuals not belonging to a dominant cultural group might perpetuate their important cultural traditions?
- Guide students through a discussion or exploration of the cultural distinction between African traditions, such as the Chucaba stilt-walkers, and African-American traditions, such as gospel music.

Remind them that Africa is a continent of many countries and tribal groups. Also, reinforce the diversity within African traditions.

References and Resources

For Teachers

It's Elementary: Talking about Gay Issues in School, by Women's Educational Media, 1996. This award-winning video for adults illustrates what really happens when educators of grades 1 through 8 talk about gay issues with their students. 78 minutes; viewing guide available. Telephone: 415/641-4616, fax: 415/641-4632, Web: www.womedia.org.

Preventing Prejudice: Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender Lesson Plan Guide for Elementary Schools, by Kim Klausner. Buena Vista Lesbian and Gay Parents Group, n.d. These lesson plans can be integrated easily into K-5 classrooms studying families and stereotypes. Available from Women's Educational Media; telephone: 415/641-4616, fax: 415/641-4632, Web: www.womedia.org.

Understanding Homosexuality, Changing Schools: A Text for Teachers, Counselors, and Administrators, by Arthur Lipkin. Westview Press, 1999, ISBN 0813325358 (paperback). A valuable and broad introduction for adults unfamiliar with issues of homosexuality in education. Serves those in need of an update as well.

For Students

Birthdays! Celebrating Life Around the World, by Eve B. Feldman. Bridgewater Books, 1996, ASIN 0816734941 (hardcover); Troll Assoc., 1995, ISBN 081673495X. Brightly colored art by children around the world combines with the simple, rhyming text to create a global birthday party.

"Birthdays Around the World" series, by Cheryl L. Enderlein. Bridge-stone Books, all with library binding. This series, illustrated with color photographs, shares birthday customs from a number of countries. Titles include:

Celebrating Birthdays in Australia, 1998, ISBN 1560657596.

Celebrating Birthdays in Brazil, 1998, ISBN 156065760X.

Celebrating Birthdays in China, 1998, ISBN 1560657618.

Celebrating Birthdays in Russia, 1998, ISBN 1560657626.

Children Just Like Me: Celebrations! by Anabel Kindersley and Barnabas Kindersley. DK Publishing, 1997, ISBN 0789420279 (hardcover). Published in association with UNICEF, this colorful book introduces readers to children from around the world celebrating a variety of religious and secular holidays.

The Children of Christmas: Stories for the Season, by Cynthia Rylant. Econo-Clad Books, 1999, ISBN 0785734686 (library binding); Orchard Books, 1993, ISBN 0531070425 (paperback). In these five short stories, sad and lonely people find unique ways to experience Christmas.

The Giver, by Lois Lowery. Houghton Mifflin, 1993, ISBN 0395645662 (hardcover); Laurel Leaf, 1994, ISBN 0440219078 (paperback); Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1995, ISBN 055347359 (audio cassette). As a member of a seemingly utopian society, 12-year-old Jonas is selected by the Elders to be the next Receiver of Memories. To prepare him for his life's work, Jonas studies with an old man known as The Giver, under whose tutelage Jonas begins to unravel the truth underlying his world. The 1994 Newbery Medal winner.

Love Makes a Family: Portraits of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Parents and Their Families, by Gigi Kaeser. University of Massachusetts Press, 1999, ISBN 1558491600 (cloth), 1558491619 (paperback). Photographs and interviews of diverse families about family roles, understanding, and respect.

Quinceañera: Celebrating Fifteen, by Elizabeth King. NAL, 1998, ISBN 0525456384 (hardcover). Photos and prose reveal similarities and differences as two young women, one from El Salvador and one from Mexico, celebrate their quinceañera. Also available in Spanish.

Quinceañera Means Sweet Fifteen, by Veronica Chambers. Hyperion, 2001, ISBN 0786804971 (hardcover). Best friends Magdalena and Marisol are excited about their upcoming quinceañera parties, but complications arise when Magdalena plans an extravagant celebration and Marisol's mother isn't sure she can afford a party at all.

That's a Family! Women's Educational Media, 1996. An award-winning video that helps elementary students see and understand many different and diverse types of families. 35 minutes, includes curriculum guide. Available from Women's Educational Media, telephone: 415/641-4616; fax 415/641-4632; Web: www.womedia.org.

Tree of Cranes, by Allen Say. Houghton Mifflin, 1991, ISBN 039552024 (hardcover). A Japanese boy learns of Christmas when his mother decorates a pine tree with paper cranes.

Tuck Everlasting, by Natalie Babbit. Farrar Straus & Giroux, 1988, ISBN 0374378487 (hardcover); Farrar Straus & Giroux, 1986, ISBN 0374480095 (paperback); Audio Bookshelf, 1995, ISBN 1883332133 (audio cassette). The Tuck family drink from a spring that grants eternal life, but questions about the cycle of life arise when 10-year-old Winnie Foster discovers the family's secret.

CD-ROM Connections

Navigation instructions for the Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin CD-ROM appear on page 27.

The following **Visits** relate to segments featured in Program 6:

“Be Czech for a Day” — This annual ethnic festival celebrates Czechoslovakian heritage. (Hillsboro; Western Upland)

“Belgian Days Parade” — A family participates in an annual ethnic festival celebrating Belgian heritage. (Brussels; Eastern Ridges and Lowlands)

“Embracing Tradition” — Explore traditions that are an important part of the Ojibwe School on the Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation. (Hayward; Northern Highland)

“Gathering Our Grandfathers” — Discover how preparations for a private ritual help keep Indian culture alive. (Milwaukee; Eastern Ridges and Lowlands)

“A Leaf on My Family Tree” — An extended family has fun and learns about its ancestors at the annual family reunion. (Modena; Western Upland)

“Longest Day of the Year” — Two sisters participate in an annual ethnic festival celebrating their Finnish heritage. (Hurley; Lake Superior Lowland)

“Three Generations of Polish Americans” — Ethnic food and dance bring a family together at an annual picnic celebrating Polish heritage. (Thorp; Northern Highland)

“Where Food Grows on Water” — Visit the Bad River Reservation to discover how and why Ojibwe people gather wild rice using traditional methods. (Odanah; Lake Superior Lowland)

The assessable activities in the **My Discoveries** electronic notebook give students the opportunity to log the information they have learned on their Visits.

“Belgian Days Parade” — How is this celebration the same as the Longest Day of the Year celebration? How is it different? (Refer to the “Longest Day of the Year” Visit, noted above.)

“Gathering Our Grandfathers” — Write about one of your traditional activities. Describe how you prepare for this activity and how it makes you feel.

“Longest Day of the Year” — Write about a real or imaginary special day that your family celebrates the same way every year.

Use the “All Groups” list in **Explorer** to learn more about the following groups of people who were represented in Program 6:

African

African American

Central American

Chinese

Mexican

Russian

United States

Embracing Tradition assessment activity

Learning Goal

Students will compare and contrast rituals and traditions among groups.

Wisconsin Model Academic Standards Correlations

Social Studies (Behavioral Sciences)

- E.4.13 Investigate and explain similarities and differences in ways that cultures meet human needs.
- E.8.3 Describe the ways in which local, regional, and ethnic cultures may influence the everyday lives of people.

Activity Overview

By comparing and contrasting rituals and traditions among groups of people, students will explain similarities and differences in ways that cultures meet human needs. After a review of rituals and traditions, students identify their own rituals and traditions.

Then, students identify rituals and traditions presented in segments from *Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin* video programs 2 through 6. Students continue their exploration by interviewing a classmate or friend about his or her unique rituals and traditions. Finally, students write four theme-focused paragraphs summarizing and contrasting what they've discovered.

Materials Needed

- Students' Culture Journals
- Student copies of the **Embracing Traditions assessment rubric** (page 18)
- Student copies of the **Investigating Rituals and Traditions activity sheet** (page 19)
- Student copies of the **Rituals and Traditions Interview activity sheet** (page 20)
- Student copies of the **Rituals and Traditions Writing activity sheet** (pages 21-22)
- Videotapes of *Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin* programs 2 through 6
- *Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin* CD-ROM (optional)

Teacher Instructions

The Assessment Rubric

At the beginning of the assessment activity, distribute the rubric to students and explain how you will use it to measure their achievement. Since there are several components to this assessment, it's best to review pertinent sections of the rubric with students as you move through the activity. Be sure that they understand the relevance of the criteria before proceeding with each part of the assessment.

1. Review

To begin the assessment, revisit the Before-Viewing Activities class discussion and journal writings (page 3). Remind students of the meaning of *ritual*. (A *ritual* is a certain activity or action always performed the same way, often to mark a special occasion.) Then, have students re-read what they wrote in their Culture Journals to these questions:

- What daily rituals are a part of my life?
- What annual rituals are important to me and my family?

Recall the class discussion for this Before-Viewing focus question:

- What rituals are a part of our classroom culture?

Restate the definition of *tradition* for students. (A *tradition* is the handing down of beliefs, customs, and ideas from one generation to the next.) Again, recall the class discussion for these Before-Viewing focus questions:

- What rituals and traditions are important in families, in communities, and in Wisconsin?
- Which traditions are passed along to generations in private?

2. Investigating Rituals and Traditions

Explain to students that they will be doing research about themselves, a cultural group of their choice, and a classmate or friend.

Distribute the **Investigating Rituals and Traditions** activity sheet and rubric. As a class, read through the portion of the rubric relevant to this activity. Make sure students understand the way in which their performance is being measured.

Ask students to fill in the “Me” row of the chart with examples of rituals and traditions from their own lives. Remind them to recall their Culture Journal writings in completing this portion of the chart.

For the row designated “A *Cultural Horizons* Group,” have each student select a cultural group featured in a segment from a *Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin* program (see below), focusing on the rituals and traditions of that group. Direct students to write the name of the group they selected on the chart and then record their observations. Suggested segments include:

Program 2, “Family Kaleidoscope” — Menominee family segment, Jewish family segment

Program 3, “Places with Faces” — Bad River Indian Reservation segment

Program 4, “Growing New Roots” — Tibetan exiles segment

Program 5, “Many Voices” — Serbian dance segment

Program 6, “Embracing Traditions” — Deer camp segment

If you plan to integrate the *Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin* CD-ROM, direct students to use the CD's Explorer component for their research (see [CD-ROM Navigation](#), page 27).

Have students complete the chart after they interview a classmate or friend, as described below.

3. Rituals and Traditions Interview

Tell students they are going to interview a classmate, friend, or someone who is not a member of their family. Distribute the **Rituals and Traditions Interview** activity sheet and read through the interview questions as a class. Explain to students that they will use the information they gather from their interviews to complete the final Classmate or Friend portion of the **Investigating Rituals and Traditions** activity.

The **Rituals and Traditions Interview** activity sheet consists of these questions:

1. Describe two **rituals** that are important to you.
2. Why are these **rituals** important to you?
3. Describe two family **traditions** that have been passed on to you.
4. Why are these **traditions** important to you?

Review with students the Rituals and Traditions Interview section of the rubric, so they understand the expectations.

4. Rituals and Traditions Writing

Explain to students that they are going to write four paragraphs describing the things they have learned about rituals and traditions. Each paragraph will have a theme.

Distribute the **Rituals and Traditions Writing** activity sheet or have students write in their Culture Journals. Also, review with the class the corresponding section of the rubric, ensuring that students know how you are measuring their performance. The four themes are as follows:

1. Pick two **rituals** and two **traditions** in your own life. Describe why they are important to you.
2. Describe why the two **rituals** and two **traditions** of the person you interviewed are important to this person.
3. Describe how your **rituals** and **traditions** are similar to those of the person you interviewed. Describe how they are different.
4. Name and describe four things you have learned about how **rituals** and **traditions** meet human needs.

Embracing Tradition assessment rubric

Name _____

Date _____ ID# _____

How are rituals and traditions similar among cultural groups? How are they different?

ACTIVITY	RESULTS			
	Just Beginning 1 point	On My Way 2 points	Almost There 3 points	Well Done 4 points
Investigating Rituals and Traditions	Named 1 ritual and 1 tradition in each row of the chart. Example was unclear.	Named 2 rituals and 2 traditions in each row of the chart. Examples were vague.	Named 3 rituals and 3 traditions in each row of the chart. Examples were understandable.	Named 4 rituals and 4 traditions in each row of the chart. Examples were well stated.
Rituals and Traditions Interview	Recorded 1 answer. Answer was unclear.	Recorded 2 answers. Answers were vague.	Recorded 3 answers. Answers were understandable.	Recorded 4 answers. Answers were well stated.
Rituals and Traditions Writing Paragraphs 1 & 2	Named 1 ritual or tradition. Example was unclear.	Named 1 ritual and 1 tradition. Examples were vague.	Named 2 rituals and 1 tradition. Examples were understandable.	Named 2 rituals and 2 traditions. Examples were well stated.
<i>Paragraph 3</i>	Named 1 similarity or difference. Example was unclear.	Named 1 similarity and 1 difference. Examples were vague.	Named 2 similarities and 1 difference. Examples were understandable.	Named 2 similarities and 2 differences. Examples were well stated.
<i>Paragraph 4</i>	Named 1 example. Example was unclear.	Named 2 examples. Examples were vague.	Named 3 examples. Examples were understandable.	Named 4 examples. Examples were well stated.

Correlations to Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Social Studies (Behavioral Sciences)
 E.4.13 Investigate and explain similarities and differences in ways that cultures meet human needs.

E.8.3 Describe the ways in which local, regional, and ethnic cultures may influence the everyday lives of people.

Investigating Rituals and Traditions

Name _____

Date _____ ID# _____

Directions:

1. In the "Myself" row, write examples of **rituals** and **traditions** in your own life. *Hint:* Read what you wrote in your Culture Journal.
2. In the row labeled "A Cultural Horizons Group," fill in the blank with the name of the group you have chosen and give examples of that group's **rituals** and **traditions**.
3. Fill in the "Classmate or Friend" row after you conduct your interview.

	RITUALS	TRADITIONS
Myself		
A Cultural Horizons Group		
Classmate or Friend		

Name _____

Date _____ ID# _____

Rituals and Traditions Interview

Name of Interviewee _____

Interview Question 1: Describe two **rituals** that are important to you.

Answer: _____

Interview Question 2: Why are these **rituals** important to you?

Answer: _____

Interview Question 3: Describe two **traditions** that have been passed on to you.

Answer: _____

Question 4: Why are these **traditions** important to you?

Answer: _____

Name _____

Date _____ ID# _____

Rituals and Traditions Writing

Paragraph 1: Describe two of my own **rituals** and two of my own **traditions**. Explain why they are important to me.

Paragraph 2: Describe two **rituals** and two **traditions** of the person I interviewed. Explain why they are important to that person.

Student Activity

Paragraph 3: How are my own **rituals** and **traditions** similar to those of the person I interviewed? How are they different?

Paragraph 4: What have I discovered about how **rituals** and **traditions** meet human needs?

Teaching Plan for Program/Chapter 6: “Embracing Tradition”

Video Segment	Learning Strategies	CD-ROM Component	The English Language Learner	The Intermediate Learner	The Gifted and Talented Learner
Birthday Variations	Listening Cooperative learning Observing	Explorer: African-American people; Mexican people	VOC: pp. 2-3 BVA: focus questions, p. 3 VA: viewing points, p. 5	BVA: focus questions, p. 3 VA: viewing points, p. 5 AVA: discussion, pp. 7-8; activity, p. 8; Culture Journal, p. 9 SAA: pp. 15-22	AVA: Culture Journal, p. 8 Technology Link: p. 8 SAA: pp. 15-22 EA: discussion; investigation; artwork, pp. 8-10
Deer Camp	Observing Listening	Visits: “Longest Day of the Year”; “Three Generations of Polish Americans”	VOC: pp. 2-3 BVA: focus questions, p. 3 VA: viewing points, p. 6	BVA: focus questions, p. 3 VA: viewing points, p. 6 AVA: discussion, pp. 7-8; class activity, p. 8; Culture Journal, p. 8 SAA: pp. 15-22	AVA: Culture Journal, p. 8 Technology Link: p. 8 SAA: pp. 15-22 EA: classifying; creating posters, p. 10
African World Festival	Observing Listening Cooperative learning	Explorer: African people; African-American people	VOC: pp. 2-3 BVA: focus questions, p. 3 VA: viewing points, p. 7	BVA: focus questions, p. 3 VA: viewing points, p. 7 AVA: discussion, pp. 7-8; class activity, p. 8; Culture Journal, p. 8 SAA: pp. 15-22	AVA: Culture Journal, p. 8 Technology Link: p. 8 SAA: pp. 15-22 EA: discussions; exploration, pp. 10-11
Environmental Education Standards addressed in this video segment: Grade 4: none applicable Grade 8: B.8.12					
Music Education Standards addressed in this video segment: Grade 4: F.4.3, F.4.6, I.4.2, I.4.5; Grade 8: F.8.3, I.8.1, I.8.3					
Dance Standards addressed in this video segment: Grade 4: F.4.1, H.4.1, H.4.2, H.4.4, I.4.5, J.4.3; Grade 8: G.8.1, G.8.2, H.8.1, I.8.3, J.8.3					
Foreign Languages Standards addressed in this video segment: Grade 4: E.4.2, E.4.3, K.4.3, K.4.4; Grade 8: E.8.2, K.8.3, K.8.4					

VOC – Vocabulary; BVA – Before-Viewing Activity; VA – Viewing Activity; AVA – After-Viewing Activity; SAA – Student Activity for Assessment; EA – Extension Activity

How to Use This Guide

This teacher guide will assist you in making best use of the *Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin* video series and its companion CD-ROM by offering ways to incorporate them into your curriculum. It also contains suggested activities designed to appeal to multiple learning styles and intelligences. Each chapter of this guide corresponds to a program in the *Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin* video series and offers activity suggestions and CD-ROM connections specific to that program.

The series is set in a spacious, learning-rich environment called the Exploratorium. There, a group of young people and their adult facilitators, Mr. Kelly and Miss White, examine each program's theme. Illustrating the topic at hand are magazine-style segments that provide real-life examples. These programs highlight Wisconsin's diversity and provide a springboard for classroom discussion and student reflection.

It is always worthwhile to preview each *Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin* program before sharing it with your class. In particular, look for points where you may wish to pause the videotape and discuss a question or idea with students. In addition to introducing and reinforcing content about the state's culture, *Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin* will help your students understand that culture pertains to them as individuals.

Correlations with Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards

Instructional goals for each video program were developed in conjunction with the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Social Studies. Learning objectives and relevant social studies standards for fourth and eighth grades are noted under the heading of Program Goals in each chapter.

Many segments within the programs support academic standards in other disciplines as well. Those correlations are noted in the Viewing Activities section and on the teaching plans (see "Assisting Teachers, Enriching Student Learning," below).

Children in the Exploratorium will engage in a variety of learning activities that support the Model Academic Standards for Information and Technology Literacy. Each chapter also includes a "technology link" that is designed to help integrate technology into enrichment activities.

Assisting Teachers, Enriching Student Learning

In addition to suggesting student activities that complement the *Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin* video series, this guide includes a set of teaching plans, one for each chapter. The teaching plan identifies main content areas covered in a particular program, learning strategies that were modeled, related CD-ROM components, and relevant cross-curricular academic standards. It also groups this guide's student activities into three graduated levels. The [teaching plan for "Embracing Tradition"](#) is on page 23.

As an ongoing activity, the Student Culture Journal plays an integral part of the *Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin* experience. References to its use are made throughout this guide. Each student creates a journal or scrapbook in which he or she can record responses to questions asked before and after viewing. The journal also can be used to collect artwork, photographs, or other materials. Students may wish to decorate their Culture Journals to reflect their own culture.

The items below outline the manner in which the chapters of this guide are organized and describe the information each section contains:

Background Information for Teachers

This section lays the foundation in regard to the content of the video program. It explains why particular topics are covered and gives relevance to the manner in which they are presented.

Synopsis

The Synopsis describes the action that takes place in a particular program and the issues that are raised.

Program Goals

This section cites learning objectives for the program and correlates each one to specific Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Social Studies.

Vocabulary

This list is made up of terms, with definitions, that are used in the video program as well as those which may arise during classroom discussion.

Before-Viewing Activities

This part of the chapter can be used to direct students' attention on the video program they are about to view. It includes focus questions for classroom discussion and journal writing. You may want to record students' responses to the discussion questions on the chalkboard and reflect on them after the class views the program.

Viewing Activities

All *Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin* programs feature several segments that address a particular cultural aspect. Synopses, relevant cross-curricular academic standards, and follow-up questions for each segment can be found here.

After-Viewing Activities

This portion of the chapter offers class discussion questions, class activities, and journal-writing topics.

Technology Links

These activities suggest ways to incorporate the tools of technology into student learning, both within and beyond the classroom.

Extension Activities

Venture a little further. These activities provide ideas to enhance or expand learning opportunities on themes and content presented within the segments seen in the video program. Some can be used as a means to integrate a topic across the curriculum.

Student Activity for Assessment

Each chapter contains a classroom-ready student assessment activity; this section provides a brief description of it. Assessment activities are designed to engage students in applying the concepts presented in the video programs. Results can be used to assess students' grasp of basic ideas for each new topic.

In addition to student materials, each assessment activity includes a **teacher summary** and **assessment rubric**. Each rubric enables students to choose the level at which they wish to perform. Before students begin an assessment activity, review the activity's rubric with the class, ensuring that students understand how their performance will be measured and scored.

Guide Resources

This section of the chapter lists the type and location of materials needed to conduct activities mentioned in the guide. These items can include images, maps, and reproducible masters.

References and Resources

The books, teaching materials, Web sites, and educational tools cited in this section have been carefully selected for quality and appropriateness. Each entry is annotated.

CD-ROM Connections

To help students and teachers make best use of the *Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin* CD-ROM, information in this section identifies components of the CD that relate to each video program.

The *Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin* video series, CD-ROM, and this teacher guide were developed with the generous involvement of a number of Wisconsin classroom teachers and other education professionals from across the state. Their contributions ensure that these materials truly reflect the collective best thinking in regard to the cultures that shape our state and our individual lives.

Kathleen Ernst, Kori Oberle

Project Co-Directors

Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin

CD-ROM Navigation

Visits on the *Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin* CD-ROM introduce students to children and adults who are learning about, celebrating, and preserving their cultural heritage. These Visits relate in various ways to segments featured in *Cultural Horizons of Wisconsin* video programs. Teachers and students can access the Visits in two ways:

- Click on the Wisconsin Map pocket in the Backpack to open the map. Explore the map to find the pop-up signposts that bear the titles of the Visits. Click on the signpost of the Visit you wish to experience.
- Click on the Tools pocket in the Backpack. Launch the “Navitron” — which includes an alphabetical list of all Visit titles on the CD — by clicking on its icon. View the list and click on the Visit title of your choice.

My Discoveries is an electronic notebook that students use to record what they learn on their Visits. The Index within My Discoveries assists teachers with tracking the progress their students make through this CD-ROM. My Discoveries is accessible through

- the last screen of any Visit. Click on the “Write in My Discoveries” link to go to the writing activity related to that Visit.
- the Backpack’s top pocket. Click on the My Discoveries pocket to open it. Next, click on the “Open” button on the cover of the notebook and then the “Index” tab to view the Visit titles. Click on the Visit of your choice to begin your journal entry.
- the Tools pocket, located on the Backpack below the Wisconsin Map pocket. Click on it and select the Navitron button, and then choose the My Discoveries option. To access a Visit read the sentence directly above that begins with “Next.”

Explorer is a database containing profiles of more than 70 ethnic population groups currently living in Wisconsin. Each profile provides four subsections of content: background information in *Who We Are*; details on foods, crafts, music, and dance in *Traditions*; *Recipes*; and examples of ways the group preserves and celebrates its cultural identity in *Getting Along*.

All profiles are accessible in two ways — either by ethnic group, under the heading “All Groups,” or by country of origin, under “Areas of the World.” CD users can access Explorer by clicking on

- a specific group name, cited on the last screen of any Visit because of its relevance to that particular Visit.
- the front pocket of the Backpack. Then, click on either the “All Groups” or “Areas of the World” button. Choose the group you wish to learn about by scrolling through the list and clicking on either the group name or the area of the world from where the group came. After opening a profile, you may read screen by screen or jump to a particular section by clicking *Who We Are*, *Traditions*, *Recipes*, or *Getting Along*.
- the Tools pocket, located below the Wisconsin Map pocket on the Backpack, and launching the Navitron. Choose the Explorer option and follow the instructions directly above, starting with the sentence that begins with “Then.”