



LINC Activities

'Embracing cultural diversity'

>> LEARNING SHEET

About the activity

The 'embracing cultural diversity' activity consists of a series of tasks that aim at enhancing the partnership between family and school and providing opportunities to the members of the school community to appreciate the diversity of cultures. Teachers, parents (including extended family members) and children are brought together through different tasks that move them to speak for themselves, to articulate their cultures and histories, to reflect upon cultural diversity and the concept of migration, to raise awareness on the varying worldviews and cultural expressions. This set of activities draws upon work that has been conducted in the area of intercultural education and must be seen in conjunction to the references listed below.

Aims and objectives:

The activity aims at:

- Bringing teachers, parents and students together and getting to know each other
- Forging the link between family and school
- Providing opportunities for intercultural interaction through tasks that celebrate cultural diversity
- Empowering teachers in integrating intercultural games and tasks in the class
- Encouraging co-operation and creating a positive atmosphere in the group
- Stimulating discussion about how people from different cultures communicate, interact and view the world
- Raising awareness of the ways cultural aspects are reflected in daily life

Regarding educational goals and pedagogies, there is a strong focus on:

- Integration of principles of inclusive learning
- Community-building approaches
- Blended learning design
- Team-building practices
- Story-telling
- Use of ICT to support the learning process and social communication

Who will be involved?

- Teachers
- Parents and family members
- Students
- Experts and seniors (optional but recommended)

This activity revolves around:

- Warm-up tasks
- Home-school interactions
- Storytelling activities
- Exploitation of cultural artifacts and customs



QUOTE TO REFLECT UPON

We share common experiences that shape the way we understand the world. It includes groups we are born into and groups that we join.

-DuPraw and Axner

Name games

This is a **warm up activity** that will allow participants to reveal information about their heritage and get to know each other better.

Procedure: The students take a piece of paper and write down their full names. This is not limited to given names but it can for example include nicknames or names that have been culturally adapted. The children work in pairs. Each child addresses answers to the following questions:

- Does your name have any special meaning?
- Where does your name come from?
- What does your name mean to you?

Encourage students to switch pairs fostering the **interaction** among the participants as much as possible. Do not forget to raise **debriefing questions**:

- How did you feel during the game?
- Did you face difficulty in sharing information with your classmates?
- Did you come across any surprising response?

Materials: Paper and writing utensil for all

Duration: 3-4 minutes per participant per round.

Preparation phase: Prior to the activity, encourage your students to discuss this task with their parents or other family members in order to retrieve as much information as possible.

Extension: Parents/extended family members can also take part in this activity by adding information about their child's name or their own names.

Our family trees

This task aims at bringing closer parents and students and making students aware of their cultural backgrounds and family history. It also provides opportunities for reflection upon the concept of migration and the different cultural contexts. It may also allow the teacher to identify social prejudice and to plan activities to deal with it. The task starts with the teacher explaining to the participants what a **family** or **genealogical tree** is. As a teacher, you can present family trees (i.e your own family tree or the family tree of a well-known person) through which you may have the opportunity to gently stress the fact that quite often people due to varying reasons need to move from one country to another. You can also give more information about the different cultural communities that may appear in the family tree or on family members who had a noteworthy, unusual or eventful life.

You can then trigger your students' interest in creating their family trees by raising the following questions: How far back in the history of your family can you go? What information can you get about your family's cultural background? Do you have relatives that come from other countries or belong to other cultural communities? Do you have relatives that leave abroad? Encourage the participants to show their family trees in the class. Make sure that you have established an atmosphere of trust; **participants should share only information that they feel comfortable with.**

This task can also take place **online**. You can encourage your students to work at home with the support of their parents using free online applications for creating family trees. Outcomes can be shared online in the LINC community.

Suggested online applications: a) <http://www.myheritage.com/> (available in English, Czech, French, Greece and Swedish)

b) <http://www.familyecho.com/>

Do not forget to encourage the dialogue and ask participants to share their experiences.

For more information see also: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Publications/Education_Pack_en.pdf (page 173).

A picture is worth a thousand words'



Select 3 pictures from the press, internet or magazines that convey intercultural messages and print them out. Encourage your students to work in small groups and write headlines or short explanatory captions (3-4 lines) for each picture. When everyone is ready stick the headlines or the captions under the pictures. Compare the different interpretations and raise discussion about students' way of thinking on the pictures.

This task can also take place **entirely online in the LINC community**. Parents and other interested parties can also participate. The interpretation provided can be used for further discussion in the class or online in the discussion area.

Duration: Each group is given 30 minutes to reflect on the pictures and write the headlines or captions

Note: This task may also allow the teacher to identify any cultural or social prejudice and to plan activities to early deal with it.

Cultural artifacts into the class

'A cultural artifact is an object that derives from and illuminates the history of a particular community' [1]. It can be a tale, a dance, a song, a recipe, a game, an architectural style anything that can convey something about culture. Personal items can also be cultural artifacts: an old family picture, clothing, handmade toys, technology and more.

Procedure: Raise the dialogue in the class about cultural artifacts. The dialogue can also take place online in the LINC community or during specific sessions including parents. Encourage students and parents to work together towards presenting 1-2 cultural artifacts. For example, you can ask the participants to present tales that they know in the class as well as to look for similar tales in other cultures. In addition you can ask parents and students to demonstrate popular outdoor games from present and the past as well as from different countries and cultures. In a similar way, recipes songs and dances can enter the classroom as cultural artifacts. Your support is crucial for the successful implementation of the task.

Preparation stage: 1 week

Duration: 30 minutes for presentation per participant

Tools for demonstration: video, pictures, dramatization, text

Extension: Based on this activity an **exhibition** can be organized in the school where students and parents' works can be presented in public

[1] <http://learner.org/workshops/hslit/session6/teaching/index.html>

Where in the world?

This task is about traditional customs around the world.

Encourage your students to find traditional customs or rituals and to place them on the map. For each traditional custom, students should submit a relevant picture, a headline and a reference. Parents, teachers and other interested parties can also contribute in further developing this unique map!

This joint activity can also take place online using Google earth. A list of traditional customs can be also created online and relevant discussion can be maintained in the LINC community.



Figure 1. Songkran Festival in Thailand, Reference
Picture retrieved online at [3]

Suggested ICT tools

- Connect to other schools and classrooms around the world using [Skype in the classroom](#)

Recommended references

- [All different-all equal: Education pack](#)
- [Education for intercultural understanding](#)
- [Intercultural education in the primary school](#)

LINC portal: <http://www.linc-project.eu>

LINC community: <http://community.linc-project.eu>

Do not forget to add an **announcement** about these tasks on the **Event area of the LINC Community**. Place all the important information about the activity there and provide the necessary guidelines.

You can also initiate the dialogue in the **Discussion area** as well as upload relevant material in the **Resources area**.