

Joyce Kilmer School

# Cultural Awareness Elective Curriculum

Middle School Grades 7-8

Cultural Awareness is an elective course that challenges prejudice, bias, and intolerance by fostering an appreciation for global diversity. Over two marking periods, the students explore, learn, and study the cultures of Ireland, Japan, Barbados, Mexico, China, India, and Canada.

CULTURAL AWARENESS

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## **DAY 1-** Ice Breaker/Diversity

**Objectives:** Identify and understand what diversity means.

**Activities:**

1. Tolerance IQ Quiz. Students are asked 5 questions that need to be answered True or False.  
This quiz is to see how biased they are.
  - a. Tolerance is a new idea.
  - b. It's best to have friends who are a lot like you.
  - c. Everyone has some biases, or prejudices.
  - d. Bias often comes out in the language we use and the jokes we tell.
  - e. Teens cannot do very much to change the prejudice world.
2. Discuss the answers to the questions.
3. Read and discuss "Totally Tolerant".
4. Define diversity and learn more about respect and tolerance.

**Materials:** Paper, "Totally Tolerant" handout.

## **DAY 2-** Intolerance

**Objectives:** Distinguish the difference between an intolerant and tolerant community.

**Activities:**

1. Teacher will ask students what it means to be tolerant.
2. Class will discuss what it means to be intolerant.
3. Students will make a list of different ways people may show their intolerance.
4. Class will read and discuss "Totally Intolerant-The Story of the Jena 6".
5. Discuss the issues of intolerance and what they can lead to.

**Materials:** "Totally Intolerant-The Story of the Jena 6"

## **DAY 3-** Being Biased

**Objectives:** Understand what it means to be biased.

1. Define what it means to be biased.
2. What are some ways people show they are biased?
3. Read and discuss "I'm not Biased"
4. Answer questions about TV to see how many TV shows and commercials may be biased.

**Mini Project:** Analyzing Commercials

Students will use questions to analyze commercials to see if they are biased.

- a. What is the product being advertised?

- b. What is the gender, race, and age (child, teen, or adult) of the main character in the commercial?
- c. Who is meant to buy the product?
- d. What kinds of people are excluded from the message?
- e. Can you identify any stereotypes that the advertisers are using?

**Materials:** Paper, “I’m Not Biased”, Analyze It questions.

#### **DAY 4-** Ways to stop being biased

**Objectives:** Learn different ways to put an end to being prejudice, biased, and intolerant.

1. Discuss commercials that we found were biased.
2. Read and discuss “Bias Busting” handout.
3. List ways we can stop ourselves from being biased.
4. Visit [tolerance.org](http://tolerance.org) and view how different schools are helping to put an end to being prejudice.

**Materials:** “Bias Busting The Beaver

Religious and political reasons are usually given to explain why Europeans moved to North America, but natural resources were another major reason. These included whales, large schools of cod, and towering pines. But the resource that lured explorers across the continent was actually the beaver.

After the early European explorers realized that Canada was not Asia, the main attraction for merchants was the beaver. In the late 1600s and early 1700s, the fashion of the day demanded fur top-hats, which needed beaver pelts. As these hats became more popular, the demand for the pelts grew. Explorers were dispatched deep into the North American wilderness to trap and trade for furs with local natives.

King Henry IV of France saw the fur trade as an opportunity to gain much-needed money and to create his North American empire. Both English and French fur traders were soon selling beaver pelts in Europe at 20 times their original purchase price.

The first North American coat of arms to depict a beaver was created by Sir William Alexander, who was granted title in 1621 to the area now known as Nova Scotia .

The trade in beaver pelts was so good that the Hudson's Bay Company honored the beaver by putting it on the shield of its coat of arms in 1678, and reflects the importance of this animal to the company. A coin was created at that time to equal the value of one beaver pelt.

Hudson's Bay Company was no ordinary business. It was a business that acted like a nation. It played a major role in the exploration of Canada, even helped to set its borders. In 1678, Louis de Buade de Frontenac, then Governor of New France, suggested the beaver as a suitable emblem for the Colony, and proposed it be

included in the armorial bearings of Quebec City. In 1690, the "Kebeca Liberata Medal" was struck to commemorate France's successful defense of Quebec. The reverse depicts a seated woman, representing France, with a beaver at her feet, representing Canada.

The beaver was included in the armorial bearings of the City of Montréal when it was incorporated as a city in 1833. Sir Sandford Fleming assured the beaver a position as a true National Symbol when he featured it on the first Canadian postage stamp - the "Three Penny Beaver" of 1851.

Even though it was a national symbol, the beaver was close to extinction by the mid-19th century. There were an estimated six million beavers in Canada before the start of the fur trade. During its peak, 100,000 pelts were being shipped to Europe each year, and the Canadian beaver was in danger of being wiped out. Luckily, about the mid-19th century, Europeans took a liking to silk top-hats, and the demand for beaver pelts all but disappeared, and the beaver population recovered.

On March 24, 1975, the beaver became an official emblem of Canada when an "act to provide for the recognition of the beaver as a symbol of the independence of Canada" received Royal approval. Today, thanks to conservation and silk hats, the beaver - the largest rodent in Canada - is alive and well all over this great country.

Adapted from: <<http://members.shaw.ca/kcic1/beaver.html>>

### The Maple Leaf

3Well before the coming of the first European settlers, Canada's aboriginal peoples had discovered the food properties of maple sap, which they gathered every spring. According to many historians, the maple leaf began to serve as a Canadian symbol as early as 1700.

In 1834, the St. Jean Baptiste Society made the maple leaf its emblem.

In 1836, *Le Canadien*, a newspaper published in Lower Canada, referred to it as a suitable emblem for Canada.

In 1848, the Toronto literary annual *The Maple Leaf* referred to it as the chosen emblem of Canada.

By 1860, the maple leaf was incorporated into the badge of the 100th Regiment (Royal Canadians) and was used extensively in decorations for the visit of the Prince of Wales that year.

Alexander Muir wrote *The Maple Leaf Forever* as Canada's confederation song in 1867; it was regarded as the national song for several decades. The coats of arms created the next year for Ontario and Quebec both included the maple leaf.

The maple leaf today appears on the penny. However, between 1876 and 1901, it appeared on all Canadian coins. The modern one-cent piece has two maple leaves on a common twig, a design that has gone almost unchanged since 1937.

During the First World War, the maple leaf was included in the badge of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

Since 1921, the Royal Arms of Canada have included three maple leaves as a distinctive Canadian emblem.

With the proclamation of Canada's new flag in 1965, the maple leaf has become the most-prominent Canadian symbol.

In 1939, at the time of World War II, many Canadian troops used the maple leaf as a distinctive sign, displaying it on regimental badges and Canadian army and naval equipment.

In 1957, the colour of the maple leaves on the arms of Canada was changed from green to red, one of Canada's official colours.

On February 15, 1965, the red maple leaf flag was inaugurated as the National Flag of Canada.

From: <[http://www.pch.gc.ca/PROGS/CPSC-CCSP/sc-cs/o3\\_e.cfm](http://www.pch.gc.ca/PROGS/CPSC-CCSP/sc-cs/o3_e.cfm)>

#### 4The Inuksuk

The Inuksuk is a well-known symbol in the Arctic. Each Inuksuk is unique - built from the stones at hand.

In Inuktitut, one of the languages of the Inuit, the word Inuksuk means "likeness of a person". While travelling in some parts of Nunavut and Northern Quebec, you can see piles of rock slabs and stones which are usually built to resemble the shape of a person with arms stretching out. The word Inuksuk now refers to all forms of piled stones.

Traditionally an Inuksuk would be used in many different ways. For example, Nuluq showed travelers and hunters the way home, Nalunaikutauk to warn of dangerous places, Egunasii showed where food was stored, and some were even used to help hunt caribou herds. Inuit placed the Inuksuk in such a way as to frighten the caribou and guide them toward the waiting hunters who would be hiding behind a boulder. In this way, the Inuksuk did the work of humans. Inuit and their ancestors have lived in the Arctic for over 4,000 years.

In the winter, many Inuit lived on the sea ice where much of the season was spent comfortably within a snow house. During this dark time of the year, the stars in the night sky were important. Their position was used to tell time and to predict the return of the spring sun. Some Inuksuit were built to point toward the North Star, the star which does not move.

Today, the Inuksuk is much more than just a stone marker. It has become a symbol of the North and of leadership, cooperation and the human spirit.

As traditional ways are blending with contemporary ways, Inuit and non-Inuit sometimes build Inuksuit simply to mark their presence both in the Arctic and across this country.

From <[http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ks/inukstrn\\_e.html](http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ks/inukstrn_e.html)> tolerance.org

## **UNIT ONE- INDIA**

### **DAY 5- Introduction to Indian Culture**

**Objectives:** Learn interesting facts about India.

1. KWL Chart of India- Students will be asked to list what they know about India and what they will like to learn about India.
2. Read and Discuss Introduction to India Worksheet.
3. Students will then be handed a Map of India. As a class we look at the map and discuss the different cities that make up India.
4. Teacher will then discuss the importance of a flag to a country.
5. Students will then read a paragraph on the Indian flag and discuss what it means to the Indian people.
6. Students will then color the Indian Flag.

**Materials:** "Introduction to India Worksheet", Map of India handout, Indian Flag Paragraph, Outline of Indian Flag, and markers/colored pencils.

### **DAY 6- Religions of India (3 out of 6)**

**Objectives:** Understand the different religions of India.

1. Read and Discuss information on Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism.
2. Discuss the caste system and reincarnation.
3. Analyze the different beliefs for each religion and see the similarities and differences between the 3 religions.
4. Religions of India Worksheet

**Materials:** Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism fact handout, Religions of India Worksheet

### **DAY 7-Religions of India Part 2 (3 out of 6)**

**Objectives:** To identify the religions of India

1. Review the 3 religions from the previous day (Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism)
2. Read and discuss handout on Buddhism, Christianity, and Jainism.
3. Analyze any similarities between the 6 religions.
4. Complete and discuss the Religions of India Worksheet

**Materials:** Buddhism, Christianity, and Jainism handout, Religions of India Worksheet

### **DAY 8- Ethnic Communities in India**

**Objectives:** Distinguish the different Ethnic Communities in India

1. Teacher will say to students, it takes many people to make up a country. Sometimes the people are referred to ethnic groups. There are many ethnic groups in New Jersey. Can we list them? (Class makes a list)
2. Discuss the 3 major ethnic groups in India.
  - a. Dravidian
  - b. Indo-Aryan
  - c. Chinese-Russian
3. Complete the Ethnic Communities of India Worksheet

**Materials:** Chart paper, markers, ethnic groups handout, Ethnic Communities Worksheet

### **DAY 9- Festivals and Holidays in India**

**Objectives:** Learn about the Festivals and Holidays celebrated in India

Procedure:

1. To students: Today we are going to learn about some festivals and holidays celebrated in India. Some of these are national holidays celebrated by all. People who practice certain religions celebrate some of holidays we learned about earlier. First we will look at the national holidays:  
Independence Day (August 15) - celebrates gaining independence from Britain in 1947

Republic Day (January 26) - the day India became a republic in 1950

2. Some of the religious holidays are:

Diwali: Hindu New Year celebration

Holi: Hindu festival that celebrate the coming of spring

Ramadan: Muslim period of prayer and fasting

3. In order to celebrate holidays, women decorate their hands with henna. This is called Mehendi. Display Mehendi pictures and materials used to create the designs. Name materials and their uses.
4. Explain that we will create our own Mehendi designs. Demonstrate tracing your hand and drawing some designs within the boundaries of the hand. Emphasize that you are not drawing pictures (i.e., houses, the sun, and other objects).
5. Hand out plain drawing paper and black markers. Have students trace their hands and create their own Mehendi designs.

**Materials:** Festivals Handout, paper, markers

## DAY 10- FAREWELL TO INDIA

**Objectives:** To create an information card about India

1. Review the information we learned about India.
2. Complete the “L” column on our KWL chart with what we learned about India.
3. Students will use all of the previous handouts to help them complete their information card.
4. Complete the Information Card about India.

**Materials:** previous handouts, Information Card, pencils

## UNIT 2- Chinese Culture

### DAY 11- Chinese Food

**Objectives:** To familiarize students to some of the Chinese foods and the culture of food in China.

1. Students will be asked if they have ever gone to a Chinese Food Restaurant to sit down and eat. They will be asked to explain their experience.
2. Students will then read the handouts Chinese Cuisine Overview and Chinese Food Philosophies
3. Look at Chinese food menus. Discuss what they believe are traditional Chinese food items.
4. Compare and Contrast Chinese food and American food using handout.
5. Watch a YouTube video on how to use chopsticks.
6. Partners take turns practicing using chopsticks.

**Materials:** Chinese Cuisine Overview and Chinese Food Philosophies handouts, Chinese food menus, chopsticks

### DAY 12- China’s Customs

**Objectives: Students will understand the different Chinese customs.**

1. Students are asked what important customs they believe China has.
2. Students will be put into small groups of 3 and asked to select a role card. On each role card is a custom/tradition important to the Chinese culture with key aspects of the custom/tradition.
3. They will be working with their group to create an ACT-IT-OUT, where they devise a skit to represent the information on their card. The other students must try to identify what custom they are representing and what is important to know about the Chinese culture.

**Materials:** Chinese Custom role cards, Chinese Customs worksheet

### DAY 13-Chinese Zodiac

**Objectives:** Students will understand the story of the Chinese Zodiac

1. Students will be asked to name the animals that are symbolized in the Chinese Zodiac.
2. Students will listen to the Story of the Chinese Zodiac and discuss the meaning.
3. Students will listen to another story called The Rooster’s Antlers.

**Materials:** Chinese Zodiac pictures, Story of the Chinese Zodiac book and The Rooster’s Antlers Books

## **DAY 14- Festival of the Mid-Autumn Moon**

### **Objectives: Understand the different Chinese Holidays**

1. Students will be asked to brainstorm the different Chinese Holidays that come to mind.
2. Students will then be given a Chinese restaurant placemat and 5 minutes to find their birth year and sign.
3. They will be asked what the connection between the sun and the moon is.
4. Students will look at the lunar months of the year.
5. Students will learn the different foods that are eaten during the festival.
6. Teacher will then read The Mid-Autumn Moon Poem

**Materials:** Chinese restaurant place mats, Mid-Autumn Moon Poem

## **DAY 15- Chinese New Year**

### **Objectives: Understand the importance of the Chinese New Year**

1. Class will make a KWL chart about the Chinese New Year.
2. Students will then view the Chinese New Year PowerPoint.
3. After viewing the PowerPoint, teacher will read Lion Dancer: Ernie Wan's Chinese New Year
4. Students will be given a T Chart, where they will fill in the similarities and differences between the Chinese New Year and how we celebrate the New Year in the US.

**Materials:** KWL chart, Chinese New Year PowerPoint, Lion Dancer: Ernie Wan's Chinese New Year, T-Chart

## **DAY 16- Chinese Fairytales**

### **Objectives: Students will distinguish the difference between Cinderella and Yeh-Shen A Cinderella Story from China.**

1. Students will review the traditional story of Cinderella.
2. Students will then listen quietly as Yeh-Shen is read aloud.
3. Students will then compare and contrast the two cultural versions of the same story.
4. Students will give their opinions of which version they liked better.
5. Students will then write their own version of an orphaned girl turned princess.

**Materials:** Yeh-Shen, paper, pencils

## **UNIT 3- Mexico**

### **DAY 17- Introduction to Mexico**

#### **Objectives: Students will be introduced to Mexico and learn important facts.**

1. Students will watch a Brainpop video about Mexico.
2. After viewing the video, students will discuss important information they learned from the video.
3. As class, students will take the online quiz to check their understanding of Mexico.
4. Students will then make a list of Mexican culture that is evident in the United States.

**Materials:** Brainpop video, pencils

## **DAYS 18 & 19-Mexican Holidays (Day of the Dead and Cinco de Mayo)**

**Objectives: Students will work in groups to research Mexican holidays.**

1. The class will be split into two groups.
2. Each group will be assigned a Mexican holiday.
3. The groups will then be split up into pairs to research important facts on certain aspects of the holiday.
  - Name of the holiday-Spanish name and English translation
  - When is the holiday celebrated?
  - Who celebrates this holiday?
  - Why does this group celebrate this holiday?
  - How is it celebrated? (Rituals, foods, costumes, dance and music)
  - Where is the holiday celebrated? (What part of the region?)

4. Groups will make a poster and present their research to the class. They can use music or dance to help present their findings.

**Materials: Mexico print outs, poster paper, markers, pencils**

## **DAY 20- Food for the Ancestors**

**Objectives: Understand the importance of certain foods in Mexican culture.**

1. Define ancestors.
2. Discuss special foods that are made in their families.
3. Show the video "Food for the Ancestors" on pbs.org
4. While watching the video, have students make a list of foods eaten on that day.
5. Discuss the different foods they eat.
6. Students will work with partners to create a Mexican menu based on certain food patterns. (Ex-breakfast, dinner, snack and then supper) They will use the list of food groups to create their menus.

**Materials: PBS.org, "Food for Ancestors" video, paper, markers**

## **Days 21 & 22- History through the Arts**

**Objectives: Students will analyze various themes and history that makes up mariachi music, dance and murals.**

1. Students will listen to various songs of mariachi music depicting historical events while reading the lyrics in English.
2. Students will watch a video of Mexican dancing.
3. Students will look at pictures of murals painted by Mexican Artists.
4. Students will then combine what they learned about Mexico and combine it with a form of art. (music, dance, murals)
5. Students will then create a song, dance or mural based on their information they learned.
6. They will present to the class.

**Materials: mariachi music, Mexican dance videos, murals, paper, pencils**

## UNIT 4-African-American Culture

### DAY 23- Exploring African Culture

**Objectives: Students will analyze African folklore and explain its importance in the African culture.**

1. Teacher will read the quote “I will tell you something about stories...They aren’t just entertainment...They are all we have...to fight off illness and death. You don’t have anything if you don’t have stories” –Leslie Marmon Silko
2. Teacher will explain how this quote explains the importance of oral tradition in African Culture.
3. Students will read and discuss “African Storytelling: Oral Traditions”.
4. Class will then discuss the following questions:

**What role does oral tradition play in the African culture?**

- **What role does oral tradition play in our culture?**
- **African myths were designed to teach and entertain. Ask students what fills that role in our society.**
- **Ask students to think about family stories. What stories are told in your house about your relatives?**
- **Ask students how many generations back in time their family stories reach.**

5. Teacher will then read aloud the myth from Mangola, Tanzania. They will discuss
6. Students will discuss the difference between reading aloud from the text and telling a story.

**Materials:** Quote, African Storytelling handout, African myth

### DAY 24- Everyday life in Africa

**Objectives: Students will learn about daily life in various African countries.**

1. Students will work in pairs students and choose a story from the following websites.
2. <http://pbskids.org/africa/myworld/>  
Contains photo essays by young people from Ghana, South Africa, Kenya, and Uganda.  
<http://www.pbs.org/africa/explore/>  
Contains links to profiles of sixteen ethnic groups from eight significant regions in Africa.  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/inatl/longterm/africanlives/front.htm>  
Profiles eight people from Africa as they live through everyday challenges.
3. Using the article they selected, students will create an interview.
  4. One student will take the role of the interviewer, and generate a list of questions that touch on the important information in the article.
  5. The other student will be the person who wrote, or who the article was written about. This student will answer the questions that the interviewer has written.
  6. After being given time to practice their interview, students will present their interviews to the class.

**Materials:** computers, pencils, paper

## **DAY 25- Food in Africa**

**Objectives: Students will learn about the kinds of food that are eaten in a particular region and the reason for its consumption.**

1. Class will make a list of typical food that is eaten in their household on the board.
2. Students will then answer the questions: Why do we, as Americans eat these foods? And how does our country's geography and economy impact what we eat?
3. Students will view pbs.org and look at recipes from Africa.
4. Students will then choose a region of Africa and research the foods they eat.
5. Students will then make a culinary report on that recipe.
  - a. Overview of foods served in that country
  - b. Overview of how dinner is served in that country
  - c. Description of the dishes served
  - d. How do the history, geography, and economy of the country reflect in the dishes?
6. Students will present the information.

**Materials:** computers, pencil, paper

## **DAY 26- Art in the African Culture**

**Objectives: Students will view and understand models of traditional and modern art in Africa.**

1. Teacher will review the varying regions and people of the African continent.
2. Students will view examples of African Art.
3. After students have viewed the many pieces of art, they will then choose a piece of art that was their favorite.
4. Students will write a paragraph explaining what the artist's work says about their country of origin.
5. Students will also compare and contrast traditional and modern African art.

**Materials:** computer, African art images, paper, pencils

## **DAY 27- Shona Burial Traditions**

**Objectives: Students will understand the Shona Burial Traditions.**

1. Students will read and discuss a handout on "Shona Burial Traditions"
2. Teacher will then tell the students a village member has died.
3. Students will write a story about the event, incorporating what they have learned about death and dying in the Shona culture.
4. Students will share their stories with the class.

**Materials:** Shona Burial Traditions handout, paper, pencil

## **DAY 28-African Music**

**Objectives: Students will explore African Music.**

1. Students will listen to African music.
2. Students will compare and contrast African music and music Americans listen to.

**Materials:** computer, African music

## **UNIT 5- CARRIBBEAN CULTURE**

### **DAY 29- Barbados**

**Objective: Students will understand the culture of Barbados.**

1. Students will read Barbados.org and discuss the different traditions that are found in Barbados.
2. Students will view and discuss a video of The Landship.
3. Students will read and discuss a handout on the Holetown Festival.

**Materials:** computer

### **DAY 30- Haiti**

**Objectives: To understand culture of Haiti and the language they speak**

1. Students will view a website on Haiti and explore the different customs.
2. Students will practice saying words in Creole. (language spoken in Haiti)

**Materials:** Haiti words handout

## **UNIT 6- IRISH CULTURE**

### **DAY 31- Irish Superstitions**

**Objectives: To understand the different superstitions Irish people believe in.**

1. Teacher will ask the students what a superstition is.
2. Class will then make a list of different superstitions we hear in America and whether or not we believe in them. (Ex- breaking a mirror will bring 7 years of bad luck)
3. Discuss how Irish people believe in superstitions.
4. Teacher will read different superstitions that Irish people believe in.
5. Class will see if any Irish superstitions are the same that we hear in America.

**Materials:** Superstition read aloud

### **DAY 32- Irish Music**

**Objectives: To learn about the different instruments that is played in Irish music.**

1. Students are given a worksheet with 15 different instruments on it. They have to match the name of the instrument to the picture.
2. Teacher will discuss the answers with the students.
3. Teacher will then play a sound clip for each instrument.
4. Students will have to guess the name of the instrument that is being played.
5. Teacher will review the answers with the class.
6. Class will listen to Irish songs.

**Materials:** instruments worksheet, sound clips, pencils

### **DAY 33- Ireland Game**

**Objectives:** To understand the geography, culture and interesting fact about Ireland.

1. Students will play an interactive game about Ireland.
2. Teacher will play the slides about Ireland through a presentation.
3. Students will answer the questions that go along with the pictures.
4. Class will review and discuss the answers.

**Materials:** [www.quia.com](http://www.quia.com)

### **DAY 34-St. Patrick's Day**

**Objectives:** To learn and understand the importance of St. Patrick's Day

1. Students will read and discuss an article on St. Patrick's Day
2. Teacher will explain the importance of a shamrock to the Irish people.
3. Students will color the Irish Flag.

**Materials:** St. Patrick's Day article, shamrock cutout and Irish flag

## **UNIT 7- JAPANESE CULTURE**

### **DAY 35- Japanese Traditions**

**Objectives:** To understand the different traditions of the Japanese Culture.

1. Teacher will ask the students. Have you ever attended a wedding? What are some of the traditions that take place at a wedding? Teacher will make a list on the board.
2. Teacher will show the students, pictures of a wedding in Japan.
3. Students will describe what the participants are wearing. Do they see a blend of cultures?
4. Students will then look at pictures of a Japanese bride and groom. Are there any similarities?
5. Class will then be divided into 4-6 groups.

6. Each group will be given a picture and a description of a marriage ceremony. Each group will answer questions to go along with each picture.
  - a. What is worn in terms of clothing and jewelry?
  - b. How do the clothing, jewelry and body art, etc. relate to the culture?
  - c. What are the similarities and differences to an "American" wedding?
  - d. What ceremonies take place before the wedding? What ceremonies take place during and after the wedding?
  - e. Students will present their findings and list on the board.
  - f. Similarities and differences will be made between the different marriages.

**Materials:** wedding pictures, pencils and paper

Homework: Students are given a reading on a Japanese Tea Ceremony

### **DAY 36 & 37- Tea Ceremony**

**Objectives: To understand why a tea ceremony is important in certain cultures.**

1. Show students pictures of Chinese, Korean, or Japanese gardens and tea ceremonies.
2. Have students imagine that they have been invited to a wedding and will be participating in a Tea Ceremony.
3. What are some of the things they will need to do in order to prepare themselves? What are some of the benefits they will acquire?
4. READ "The Tea Master and the Bandit" and ask the questions that follow.

Materials: garden tea ceremony pictures, "The Tea Master and the Bandit"

### DAY 38- Haiku

Objectives: Students will write Haikus.

1. Students will understand the importance of Haikus in the Japanese culture.
2. Students will write and read Haikus to the class.

Materials: paper, pencils

### DAY 39-Origami

**Objectives: Learn about the history of Origami**

1. Discuss the meaning of the word origami.
2. Read and discuss the handouts "The History of Origami" and "Art of Japan: Origami"
3. Students will view examples of origami.
4. Students will be handed a sheet of paper.
5. Students will make a paper crane (traditional origami art)
6. Students will watch a How To video as well as be given step by step directions.
7. Students will be able to make different origami projects.

**Materials:** paper, handouts, computer

## UNIT 8-CANADIAN CULTURE

### DAY 40-Canadian Symbols

**Objectives:** Understand the symbol of Canada

1. Teacher will show familiar symbols that they may know.
2. Teacher will then show the class different flags ending with the Canadian flag.
3. Show a picture of the maple leaf and explain the meaning behind it.
4. Students will be put into groups of 3 or 4.
5. Each group will be given a specific symbol (ex-maple leaf, beaver etc.)
6. Students will be handed information cards and a worksheet. As they are reading about the symbol they need to complete the worksheet.
7. Review the worksheet.
8. Students will be given a blank piece of paper. They will then design a symbol that represents themselves (without writing) They need to explain the symbols and colors they chose.

**Materials:** pictures of symbols, information cards, worksheets, pencils,papers,markers

### DAY 41 & 42-Review of all Cultures

**Objectives:** Students will review what they have learned about each culture

1. Students will play a questionnaire game.
2. Students will be broken up into 2 teams.
3. Teacher will ask each team questions referencing each culture.
4. Whichever team scores the most points wins.

# **CULTURAL AWARENESS LESSONS**

## **Resources**

## **TOLERANCE IQ QUIZ**

### **True or False**

- 1. Tolerance is a new idea.**
- 2. It's best to have friends who are a lot like you.**
- 3. Everyone has some biases, or prejudices.**
- 4. Bias often comes out in the language we use and the jokes we tell.**
- 5. Teens cannot do very much to change the prejudice in the world.**

## **ISSUES OF TOLERANCE**

**The town of Jena and, indeed, the country as a whole face a lot of tough questions about race and tolerance in the aftermath of this incident.**

**WHY did African American students feel like they were not allowed to sit in a certain place on campus?**

**WHY was a student's question about the tree treated as a joke?**

**WHY weren't the nooses seen as a threat against the school's African American students? Didn't the school administrators know the history of lynching?**

**WHY did some students resort to violence?**

**WHY** are African American males so likely to face maximum charges and maximum penalties if they enter the justice system?

## **ANALYZE IT!**

The next time you are watching TV, use these questions to analyze some commercials.

**WHAT** is the product being advertised?

**WHAT** is the gender, race, and age (child, teen, or adult) of the main character in the commercial?

**WHO** is meant to buy this product?

**WHAT** kinds of people are excluded from the message?

**CAN** you identify any stereotypes that that advertisers are using?

When you start thinking critically about the advertisements you see, you will begin to identify the hidden biases in them.

## **GET A VOICE PROJECT**

**The GET A VOICE PROJECT challenges teens to use their voices in positive ways. The project, which is now 15 schools in Long Island, New York, asks students to take an oath to think about their words and to stand up for others when they hear disrespectful language. The motto is: “Be a leader. Make a difference. Get a voice.”**

**GET A VOICE students learn that words are powerful. They can really change the way people think and feel-in good ways or bad ways. Students practice strategies for dealing with negative language. When someone says something hurtful or disrespectful, they respond:**

**“That’s really rude. Stop saying that!”**

**“If you’re just kidding, JUST STOP!”**

**“Did you really mean that? Say what you mean.”**

**Meanwhile, students learn to have a positive impact on their friends by noticing-and saying out loud-what they like about each other. Here are some sentences starters to get the positive vibes flowing:**

**“I like it when you...”**

**“Thanks for noticing...”**

**“I’m really glad...”**

**“I appreciate it when...”**

**“Thanks for...”**

**“That made me feel so...”**

## **India: An Introduction**

India is a land of many diverse people and landscapes. The Indus Valley civilization, one of the oldest in the world goes back at least 5/000 years. People known as Aryans from the land northwest of India invaded about 1/500 B.C./creating classical Indian culture. The Aryna invasion led to many other people invading the land including the Arabs, Turks and finally the European trading nations beginning in the 1500's A.D. By the 1900's the British assumed control of the land and they ruled the peoples until the non-violent resistance to their control by Mohandas Gandhi and Jawaharal Nehru led to independence in 1947. After independence, the subcontinent was divided into the secular state of India and the primarily Muslim state of Pakistan. In 1971, after a third war, the part of the territory known as East Pakistan became the separate state of Bangladesh. Today India is a country of more than one billion people and ranks second behind China in total population. It is country that faces an ongoing dispute with Pakistan over the region known as Kashmir, serious environmental concerns, extensive poverty, and ethnic and religious conflicts. Many countries around the world keep investing in the future of India despite these many problems hoping that India may be able to overcome many of their problems.

## **India Facts at a Glance**

Population: 1,049/7000,118(2003,est)

Area: 3,287,590 sq.km

Highest Point: Kanchenjunga(8/598m/26,185ft.)

Lowest Point: Indian Ocean(0m/0ft)

Main Ethnic Groups: Indo-Aryan(72), Dravidian(25), Mongoloid and other(3)

Religions: Hindu (81.3), Muslim (12), Christian (2.3)/Sikh (1.9)/others

including Parsi, Buddhist, Jain (2.5)

Official Name: Republic of India

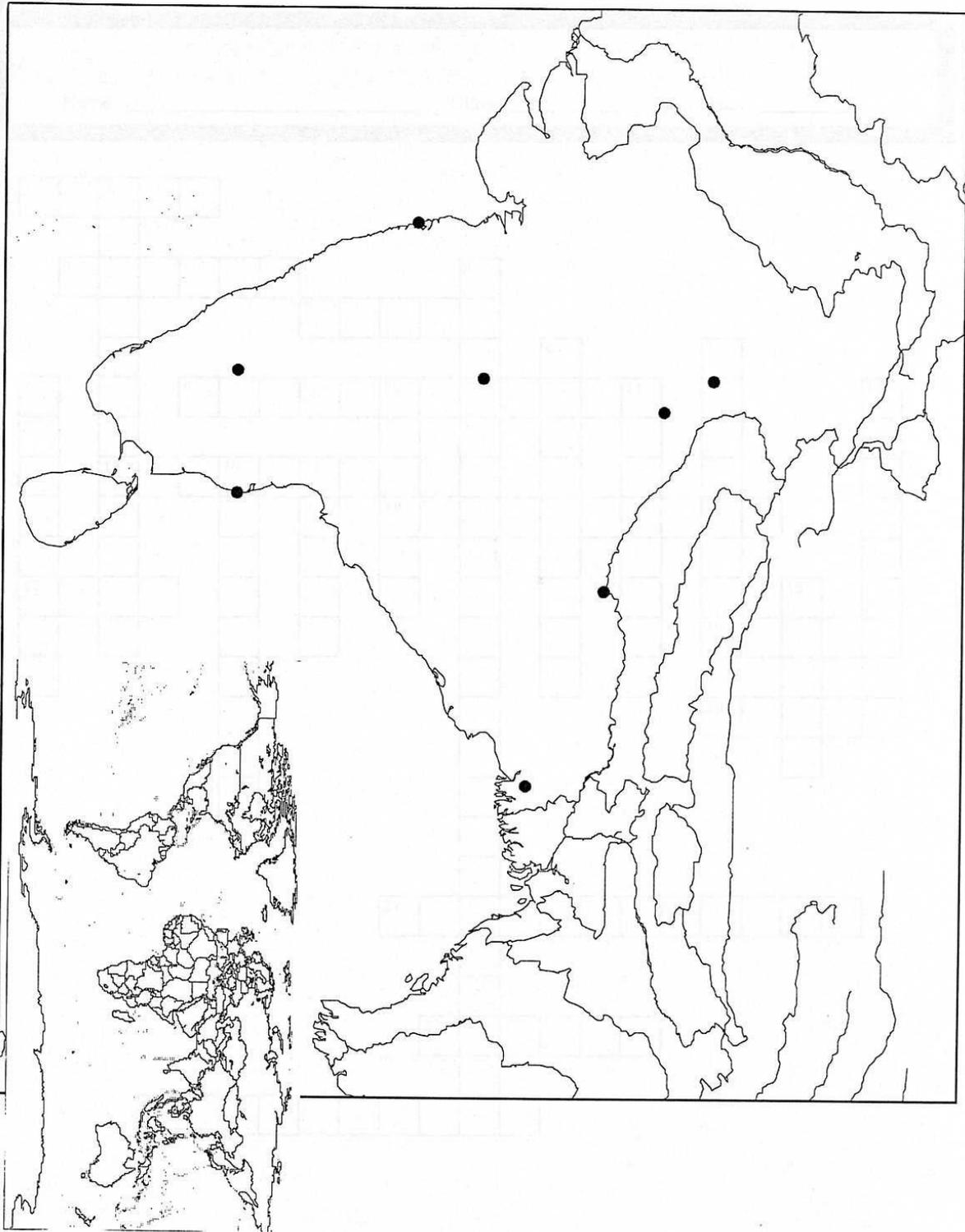
National Holiday: Republic Day , January 26th,

gained Independence from Great Britain in 1950

Suffrage: 18 years old

Capital: New Delhi

India's Flag

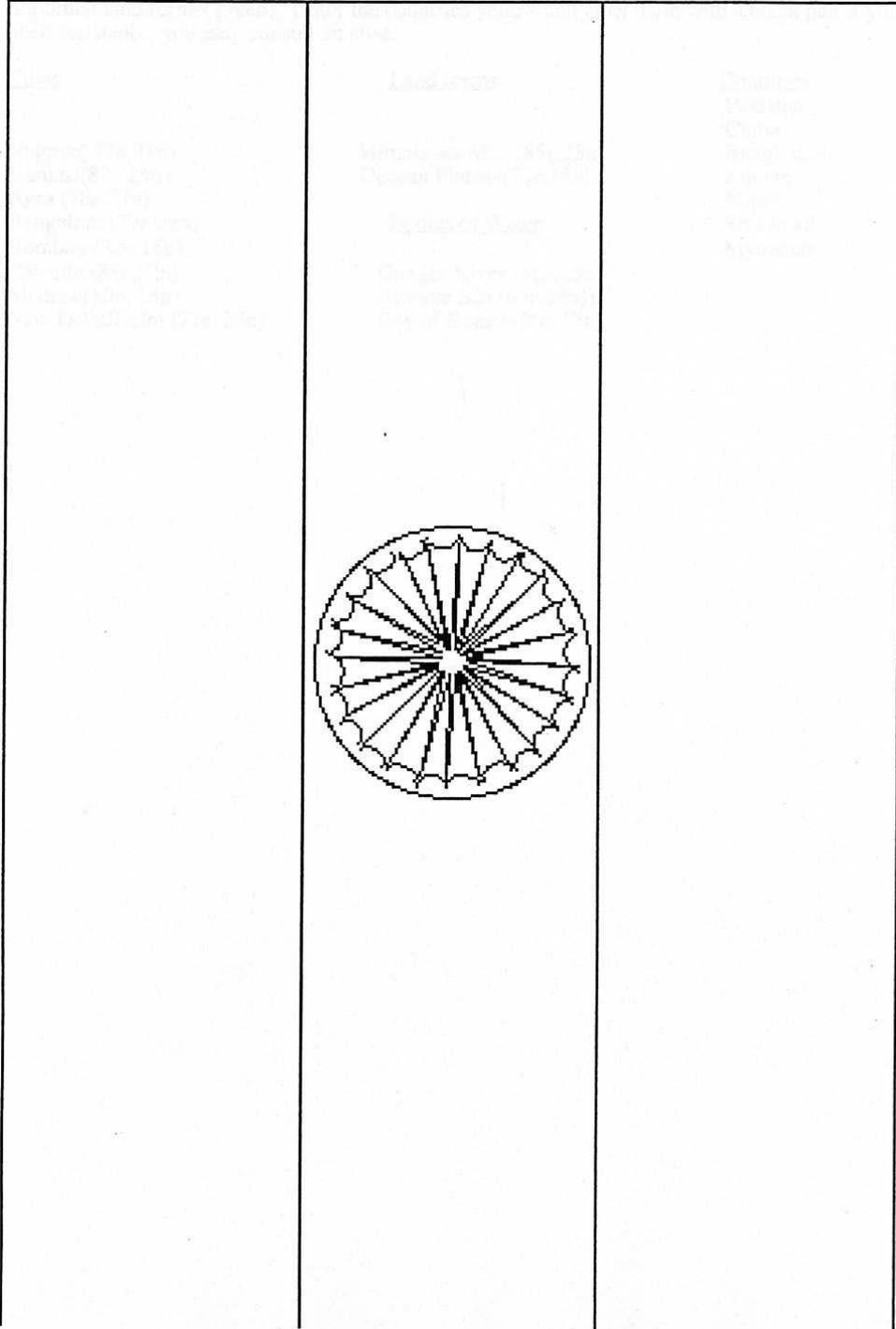


India's flag was adopted on July 22, 1947 after India became independent from Great Britain. The flag was based upon the design by the Indian National Congress. The Indian flag has three horizontal bars (saffron, white and green) with a blue Dharma Chakra (wheel of law) in the center. The wheel has 24 spokes, representing the 24 hours in the day (at the end of each spoke is a dark blue half moon). The saffron, the color which is sacred in

Hinduism, represents courage and sacrifice. The white stands for peace, unity, and truth. The green stands for faith (Islam) and fertility and the blue symbolizes the sky and the ocean.

# FLAG

Color the flag of India according to the description on the reverse side of the page. You may also look at a real Indian flag from an almanac to help you.



1. There are six religions practiced in India. Today we are going to learn about three:  
Hinduism

- Hinduism started in India thousands of years ago
- Hindus make up about 80% of the Indian population
- Hindus believe in an external spiritual force called Brahman
- Hindus believe in **reincarnation**: a cycle of birth, death, and rebirth
- Hindus believe in a **caste system**

Islam

- The Muslim religion is called Islam
- The Muslims are followers of the Prophet Mohammed
- All Muslims are required to carry out five duties:
  - They must believe that Allah is the only God
  - They must pray five times a day
  - They must give to the poor
  - They must carry out the month-long fast of Ramadan every year
  - They must make a pilgrimage to Mecca

Sikhism

- Worship only one God
- Believe that by following their religion faithfully they can avoid the cycle of reincarnation
- Believe that all people should live and worship together
- Sikh men wear five outward signs of their faith that start with the letter K:
  - Kesh: long hair tied up in a bun
  - Kachha: short pants
  - Kangha: carries a comb
  - Kirpan: carries a small sword

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Religions of India (worksheet #1)

Use the glossary or dictionary to define the following words:

reincarnation \_\_\_\_\_

caste system \_\_\_\_\_

Which religion has these two beliefs \_\_\_\_\_

List the five things that Muslims must do:

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Riddles: Islam, Jainism, or Sikhism

Men of this religion show five outward signs of their faith. They practice:

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We follow the Prophet Mohammed. We practice:

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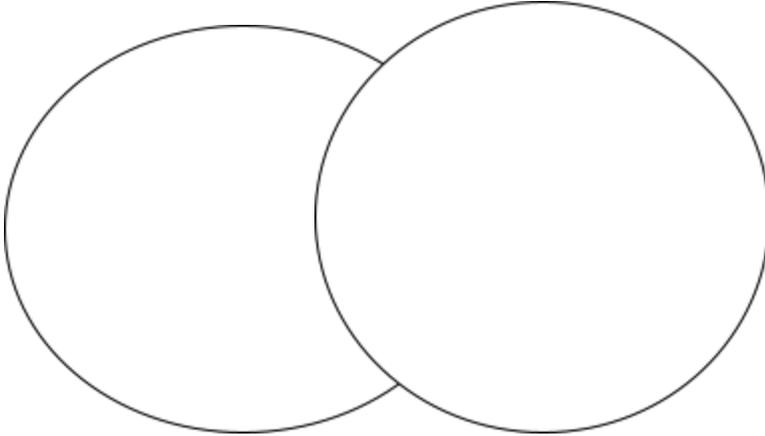
We believe in a spiritual force called Brahman. We practice:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Religions of India (worksheet #2)

Compare and contrast, and complete the Venn diagram. Choose two of the following religions: Christianity, Jainism, and Buddhism. Label your diagram.



Write True or False at the end of each statement.

If you practice Jainism, you eat meat \_\_\_\_\_

If you practice Christianity, you probably live in the southern part of Indian \_\_\_\_\_

Buddhism was founded by a prince \_\_\_\_\_

Christians believe in more than one God \_\_\_\_\_

Buddhist practice meditation \_\_\_\_\_

Jains believe in violence \_\_\_\_\_

Review worksheet #1 and #2. Choose the religious group you would like to be a member of. Please explain why you want to be a part of that religious group. What is unique about your religious practices?

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Ethnic Groups in India

Use the glossary or dictionary to define the following words:

ethnic group \_\_\_\_\_

ancestry \_\_\_\_\_

Circle the largest ethnic group in India?

Indo-Aryan

Dravidian

Chinese-Russian

Use the following words to complete the sentence correctly: Dravidian, Chinese-Russian, and Indo-Aryan

The \_\_\_\_\_ ethnic group has mixed ancestry of native Indian and white European.

The \_\_\_\_\_ is the smallest ethnic group in India.

The \_\_\_\_\_ ethnic group speaks the most languages.

Choose the ethnic group you would like to be a member of. Please explain why you want to be a part of that ethnic group. What is special about your ethnic group?

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List any questions you have about the ethnic groups or what else you would like to know about them.

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Independence Day (August 15)- celebrates gaining independence from Britain in 1947

Republic Day (January 26)- the day India became a republic in 1950

1. Some of the religious holidays are:

Diwali: Hindu New Year celebration

Holi: Hindu festival that celebrate the coming of spring

Ramadan: Muslim period of prayer and fasting

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Game Card Worksheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Religion: \_\_\_\_\_

Festivals: \_\_\_\_\_

Average Weather: \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnic Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Give a brief description of your life in India:

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# CHINESE CUISINE OVERVIEW

In the west, people are used to takeout Chinese food such as fried rice, lo mein or sweet and sour chicken. This is a small sample of Chinese food and is usually quite westernized.

There is an enormous variety of Chinese food that differs greatly from region to region. Food is a central part of the Chinese culture. Chinese cuisine is one of the greatest methods of cooking. A delightful and delicious meal creates happiness, harmony, mental and physical wellbeing.

Famine and hardship played a large role in the development of the cuisine. China has been an agriculture civilization for thousands of years and has suffered from poor harvests. During lean years, people would explore everything eatable to stay alive. Many strange and incredible ingredients such as wood ears, lily buds etc. were added to Chinese recipes. The scarcity of food also taught people about waste. Various fruit and vegetable peels and even shark fins turned out to be delicacies in China.

The lack of cooking fuel from thousands of years settlement and clear cutting prompted the development of stir frying. The need to save fuel became so influential that most Chinese dishes require a lengthy preparation but only a few minutes cooking time. With the current energy crisis the Chinese cooking method offers a practical way to conserve fuel while it delights the taste buds.

## **Beijing Food**

Beijing food is the most famous food in China, known for Beijing duck. Much of this fame comes from the fact that Imperial cuisines were based out of there. Beijing duck is a time consuming dish to prepare. Thin slices of oven roasted duck with a crispy brown skin are cut off and put onto a plate where it is wrapped with a fresh tortilla with plum sauce, cucumber, and green onion. The northern part of China has a cold climate unsuitable to grow rice, so wheat is the primary grain consumed.

## **Cantonese Food**

Cantonese food is typically steamed, boiled or stir fried. It is very healthy food since it used minimal oil. The main ingredients of this type of Chinese food are seafood, pork, chicken and vegetables, but could include almost anything. You need white rice to accompany the meal to make it complete.

## **Sichuan Food (Szechuan)**

What is typical of this southwestern province of China is the spicy taste of its food. Many Sichuan dishes are prepared using chili pepper oil, which gives a special taste to the food. The most famous Sichuan dish is the Kung Pao chicken, fried with peanuts and chili pepper.

## **Noodle Knowledge**

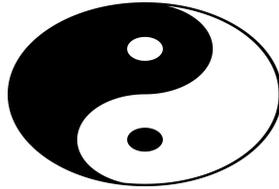
There are egg noodles, wheat noodles, and rice flour noodles. Wheat noodles are often found in Shanghai noodle dishes. These are round wheat noodles that are cooked often then stir fried in a savory sauce with chicken, pork, and shrimp. Rice flour noodles are often found in Singapore-style noodle dishes and are cooked with curry powder, shrimp, barbecued pork and ham. Egg noodles are often found in Cantonese restaurants as noodle soup (like wonton) or stir-fried in a dish. There are two types of noodle dishes. The first is lo mein which is a plate of cooked (boiled) noodles with some barbecue pork or duck and some vegetables on the side of the plate, and accompanied with a bowl of broth. The second is Chow mein in which the noodles are pan fried and then mixed with stir- fried vegetables, meat and seafood.

## **Chinese Tea**

Tea drinking is an integral part of Chinese life and the Chinese food experience. Tea is believed to be good for you. The Chinese were the first to discover the tea leaf and have been drinking tea ever since in many varieties.

## CHINESE FOOD PHILOSOPHIES

Ancient Chinese philosophies has an important influence on Chinese food culture.



This is the traditional symbol for the forces of **yin and yang**, sometimes described as two fish swimming head to tail. The left half is yin and the right half is yang. Taken literally, yin and yang mean the *dark side and sunny side of a hill*. People commonly think of yin and yang as opposing forces. However, it is really more appropriate to view them as complimentary. The Chinese believe problems arise when there is an imbalance between them.

How does the concept yin and yang relate to the food?

This philosophy can be in any Chinese dish, from stir-fried beef with broccoli to sweet and sour pork. There is always a balance in color, flavors, and textures.

Certain foods have yin properties, while others have yang properties-Cooling or warm, fat or non-fat, high-calories or low calorie, and etc.

Almost no food is purely yin or yang-it's more that one characteristic tends to dominate. Cooking methods also have more of a yin or yang properties, as listed below.

## **Cooking Methods:**

### **Yin Properties**

Boiling

Poaching

Steaming

### **Yang Properties**

Deep-frying

Roasting

Stir-frying

## **Types of Food**

### **Yin Foods**

Cabbage

Carrots

Cucumber

Tofu

Water

### **Yang Foods**

Beef

Chicken

Eggs

Rice

Wine

Chinese food emphasizes on a diet that is a balance between yin and yang. You'll find most Chinese dishes are made of a mixture of ingredients and each meal is made up of a combination of dishes.

## MID AUTUMN MOON POEM

Sunset cloud gather far excess clear  
cold  
Milky Way silent turn jade plate  
This life this night not long good  
Next year bright moon where see

The sunset clouds are gathered far away, it's clear and cold,  
The Milky Way is silent, I turn to the jade plate.  
The goodness of this life and of this night will not last for  
long,  
Next year where will I watch the bright moon?

**"...[I]t is only the story that can continue beyond the war and the warrior.  
It is the story that outlives the sound of war-drums and the exploits of brave  
fighters.**

**It is the story . . . that saves our progeny from blundering like blind beggars  
into the spikes of the cactus fence.**

**The story is our escort; without it, we are blind.  
Does the blind man own his escort? No, neither do we the story;  
rather it is the story that owns us and directs us."**

--Chinua Achebe, *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987)

**"I will tell you something about stories....They aren't just entertainment...  
They are all we have...to fight off illness and death.  
You don't have anything if you don't have the stories."**

--Leslie Marmon Silko, epigraph to *Ceremony* (1977)



**Traditionally, Africans have revered good stories and storytellers, as have most past and present peoples around the world who are rooted in oral cultures and traditions. Ancient writing traditions do exist on the African continent, but most Africans today, as in the past, are primarily oral peoples, and their art forms are oral rather than literary. In contrast to written "literature," African "orature" (to use Kenyan novelist and critic Ngugi wa Thiong'o's term) is orally composed and transmitted, and often created to be verbally and communally performed as an integral part of dance and music. The Oral Arts of Africa are rich and varied, developing with the beginnings of African cultures, and they remain living traditions that continue to evolve and flourish today.**

**Every human culture in the world seems to create stories (narratives) as a way of making sense of the world. Some familiar features of the folktale, a common kind of story around the world, for example, can be discerned in Tortoise and the Birds, an Igbo folktale recounted in ch. 11 (pp. 68-70) of Chinua Achebe's acclaimed 1958 novel *Things Fall Apart*:**

- "'Once upon a time,' she began, all the birds were invited to a feast in the sky,'" as Achebe renders the traditional Igbo folktale opening into English.
- The story explains a cause, origin, or reason for something--gives an "etiological explanation...at the end" (Obiechina, "Narrative Proverbs in the African Novel")--in this case, for why the tortoise shell is "not smooth."
- The story dramatizes a moral: greedy Tortoise, "full of cunning," manages to trick the birds out of all the food at the feast, but for his selfishness he is punished. Tortoise falls from the sky and "His shell broke into pieces."
- In folktale worlds, such "naughty," but not "irredeemably" wicked characters, as Achebe describes Tortoise (qtd. in Baker and Draper 22), are often restored and/or reintegrated back into society: in this case, "a great medicine-man in the neighbourhood" patches Tortoise's shell together again.

**Despite these universal features, however, the particular narrative meanings, themes, genres, and styles of storytelling around the world differ from culture to culture.** Thus, while many features of traditional African storytelling may seem familiar and make sense to U.S. students, many others may seem very foreign and strange. To more fully understand and appreciate African storytelling traditions, one needs to study them in the context of the cultures which produce the stories.

**African proverbs and stories draw upon the collective wisdom of oral peoples, express their "structures of meaning, feeling, thought, and expression," and thus serve important social and ethical purposes:** "The story itself is a primary form of the oral tradition, primary as a mode of conveying culture, experience, and values and as a means of transmitting knowledge, wisdom, feelings, and attitudes in oral societies"; a central position is thus "given to the story in the oral tradition...by African writers in the shaping of their literary world and works..." (Obiechina, "Narrative Proverbs in the African Novel").

**One cannot study African literatures without studying the particular cultures and oratures on which African writers draw...**for their themes and values, for their narrative structures and plots, for their rhythms and styles, for their images and metaphors, for their artistic and ethical principles. As Solomon Iyasere puts it in "Oral Tradition in the Criticism of African Literature":

**"...the modern African writer is to his indigenous oral tradition  
as a snail is to its shell. Even in a foreign habitat,  
a snail never leaves its shell behind" (107).**

**African novelists like Chinua Achebe often introduce oral stories— such as narrative proverbs, song-tales, myths, folktales, fairy tales, animal fables, anecdotes, and ballads—into literature.** One of many examples from *Things Fall Apart* is Ikemefuna's song, a condensed version of an Igbo folktale, according to Emmanuel Obiechina:

*"Eze elina, elina!  
Sala  
Eze ilikwa ya  
Ikwaba akwa oligholi  
Ebe Danda nechi eze  
Ebe Uzuzu nete egwu  
Sala"*

[*Things Fall Apart* Ch. 7, p. 42]

Here is a translation into English offered by Obiechina:

[the singer calls:]  
King, do not eat [it], do not eat!

*Sala* [the audience responds]

King, if you eat it  
You will weep for the abomination

Where Danda [white ant] installs king  
Where Uzuzu [Dust] dances to the drums

*Sala* [the audience responds]

Even with the English translation—which Achebe does not give in *Things Fall Apart*—it is difficult for U.S. readers to make sense of this song-proverb without learning more about the cultural context of Igbo beliefs and the folktale on which Ikemefuna's song is based. The full tale is the story of a perverse, headstrong king who breaks a sacred taboo by eating roast yam (perhaps the first fruits of the harvest) which is reserved for and offered in sacrifice to the gods. "The song is an attempt by the people to warn the king not to commit an action that would compromise himself...his high office," and the continued prosperity of his people (Obiechina, "Narrative Proverbs in the African Novel"). So a line-by-line interpretation might go like this:

1. The king is warned not to eat [not to break the taboo—"the abomination"]
2. If he does, he will regret it ["You will weep for the abomination"]
3. The price he will pay is death, a dishonorable death without proper burial rites...
4. "Where Danda [White Ant] installs a king" and
5. "Where Uzuzu [Dust] dances to the drums." In death, only white ants and dust will claim this headstrong king, as Obiechina explains. For breaking such a serious sacred taboo, after his human death the king will be denied reunion with his ancestors and his clan, and will be forever alienated from the community—believed to encompass all the past, present, and future members of his people.

In the context of Achebe's novel, this untranslated song-proverb might suggest to a reader who knows Igbo language (like translator Emmanuel Obiechina) that the protagonist Okonkwo is being indirectly warned against breaking another serious taboo. Like the king in Ikemefuna's song, Okonkwo is on the verge of committing an "abomination"—the killing of a child who has lived with him for three years and called him father. This is the "kind of action," his friend Obierika points out, "for which the goddess wipes out whole families" (*Things Fall Apart*, Ch. 8, p. 46).

**"Nnabe and Chineke" ("The Tortoise and the Lord") is another traditional Igbo folktale like "Tortoise and the Birds," but it presents a different explanation of why the tortoise has a cracked shell. Why the variations?** For starters, even traditional oral "texts" are not static or unchanging—there is no reverence for a single, "definitive" text committed to writing and shelved in a library, a Western concept foreign to traditional African oral performance arts. Oratures, like the cultures that produce them, constantly evolve and change across time, culture, place and regional style, performer, and audience for a variety of reasons. For example, if a story loses its relevance because of changing values and social conditions, it is discarded or modified, and new stories are born. As scholars and transcribers attest, even the same gifted African oral storyteller does not simply memorize and repeat the same story the same way each time. Griots will alternate between set text and improvisation. Within open-ended narrative and poetic formulas, the bard creates, embellishes, adapts to the occasion, and plays to the needs and interests of particular audiences.

Another reason for folktale variation might lie in differences of language/dialect and culture. Language is a primary means of learning and transmitting one's culture, and it is used to help define and distinguish different ethnic groups and cultures. Consider the fact that more

than 450 languages are spoken in modern Nigeria, one region in which the Igbo peoples are concentrated. As Chinua Achebe has explained, spoken "Igbo exists in numerous dialects, differing from village to village" (qtd. in Gallagher). There is no standardized formal written or oral Igbo language that all Igbo accept and use in Western Africa, though Christian missionaries tried to create and impose one [called "Union Igbo"] in order to translate the Bible and speed up religious conversion in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (cited in Gallagher). This situation is not so different for many other oral cultures and peoples of Africa. It is perhaps even more understandable that oral traditions carried by African descendents to other parts of the world would change and vary. The translated performance of "Nnabe and Chineke" that we will recite in class was recorded on Wadmalaw Island, one of the Sea Islands off the coast of Georgia and the Carolinas in the U.S. where many Igbo slaves were forceably and brutally transported during the Atlantic Slave Trade of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (Jackson-Jones).

Tortoise and the Birds and "Nnabe and Chineke" are examples of Igbo folktales that explain how animals got their physical characteristics—a genre common in many cultures around the world. (Can you think of any similar folktales told in your culture?) Animal stories have many variations and abound in the oral traditions of Africa and the African Diaspora. In animal stories of West African origins, smaller, physically weak, and seemingly vulnerable creatures—like Tortoise in these stories, or Spider in the Anancy stories—are often endowed with special intelligence and human characteristics, and are answerable only to God (called Chineke in Igbo cosmology). Ironically, large, powerful animals like the lion, elephant, and leopard are often duped in such animal stories, often through what are considered their centers of thought: the stomach and the heart (See Badejo and Jackson-Jones).

**Both stories feature Tortoise, a trickster figure in African folklore** (called *Nnabe* in Igbo cultures, *Ijapa* in Yoruban cultures, *Fudugazi* in Zulu cultures, for example). Tortoise is physically slow but quick witted, lives a long time and has a long memory, and gains wisdom by studying fellow creatures in society. But like trickster figures in the folklore of many world cultures, Tortoise sometimes misuses his knowledge. Tortoise can be cunning and malicious, and may dupe or trick others (like Tortoise tricks the birds in *Things Fall Apart*, Ch. 11) for his own greed or selfish gain. (Of course even Tortoise cannot get the better of God, as seen in "Nnabe and Chineke.")

**Chinua Achebe explains that the trickster Tortoise is a favorite in Igbo children's stories**, for he "is a character that children can relate to. He is a rogue, but he is a nice kind of rogue. I think that children don't trust him, but they like to hear that he is around, because they know that he is going to do something unexpected and generally he will be punished too. This is the moral side of it. He's not allowed to get away with murder. He does something and he is punished, but he still lives to appear again....Tortoise is wicked, but he is not irredeemably so. Tortoise is not evil. He's just naughty" (qtd. in Baker and Draper 22). For a complete picture of evil, says Achebe, the Igbo might instead point to "Something That Doesn't Even Wear a Necklace"; a thing so completely alone that it "doesn't even have a necklace to keep it company" [qtd. in Baker and Draper 23]).

According to Deidre Badejo's interpretation, the African tricksters like the Yoruba *Ijapa* perceive, remember, and study others' weaknesses in order to use this knowledge for the trickster's own self-interest or amusement, or to escape social responsibilities. Tricksters exist on the peripheries of the social order ("liminal" figures at the boundaries of society). Their individualistic non-conformist behavior creates havoc and disharmony in society, and can threaten the survival of the community. (Contrast this attitude to the positive ways we, in the U.S., value individualism.) Secular tricksters like Tortoise often

project the kinds of evil forces and bad behaviors against which the human community must contend to survive and which must be kept in check. This goal is rehearsed and achieved in communal performances of African proverbs and folktales, wherein the trickster's bad anti-social behaviors are usually punished, and the evil forces unleashed are controlled or defeated. Thus, for example, recounting Tortoise stories in African communities can function to reaffirm the priority and wisdom of the community, reassure its members that balance and harmony can and should be restored, and that the community will survive and prevail. (See also Ugorji).

**Chinua Achebe himself explains that a story "does many things. It entertains, it informs, it instructs."** "If you look at these stories carefully, you will find they support and reinforce the basic tenets of the culture. The storytellers worked out what is right and what is wrong, what is courageous and what is cowardly, and they translate this into stories" (qtd. in Baker and Draper 22). **We can learn much about a culture by learning its stories.**

**Oral African storytelling is essentially a communal participatory experience.** Everyone in most traditional African societies participate in formal and informal storytelling as interactive oral performance—such participation is an essential part of traditional African communal life, and basic training in a particular culture's oral arts and skills is an essential part of children's traditional indigenous education on their way to initiation into full humanness.

To get some sense of African storytelling as a participatory communal experience in Hum 211, we try an interactive "call-and-response" performance of "Nnabe and Chineke," as transcribed from an actual oral story telling performance in Igbo language given by Samuel Onunwa, Bartholomew Amaugo, Kevin Chiedusie, and Francis Mbah; and then translated into English by Victor C. Ihejeto (rpt. in Jackson-Jones). Again, even with an English translation, this story will probably seem stranger and harder to interpret to non-Igbo audiences than Tortoise and the Birds without a mediator like Chinua Achebe or Emmanuel Obiechina to explain it; but we can use what we have learned about Igbo culture from the background readings to make the attempt).

**Call and response forms, found seemingly everywhere in Africa, entail a caller or soloist who "raises the song," as the Kpelle say, and the community chorus whorespond, or "agree underneath the song"** (Mutere, "African Oral Aesthetic"). In the case of the Igbo stories, the storyteller "calls" out the story in lines; the audience or chorus "responds" at regular intervals to the storyteller's "calls" with a "sala" (the chorus' response). The Igbo "sala" used in "Nnabe and Chineke" is "amanye," roughly equivalent to American English expressions of agreement like "amen" or "right on!" (Ihejeto, qtd. in Jackson-Jones).

**Traditional African societies have developed high aesthetic and ethical standards for participating in and judging accomplished oral storytelling performances**—and audience members often feel free to interrupt less talented or respected secular performers to suggest improvements or voice criticisms. . (Bear in mind that aesthetic standards of what constitutes "good art" in a particular society are learned and culturally-determined. Thus, Western learned concepts of what constitutes a good story or great music can differ significantly from the aesthetic ideals of the African cultures.)

**In many of these cultures, storytelling arts are professionalized: the most accomplished storytellers are initiates (griots, or bards),** who have mastered many

complex verbal, musical, and memory skills after years of specialized training. This training often includes a strong spiritual and ethical dimension required to control the special forces believed to be released by the spoken/sung word in oral performances. These occult powers and primal energies of creation and destruction are called *nyama* by Mande peoples of Western Africa, for example, and their *jeli*, or griots, are a subgroup of the artisan professions that the Mande designate *nyamakalaw*, or "*nyama*-handlers"(see, for example, discussions in Johnson et al; and Hale). This sense of special powers of the spoken word--as expressed in the following Bambara praise poem--has largely been lost in literate-based societies of the West:

### **Praise of the Word**

**The word is total:  
it cuts, excoriates  
forms, modulates  
perturbs, maddens  
cures or directly kills  
amplifies or reduces  
According to intention  
It excites or calms souls.**

--Praise song of a bard of the Bambara Komo society  
(qtd. in Louis-Vincent Thomas and Rene Luneau,  
*Les Religions d'Afrique noire, textes et traditions sacres*; as cited in Gleason xxxvii)

Following a traditional griot performance of a spiritually-charged oral epic like Sundjata, a Malian audience might ritualistically chant, "*Ka nyama bo!*" (which could be translated something like, "May the powers of *nyama* safely disperse!").

I hope some of the recorded professional performances that we listen to in class will demonstrate that African storytelling and orature are highly skilled performance arts. These living traditions continue to survive and adapt to the challenges of modernization facing Africa today, and have fused, in uniquely African ways, with newer creative forms and influences to enrich the global human experience and its creative expressions.

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### **Shona Religion and Beliefs**

[BACK](#)

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Even though the majority of Shona people believe in God, virtually all of them still believe their ancestral spirits are their supernatural protectors. It is this belief that

brings has perpetuated an intriguing religion and culture, supported by a set of procedures, protocols and customs. Until recently these customs, like mbira music, have all been passed down the generations orally.

### **Death and Dying in Shona Culture**

When a grown person dies in the Shona culture, it is believed that his spirit wanders about. It is a homeless spirit. Only until the surviving relatives of the deceased "welcome back" his or her spirit does it become a legitimate ancestral or family spirit.

At the burial of a grown person, one who has left a wife or husband and children, special arrangements are made to enable the living to welcome back the spirit of the deceased. The deceased is believed to have two (2) shadows - a black shadow representing his flesh and a white shadow representing his soul or spirit. During the burial, a long stick, the height of the grave is rested against the body of the deceased. Its top end will be visible on the edge of the grave after burial. After the soil around the grave has settled, the stick is removed leaving a thin hole down into the grave. The stick is normally removed after several months. It is believed that the spirit will come out through the hole and manifest itself as a worm or caterpillar which will turn into the deceased's spirit and wander about. As soon as the stick is removed, one of the surviving relatives periodically visits the grave to see if they can find the caterpillar or gonye. When the spirit caterpillar comes out, it will soon turn into the deceased's spirit. As soon as the caterpillar is found, word is passed among family members that the spirit has come out and is therefore wandering about without a home.

### **Kurova Guva or Bira**

The family will wait approximately a year after the deceased's death to hold a special ceremony to accept and welcome his or her wandering spirit (or Mudzimu) back to the family. This ceremony is called kurova guva. In other parts of Zimbabwe is called bira. By the time this ceremony occurs, a descendant of the deceased will have been chosen as the Svikiro or spirit medium. In some families the oldest son is normally the spirit medium. However in other situations the spirit may choose its own spirit medium. The spirit chooses its own medium by causing an incurable illness to the medium-to-be which can only be diagnosed and treated by an African doctor or n'anga. The n'anga simply tells the family to complete a ceremony that designates the sick as the spirit medium of the deceased, and he or she will no longer be ill.

Before the bira ceremony is conducted, beer is brewed from rapoko or kiffir corn. The family gathers and a beast is slaughtered in honor of the incoming spirit. On the day of the ceremony, very early in the morning, the family prepares **Sadza neNyama**, the Shona staple food made of ground corn and meat. They travel to the grave with a pot of beer, a wooden plate of snuff (ground tobacco) and sadza nenyama. At the grave site, they will pour the beer over the grave and place the other items on it. An elder person, maybe the deceased's son will kneel and say a prayer of welcome to the deceased name, "We are calling you back home to be with us. Please guide and protect your family. If there is anything you need please let us know. Be kind to us". These words mark the incorporation of the wandering spirit back into the family circle.

The family leaves the grave site and heads back to their home where festivities continue into the middle of the night. It is during this time that the mbira is played to please and welcome the spirit home. It is during this ceremony that the deceased's spirit will actually possess its spirit medium.

On the next morning, the relatives take several small pots of beer to the cattle kraal. They pour the beer on a bull's head. If the bull shakes its head, then it is believed the spirits are happy otherwise the next person pours their pot of beer until

the bull shakes its head. As soon as the bull shakes its head, the family will celebrate and women in attendance will ululate (Kupururudza) to signal the grand finale of the ceremony. The family now has a new ancestral spirit.

### **Ndebele Customs & Traditions** (see author's note)



Ndebele Art Panels

The Masanabo sisters at one of their Ndebele art panels at the High Commission  
(© Visual News Associates, Islamabad)

Ndebele people treat death and life after death in an amazingly similar manner to the Shona people. Like their sister tribe, the Shonas, Ndebeles believe death is passage from one form of being to another. A grown person who dies will have a role as an ancestral spirit, idlozi, after that spirit has been accepted back by the family to assume family responsibilities. Wolfgang Laade, in the [Music of Man Archive: The Ndebele People](#), page 40 describes death, dying and ancestral spirits among the Ndebele people as follows:

"The nature and role of the ancestral spirits (amadlozi) in the Nguni and Ndebele societies was explained. Here we shall be concerned with an important ritual, the umbiyiso. Death alone does not confer ancestor hood. This ritual is necessary to 'bring back home' the spirit, re-establishing the dead man into family life. Bozongwana describes everything connected with death and burial, and describes also the umbiyiso, or 'Calling home the Dead Father'. This ritual is held a year after the burial, that is after the decomposition of the dead man's body. He is 'called back home' that he should 'look after his children'. The purpose of this rite is to facilitate the dead man's transition into the realm of the amadlozi. All relatives and friends should be called to this ceremony. Beer is offered at the grave of the dead man to induce him to come. Then the people walk back to the house singing 'Woz ekhaya...', 'Come come..'. In the afternoon an ox is killed and its meat cooked. The family sits together through the night. They eat and drink beer and snuff in a communion service in which each member can say what he or she wants from the ancestral. The rest of the food and drink is left in front of the hut for the spirit to consume. In the morning they sing and dance 'ubaba makeze ekhaya', 'Father should come home', and the ox meat is eaten and beer served. This communion service implies the re-admission of the dead man into the home in another form and capacity. Like on all ritual occasions, from birth and puberty to marriage and death, the sharing of sacrificial meat secures the establishment of the communion between the living and the dead. If the spirits come and eat the food and drink the beer offered to them they will in return look after the well-being of the family. The 'living dead' must be given meat and beer at least once a year in order to maintain and renew the fellowship which is so vital to both. To facilitate communion, the idlozi spirit is given an animal as its host, preferably a black ox, the 'ox of the ancestor', inkomo

yamadlozi, the care of which is the special task of the main heir. Important matters concerning the family should be announced to this animal. Sometimes beer is brewed and a small amount of it poured over it as an offering. If such an animal has not been set aside, earlier, it is installed on the day of umbuyiso"

## Barbados Holetown Festival

The Holetown Festival commemorates the anniversary of the first settlement of Barbados at Holetown in February 1627. The week-long festival begins in mid-February with the opening celebrations taking place at the Holetown Monument.



The festival highlights local arts and crafts as well as Barbadian culture and history, and events typically include:



- historical lectures
- fashion show
- beauty contest
- street parade with tuk band
- tattoo show
- exhibitions
- concerts
- theatrical presentations
- sporting events
- antique car parade

Stroll through the tents setup in Holetown at the festival village, where talented local artists showcase and sell their creations, including pottery, fine art, soaps and candles, straw works, metal sculptures, clothing and bags!

And of course sample delicious Bajan food (fish cakes, macaroni pie, barbecue chicken, pudding & souse), washed down with a cold Banks Beer or a shot of Barbados rum!

One of the most popular events at the Holetown Festival is the Police Tattoo, an outdoor night show featuring the men and women of the Royal Barbados Police Force. The police force band, mounted troop, canine unit and motorcycle unit are usually on display.

## God Between us and All Harm - Irish Superstitions

by Bridget Haggerty

In all my years, I've never met a more superstitious person than my Dublin-born mother, Lena O'Flaherty. It was bad luck to put shoes on a table or chair, place a bed facing the door, bring lilac into the house, cut your fingernails on Sunday, give a knife as a gift, or wear green - except for a bit of Shamrock or ribbon on St. Patrick's Day.



My mother grew up in a land that's renowned for its belief in superstitions, and while Ireland has become a very modern country, it's safe to say that many of her inhabitants, as well those of Irish descent living elsewhere, still throw spilled salt over their right shoulder or worry about seven years bad luck if they break a mirror. No doubt, you can add a dozen more to your own personal list, but we're going to relate some odd ones you may never have heard of before.

Did you know, for example, that you can tame a young wild horse by whispering the Creed into his left ear on Wednesday and into his right ear on Friday? The procedure was repeated until the animal was calmed.

If a bird flew into the house, it was a portent of death. A purse made from a weasel would never be empty. It was unlucky to knit at night until you were certain the sheep were asleep. It was fortunate to hear a cuckoo call - but only if it was on your right side. If a child was born before noon, he or she would not be able to see spirits or the good people - but if born at night, the child would have the gift. By the way, it's considered very risky to refer to the good people as fairies, wee folk or little people.

Thinking of building an extension onto your home? It's supposed to be unlucky to extend from the rear - especially if it faces west. This belief probably originated on the Aran Isles where they were reluctant to build in that direction - no doubt, because of the weather. As the story goes, one family defied the custom with tragic results - two of their menfolk were lost at sea and a third went mad.

Livestock fairs are still widespread in Ireland and it's common practise to give a "luck penny" which means returning a portion of the sale price to the seller when a deal is made. The deal is then settled by spitting on the palm and slapping the hand of the customer. Interestingly, a man's status in the area is often determined by the size of the "luck penny" he is in the habit of giving.

From the country folk come a wealth of beliefs related to physical ailments. For example, a stocking filled with hot potatoes and applied to the throat cured tonsillitis. Shaving on Sunday encouraged toothache - but carrying a haddock's jawbone helped prevent it. Boiled daisies were said to relieve sore eyes, milk in which kelp had been boiled could cure boils, and unsalted butter rubbed on a stitch in the side could make it go away. As for warts, my mother firmly believed they could be cured by rubbing them with a fresh-cut potato and burying the potato in the garden. As I recall, I don't remember my brothers or I suffering from this particular affliction, so I can't attest to the efficacy of this cure.

Still more colorful superstitions surround the sea and the weather. Changing the name of a boat was said to change its luck and coins dropped overboard would cause a storm. Fishermen considered it unlucky to keep the first salmon of the season. Inishowen anglers were reluctant to paint their boats green; taking short-cuts from established routes along the shore was unlucky, and water in the house - not just in coastal areas - had many superstitions attached to it. For example, water in which feet were washed was never thrown out at night. And, when water was discarded, it was never thrown without a warning to the good people.

As for the weather, because they depended so much on a fruitful harvest, rural folk paid close attention to the portents. The old, familiar red sky at night rhyme was common in the Irish country side - but so were other signs including falling soot, frogs changing color, curlews calling, midges biting, and swallows flying low. All of these omens foretold a change for good or ill. Seafolk had their own superstitions, too. Big shoals of herring foretold a plentiful harvest; three boats were lashed together when leaving a harbor because it was bad luck to be the third boat out; along the northwest coast, some of the catch was always left on board; sharks should not be hunted on Sunday; no family called Cregan or Kerry would ever be drowned; greedy pollock were a sign of bad weather; a coal thrown after a fisherman as he board his boat

brought good luck and he always boarded from the right; and, in Wicklow, the fishermen always put to sea in a sunwise direction. There's some logic to many of these beliefs - especially those regarding the movement of marine life or birds. Porpoises swimming near shore, lobster and crabs on rocks, or seagulls and other sea-birds flying in-land were all portents of stormy weather.

To live through an ordinary day in old Ireland without being mindful of so many superstitions would have been impossible. Add to this burden, the special beliefs surrounding important dates in the calendar.

Pipes were never lit from the hearth fire on May Day, nor were the embers taken outdoors. Also, if you drank nettle soup on May 1, it was believed that you'd be free of rheumatism for a year. It was unlucky to go on a trip on both St. Martins Eve and the Feast of St. Martin - November 10 and 11. On Epiphany, January 6, the tail of a herring was rubbed across the eyes of children to protect them from disease for the rest of the year. On St. Brigid's Day, February 1, a straw from the Christmas nativity scene was put up into the rafters to protect against evil spirits (or as a cure for ringworm!) Whitsuntide was associated with drowning and there were those who would not put to sea - unless the boat was steered by a new bride.

On Good Friday, while little work was done in observance of the Crucifixion, it was a lucky day to sow potatoes. And, on all Souls Day - November 2 - people avoided taking short cuts for fear the good people would lead them astray. Other days in the year had special beliefs attached to them - Saturday, in particular. In the old days, it was considered unlucky to move house, get married, begin a big project, or take a journey overnight.

"Pinch, punch, first day of the month, white rabbit!" This was a verse my mother taught us and I have no idea what it means. But my brothers and I certainly had fun putting the words into action at the beginning of every month. My mother also carried a rabbit's foot for good luck. However, in the old days, it wouldn't have been a rabbit at all. Hares are featured in numerous folktales and my very devout Catholic mother would have been dismayed to learn that the hare - and subsequently, the rabbit - is an ancient pagan symbol. When Christianity came to Ireland, the symbol of the hare was used deliberately to transfer old pagan religion into a Christian context - especially at Easter time. As harbingers of spring, hares were held in high esteem. Over time, the Easter hare became the Easter rabbit or bunny - far less threatening to Christian Ireland than the ancient pagan symbol.

Besides hares and rabbits, other animals, as well as birds, provided rich fodder for superstitious country folk. If a cat strayed into a house, every effort was made to make it stay. But, if a family moved, the cat was left behind. It was also believed that you should not look at a cat who had just wiped its face with its paws - whoever the cat looked at would be the first in the household to die. Crows flying directly over a home were also an omen of death and the old Irish saying "God between us and all harm" was always said on hearing the crow of a rooster - no doubt, a throwback to the betrayal of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane.

There are literally hundreds of other fascinating beliefs - so many in fact, that we have enough material for several articles. So, we'll conclude this one with a few more and then save the rest for future reading.

Also, Russ wants to do a spoof on the subject - perhaps this public announcement will help encourage him!

Besides the rabbit's foot my mother carried with her from Ireland, she also had a lucky horseshoe - a real one - positioned above the door into our flat. It was placed with the points up "so the luck wouldn't run out." Even today, Irish brides make sure there's a lucky horseshoe included in their ensemble - perhaps a small fabric one sewn into the hem of their gown or a fabric one carried on their wrist (as our daughter did). Growing up in my mother's house in 1950s London, England, we were spared many of the old ways that would have been common in the rural Ireland of Lena O'Flaherty's childhood. If you've often wondered why Irish children were often seen as barefoot and scruffy, did you know that it was to protect them from the good people? Beautiful things, including children, were a much sought after treasure, so Irish mothers in the old days made certain their offspring looked as unattractive as possible. My mother was also adamant about never saying how cute a baby was. That was definitely tempting the fates - as was admiring a piece of jewelry. That would "bring down the evil eye."

Just as in old Ireland, not a day goes by without being reminded of my mother's beliefs. But, while I can now walk under a ladder and scorn the very logical origins of perhaps being showered with paint, I still won't allow an open umbrella in the house. Or lilac blooms inside. Or crossed knives on the countertop -

better uncross them immediately or there will be an argument!

Whether you believe in any of these old superstitions or not, there's no doubt that there's total truth in the old saying that if you're Irish, you're lucky enough.

**Resources:**

**Content:** [Superstitions of the Irish Country People](#)

**Image:** [Irish Tinker.](#)

# Have you ever heard Irish music?

1. Write the name of the instrument :

accordion - bodhran - choir - fiddle - flute - harp - guitar - solo voice - tin whistle  
- uilleann pipe

1. Write the name of the instrument(s) you hear :

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>

<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>

2. Which of these instruments do you prefer ?

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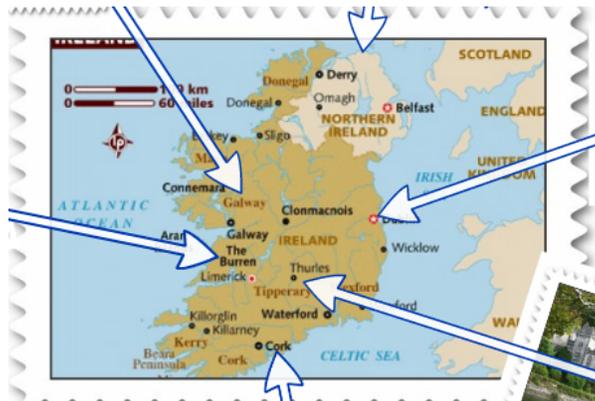
4. Which of these instruments do you prefer ?

## Facts about Ireland

Watch the slide show and answer the following questions

[http://www.quia.com/hm/725687.html?AP\\_rand=938603343](http://www.quia.com/hm/725687.html?AP_rand=938603343)

1. What is the capital city of Northern Ireland?  
.....
2. What is the capital city of Ireland? How many inhabitants live there?  
.....
3. Where is Blarney Castle? (city, geographical situation)  
.....
4. In which century was it built?.....
5. Where can you see The Book of Kells? What is it?.....  
.....
6. Find the English words for the phonetic transcription:  
In cemeteries, you can see /keltɪk kɹɒsəz/.....
7. Write the names of the famous Irish places at the end of the arrows:



8. Watch the following video about “Water everywhere”. Circle the elements that appear in the video:  
Sea rivers spring (source) rain snow lakes shores (côte, littoral)  
stream (ruisseau) ice
9. Mention 3 elements of Irish culture: (music).....; (dance)  
.....; (drink).....
10. Mention 2 symbols: ...../.....

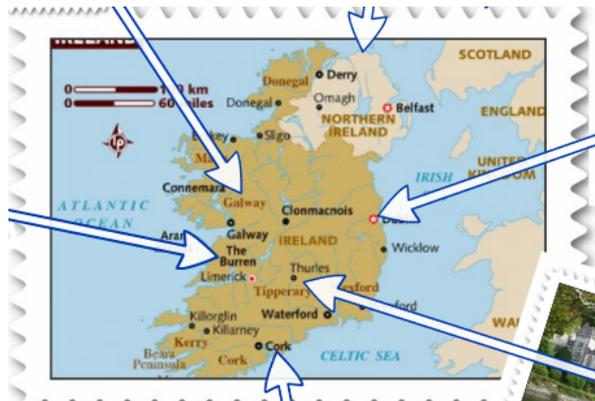
11. According to the legend, the /'leprəkɔ:n/ ....., hide their gold in a pot of gold, at the end of the rainbow.

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## "I, Patrick, the sinner..."

by Bridget Haggerty

The high veneration in which the Irish hold St. Patrick is evidenced by the common salutation, "May God, Mary, and Patrick bless you." His name occurs widely in prayers and blessings throughout Ireland and it is said that he promises prosperity to those who seek his intercession on his feast day, which marks the end of winter.

Crops could not be safely planted, nor animals put out in the fields, before the fear of winter frost had passed. The appearance in one's garden of snowdrops, daffodils and crocus were fickle forecasters of better weather, as often as not popping up too soon, only to be covered by a late snow, or shriveled up by a sudden blast of frost. Indeed, such was the importance of getting the planting date correct, that the Celts had markers, to remind them when it was safe to plant, and later on, the early Christian Irish adopted these days as Saint's days, for St Brigid (Feb 1) and St Patrick (March 17). Thus the proverb went: "Every second day is good, from my day forward" says Brigid. "Every day is good from my day forward" says Patrick.



All well and good. But who was this man who legend says drove the snakes out of Ireland and used a shamrock to convert the heathens?

The Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters state that by the year 438 Christianity had made such progress, the laws were changed to agree with the Gospel. In just 6 years, a 60 year old man was able to so change the country that even the laws were amended. He had no printing press, no finances, few helpers and Ireland had no Roman roads on which to travel.

Recorded history and mystical legend are cavalierly intertwined when it comes to St. Patrick. Some historians say he was born in Banwen, Wales. Others say it was Kilpatrick, near Dumbarton, in Scotland. As with many of the facts about his life, no-one is exactly sure where.

Even the date of his birth is disputed, although many historians place it about 385 A.D. Most of what is known comes from the saint's Confessions, a slim volume which he wrote before he died in the late 400s.

In Patrick's youth, the Roman Empire was in decline; without Roman protection, Britain was vulnerable to attack by marauding Irish pirates whose homeland had never been conquered or absorbed by Rome.

After one such raid, Patrick became one of the thousands captured and returned to Ireland as slaves; this was a devastating shock for one who had enjoyed a life of relative comfort as the son of a well-compensated church official.

Not only was he torn from home and family, but he also was taken to a land that, while not very distant, had to have seemed incredibly alien and frightening.

Roman expansion into Britain had brought law and order, advanced culture and infrastructure, and eventually, Christianity. Ireland, on the other hand, remained a harsh, difficult place where warring kings ruled violent small kingdoms and pagan priests performed human sacrifice.

Patrick was purchased by a Druid. Members of this mystical Celtic religion practiced magic, oversaw rituals and served as judges in the top echelons of ancient Irish society.

Once indifferent to the Christian teachings of his family, Patrick's attitude changed radically during his six-year captivity. As a shepherd in his master's lonely, misty fields, he writes of having only two constant

companions - hunger and nakedness. In this isolated and degrading situation, Patrick wrote of his spiritual transformation: "The love of God - grew in me more and more, - in a single day, I have said as many as a hundred prayers, and in the night, nearly the same - I prayed in the woods and on the mountain, even before dawn. I felt no hurt from the snow or ice or rain."

Patrick dreamed of escape. He tells us that he stole away one night and hiked 200 miles to the nearest port, where he found a ship that was soon to embark. But, because he was a penniless slave, the captain refused him passage. Patrick then prayed for several hours in a nearby wood; he returned to the ship, and miraculously the captain relented and gave him a place on the ship, possibly as a sailor.

History does not record precisely where the ship landed, but it was most likely along the coast of France, then known as Gaul. Details about how Patrick finally reached his family in Britain are also very sketchy. But, he did make it home and was haunted by his experiences in Ireland.

Convinced that God had summoned him to return to the pagan land of his captivity, Patrick trained for the priesthood. Some historians believe that he did so in France under the tutelage of St. Germain. Others say he trained in Rome. Regardless, he was assigned as a missionary to Ireland.

A few others had preceded him but with little success. Patrick's immediate predecessor, in fact, was said to have been martyred. Territorial kings and intransigent Druids proved powerful barriers to Christianity, then synonymous with Roman domination as the church and its popes filled the void left by departing emperors.

Patrick faced very real danger but had an advantage. Having lived among the Irish for six years, he was familiar with their ways. That and a persuasive personality were vital to his eventual success.

Though Ireland is smaller than the state of Maine, it had many kings, each ruling tiny kingdoms called tuatha. Above them were kings of the five provinces, in turn subject to the high king seated at Tara, then the capital. Patrick knew he had to appeal to the fiercely independent minor monarchs in order to spread his message safely. Greasing their royal palms helped.

"I spent money for your sake in order that they might let me enter," he addresses his superiors, recounting his mission in Confessions. "I made presents to the kings, not to mention the price I paid to their sons who escorted me."

Underscoring the need for such royal protection, Patrick frequently referred to the dangers he faced in Ireland. Sometimes, the patronage of a king wasn't enough to keep him safe.

At one point, he tells of being attacked, bound, robbed and threatened with death, all while under "protection." But because the kings constantly battled with each other, it was important to court all of them.

Having friends in high places helped Patrick's mission in other ways. Although he made few converts among kings who offered him safe passage, their fortunes being too closely related to maintaining the old order, his message often attracted other members of the royal families with less to lose, including younger brothers with little hope of inheritance from their fathers.

As Ludwig Bieler, the mid-century church historian, noted, when the highest echelon of society adopted the new faith, the people often followed.

But royal favor doesn't begin to explain Patrick's transforming effect on the people. History cannot always interpret such intangibles. There is little contemporary documentation of Patrick's mission by chariot throughout Ireland, converting thousands and establishing churches.

Later hagiographers -- people who write about saints -- give vivid yet ultimately unreliable details about Patrick's conversions and wondrous acts. His most famous "miracle," driving the snakes out of Ireland, certainly is legend - geologists say the island broke off the European continent before snakes could evolve there. The story most likely is intended to be emblematic of how he purged paganism.

But Patrick's dynamism was so great that myths abounded. "He must have been a terrifically charismatic figure," says Robert Mahony, an associate professor of English at Catholic University and former director of the Center for Irish Studies there. "And such people inspire legends."

One legend that is not widely known is Les Fleurs de St-Patrice which says that Patrick was sent to preach the Gospel in the area of Bréhémont-sur-Loire. He went fishing one day and had a tremendous catch. The local fishermen were upset and forced him to flee. He reached a shelter on the north bank where he slept under a blackthorn bush. When he awoke the bush was covered with flowers. It was Christmas day and from that time on, the bush flowered every Christmas until it was destroyed in World War I. The phenomenon was seen and verified by various observers, including official organizations. Today, St. Patrick is the patron of the fishermen on the Loire and, according to a modern French scholar, the patron of almost every other occupation in the area.

Thomas Cahill, author of *How the Irish Saved Civilization*, believes that part of Patrick's appeal lay in his message. In a 1996 CNN interview, Cahill noted that "the Christianity that Patrick planted in Ireland was really of a unique kind, in the sense that he left behind all of those dark, sad meditations on human sinfulness that were favorites of the fathers of the Church, and instead he concentrated on the goodness of creation.

"The Irish were already very mystical. They believed that the world was a magical place, and he built on that rather than on this human sinfulness theme, and, as a result, early Irish Christianity was extremely celebratory of the world, of the earth, of matter, of human experience, of the human body. It gets off the ground very quickly in this kind of dance of happiness and joy which is very unlike the sound of earlier Christianity."

There is no reliable account of St. Patrick's work in Ireland. Legends include how he described the mystery of the Trinity to Laoghaire, high king of Ireland, by referring to the shamrock, and that he singlehandedly--an impossible task--converted Ireland. Nevertheless, Saint Patrick established the Church throughout Ireland on lasting foundations: he travelled throughout the country preaching, teaching, building churches, opening schools and monasteries, converting chiefs and bards, and everywhere supporting his preaching with miracles.

His writings show what solid doctrine he must have taught his listeners. His "Confessio" (his autobiography, perhaps written as an apology against his detractors), the "[Lorica](#)" (or "[Breastplate](#)"), and the "Letter to the Soldiers of Coroticus," protesting British slave trading and the slaughter of a group of Irish Christians by Coroticus's raiding Christian Welshmen, are the first surely identified literature of the British or Celtic Church.

What stands out in his writings is Patrick's sense of being called by God to the work he had undertaken, and his determination and modesty in carrying it out: "I, Patrick, a sinner, am the most ignorant and of least account among the faithful, despised by many. . . . I owe it to God's grace that so many people should through me be born again to him."

St. Patrick died at Saul (Sabhall) on March 17 493. Saint Tassach administered the last rites and his remains were wrapped in a shroud woven by Saint Brigid. The bishops, clergy and the faithful from all over Ireland crowded around his remains to pay due honor to the Father of their Faith. Some of the ancient Lives record that for several days the light of heaven shone around his bier. His remains were interred at the chieftan's fort two miles from Saul. Centuries later, the cathedral of Down was built where St. Patrick was buried.

There is another old legend that promises that on the last day, though Christ will judge all the other nations, it will be St. Patrick sitting in judgment on the Irish. In an interview, when Thomas Cahill was asked whether that spelled good news or bad news for the Irish, Cahill didn't hesitate. "That's great news for the Irish!" **Resources:** The Irish Heritage Newsletter and several web sites including [The Catholic Messenger](#)

# THE JAPANESE TEA CEREMONY

The Japanese tea ceremony, or *chanoyu* (hot water for tea in Japanese), came about when Japan adopted both Chinese practices of drinking powdered green tea and Zen Buddhist beliefs. In the 1500s, Sen No Rikkyu incorporated the ideas of simplicity and that each meeting should be special and unique into the tea ceremonies. The traditional Japanese tea ceremony became more than just drinking tea; it is a spiritual experience that embodies harmony, respect, purity and tranquility.

The host of the tea ceremony may prepare extensively for the event, practicing hand movements and all steps so that the ceremony is perfect, yet simple in every detail. The ceremony can be performed in the home, a special tea room, in a tea house, even outdoors. The décor for the ceremony is simple and rustic and includes hanging scrolls (*kakemono* in Japanese) that are appropriate for the season or feature well known sayings.

Before a Japanese tea ceremony begins, guests may stay in a waiting room (*machiai* in Japanese) until the host is ready for them. The guests will walk across *roji*, Japanese for dewy ground, symbolically ridding themselves of the dust of the world in preparation for the ceremony. Then, the guests will wash their hands and mouths from water in a stone basin (*tsukubai* in Japanese) as a last purifying step.

The host receives the guests through a small door or gate which is short, forcing the guests to bow upon entry. The host greets each guest with a silent bow. For an informal gathering, or *chakai*, guests are served *Wagashi* (sweets) and then the tea. Alternatively, a full three course meal is first served for a formal Japanese tea ceremony, known as *chaji*. This type of ceremony, complete with sake and intermission before the tea is served, can take up to four hours.

The Japanese tea ceremony steps begin with cleaning and preparation of the tea serving utensils. The host cleans the tea bowl, tea scoop, and tea whisk with concentrated and graceful movements. Next, the host prepares the tea by adding three scoops of *matcha green tea powder* per guest to the tea bowl. Hot water is ladled into the bowl and whisked into a thin paste. More water is added as needed to create a soup-like tea.

The host presents the prepared tea bowl to one of the guests and they exchange bows. This first guest admires the bowl then rotates it before taking a drink. The guest wipes the rim of the tea bowl then offers it to the next guest who repeats these movements. After all the guests have taken a drink of tea, the bowl is rinsed clean by the host. The host will also rinse and clean the tea whisk and scoop again. The guests now have an opportunity to inspect the utensils used during the ceremony. They carefully and respectfully examine the utensils, perhaps even using a cloth when delicately handling them. The host gathers the utensils and the guests exit with a bow completing the ceremony.

It can take years of practice to master the art of Japanese tea ceremonies. In Japan, many choose to take classes or join clubs at dedicated tea schools, colleges, or universities. Students learn the common hosting duties such as how to properly enter and exit the tea room, when to bow, making the tea correctly, proper placement and cleaning of the utensils and equipment, as well as appropriate guest behavior like handling and drinking from the tea bowl. With more and more hands-on practice, students can earn certificates for progressively mastering each of the *temae*, or the various procedures used during a traditional Japanese tea ceremony. Even after acquiring numerous certificates, students can spend their lifetime in pursuit of perfecting *chanoyu*.

Obviously, Japanese tea ceremonies are very different than our modern *ways to serve tea* and holding formal British style *tea parties*. The symbolism and traditions of the Japanese tea ceremony leaves much to be appreciated.

## Origami 折り紙

Origami (from *oru* meaning "folding", and *kami* meaning "paper") is the ancient Japanese art of paper folding, in which the aim is to create a representation of an object using folds and crease patterns preferably without the use of gluing or cutting the paper, and using only one piece of paper.

There is much speculation as to the origin of origami. It is safe to say that most of its development occurred in Japan; however, there have also been less developed (but independent) paperfolding traditions in China, Korea, Germany, and Spain, among other places.

Paper money from various countries are also popular to create origami with, called "Moneygami".

### Sadako Sasaki and the Peace Crane

The Second World War was a war in which many terrible things happened. One such event took place on the 6 August, 1945, at 8.15am, Japanese Standard Time. An atomic bomb was dropped on the city of Hiroshima. The atomic bomb exploded 564 metres (1,850 feet) above the ground. Nearly all the buildings within 2.4 km (1.5 miles) were flattened. About 80,000 people died instantly from the blast. Another 70,000 died within a year, from injuries and from the fallout of nuclear radiation in the area surrounding the bomb's detonation.



One young Japanese girl named Sadako Sasaki was born in 1943. She was only two years old when the bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. Although she was too young to remember the war, every year she took part in the Peace Celebrations in Hiroshima because her grandmother died during the war. As Sadako grew up, she was strong, courageous and athletic. In 1955, she was preparing for a big race when she became dizzy and fell down. She was diagnosed with leukaemia, a cancer caused by radiation fallout, the 'atom bomb disease'. She was only 11 years old.

The illness changed Sadako's life. She was unhappy because she could not go to school, go out running or do the activities she had so enjoyed. However, she knew that some people recover from leukaemia so she never gave up hope.

One day her best friend Chizuko came to visit her and she told Sadako a story to cheer her up. The story was about a bird, a crane which was supposed to live for 1,000 years.

The crane's reputation for long life and prosperity became a symbol of good health, and origami cranes became a popular gift for those who were ill.

The story said that anyone who was ill should make 1,000 paper cranes and the gods would grant them a wish. Sadako hoped that the gods would grant her wish to get well so that she could run again. Her

friend, Chizuko showed her how to make a crane using origami, the ancient Japanese art of paper folding, and Sadako set to work.

All her visitors brought brightly coloured pieces of paper for her to make the cranes and Sadako's brother hung the finished ones from the ceiling of her room in the hospital.

Sadly, Sadako only managed to complete 644 paper cranes before dying on the 25 October, 1955, at the age of 12. The remaining 356 cranes were folded by her school friends so that she could be buried with 1,000 paper cranes.

### A Monument to Peace

Sadako had not given up, she continued to make paper cranes until she died. Sadako's friends were inspired by her courage and determination. They collected the letters that she had written and published them in a book called *Kokeshi*. Young people all over Japan were touched by her story and raised money to build a monument to her and all of the children killed by the atom bomb.

In 1958 the memorial was unveiled. It is a statue of a golden crane and is in the Hiroshima Peace Park, in Japan. The statue is engraved at the bottom with children made:

*This is our cry, This is our prayer, Peace in the world*

Every year on Peace Day people from all over the world fold paper cranes and send them to Sadako's statue in Hiroshima.

*I will write 'peace' on your wings and you will fly all over the world.*  
- Sadako Sasaki



Sadako holding  
Hiroshima,  
the wish the

world fold  
Hiroshima.

*over the world.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Core \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Origami



When the word origami is mentioned, most people probably think of little paper cranes or maybe even paper airplanes. Although origami is commonly referred to as the art of paper folding, the study of origami reveals that there are many mathematical characteristics of it as well. Origami can be utilized in the study of geometry, calculus, and even abstract algebra. A number of technological advances have come from insights obtained through paper folding. For example, techniques have been developed for the deployment of car airbags and stent implants from a folded position. With math it is possible to fold many beautiful shapes in origami. Most amazingly, many astonishing pieces of origami are produced from a single piece of paper, with no cuts.

Origami, the art of paper folding, originated in first century A.D. in China with the invention of paper. The forerunner of modern day origami served practical purposes for the Chinese, who made useful commodities such as vases, bowls, and boxes from folded paper. Almost 500 years after paper was invented, Buddhist monks brought the secret to Japan.

The Japanese quickly integrated paper into everyday life, first using it in architecture and for ceremonial functions. Samurai warriors would exchange gifts adorned with noshi, a sort of good luck token made of folded strips of paper. Origami butterflies were used during the celebration of Shinto weddings to represent the bride and groom. With foundations in such formal usage, origami slowly evolved to become what we recognize today as Japanese paper folding.

In the 1960's the art of origami began to spread out, first with modular origami and then with various movements developing, including the kirikomi paper sculptures. Origami is now an international art.

No matter how intricate the final design, pure origami adheres to its original concept that the product must be achieved exclusively by folding paper. Contemporary origami techniques continue to develop into seemingly impossible feats of folding. Master folders produce objects such as recognizable, anatomically correct insects with segmented bodies and multiple legs.

Modular origami, which has been increasing in popularity for the last twenty years, breaks the rules of pure origami by combining several identical pieces to create one spectacular model. It is nearly always the case that creating the units is far less problematic than putting the final model together which often requires much patience and practice.

## The Beaver

Religious and political reasons are usually given to explain why Europeans moved to North America, but natural resources were another major reason. These included whales, large schools of cod, and towering pines. But the resource that lured explorers across the continent was actually the beaver. After the early European explorers realized that Canada was not Asia, the main attraction for merchants was the beaver. In the late 1600s and early 1700s, the fashion of the day demanded fur top-hats, which needed beaver pelts. As these hats became more popular, the demand for the pelts grew. Explorers were dispatched deep into the North American wilderness to trap and trade for furs with local natives. King Henry IV of France saw the fur trade as an opportunity to gain much-needed money and to create his North American empire. Both English and French fur traders were soon selling beaver pelts in Europe at 20 times their original purchase price. The first North American coat of arms to depict a beaver was created by Sir William Alexander, who was granted title in 1621 to the area now known as Nova Scotia . The trade in beaver pelts was so good that the Hudson's Bay Company honored the beaver by putting it on the shield of its coat of arms in 1678, and reflects the importance of this animal to the company. A coin was created at that time to equal the value of one beaver pelt. Hudson's Bay Company was no ordinary business. It was a business that acted like a nation. It played a major role in the exploration of Canada, even helped to set its borders. In 1678, Louis de Buade de Frontenac, then Governor of New France, suggested the beaver as a suitable emblem for the Colony, and proposed it be included in the armorial bearings of Quebec City. In 1690, the "Kebeca Liberata Medal" was struck to commemorate France's successful defense of Quebec. The reverse depicts a seated woman, representing France, with a beaver at her feet, representing Canada. The beaver was included in the armorial bearings of the City of Montréal when it was incorporated as a city in 1833. Sir Sandford Fleming assured the beaver a position as a true National Symbol when he featured it on the first Canadian postage stamp - the "Three Penny Beaver" of 1851.

Even though it was a national symbol, the beaver was close to extinction by the mid-19th century. There were an estimated six million beavers in Canada before the start of the fur trade. During its peak, 100,000 pelts were being shipped to Europe each year, and the Canadian beaver was in danger of being wiped out. Luckily, about the mid-19th century, Europeans took a liking to silk top-hats, and the demand for beaver pelts all but disappeared, and the beaver population recovered.

On March 24, 1975, the beaver became an official emblem of Canada when an "act to provide for the recognition of the beaver as a symbol of the independence of Canada" received Royal approval. Today, thanks to conservation and silk hats, the beaver - the largest rodent in Canada - is alive and well all over this great country.

Adapted from: <<http://members.shaw.ca/kcic1/beaver.html>>

#### The Maple Leaf

3Well before the coming of the first European settlers, Canada's aboriginal peoples had discovered the food properties of maple sap, which they gathered every spring. According to many historians, the maple leaf began to serve as a Canadian symbol as early as 1700.

In 1834, the St. Jean Baptiste Society made the maple leaf its emblem.

In 1836, *Le Canadien*, a newspaper published in Lower Canada, referred to it as a suitable emblem for Canada.

In 1848, the Toronto literary annual *The Maple Leaf* referred to it as the chosen emblem of Canada.

By 1860, the maple leaf was incorporated into the badge of the 100th Regiment (Royal Canadians) and was

used extensively in decorations for the visit of the Prince of Wales that year.

Alexander Muir wrote *The Maple Leaf Forever* as Canada's confederation song in 1867; it was regarded as the

national song for several decades. The coats of arms created the next year for Ontario and Quebec both

included the maple leaf.

The maple leaf today appears on the penny. However, between 1876 and 1901, it appeared on all Canadian

coins. The modern one-cent piece has two maple leaves on a common twig, a design that has gone almost

unchanged since 1937.

During the First World War, the maple leaf was included in the badge of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

Since 1921, the Royal Arms of Canada have included three maple leaves as a distinctive Canadian emblem.

With the proclamation of Canada's new flag in 1965, the maple leaf has become the most-prominent Canadian symbol.

In 1939, at the time of World War II, many Canadian troops used the maple leaf as a distinctive sign, displaying it on regimental badges and Canadian army and naval equipment.

In 1957, the colour of the maple leaves on the arms of Canada was changed from green to red, one of Canada's official colours.

On February 15, 1965, the red maple leaf flag was inaugurated as the National Flag of Canada.

From: <[http://www.pch.gc.ca/PROGS/CPSC-CCSP/sc-cs/o3\\_e.cfm](http://www.pch.gc.ca/PROGS/CPSC-CCSP/sc-cs/o3_e.cfm)>

#### 4The Inuksuk

The Inuksuk is a well known symbol in the Arctic. Each Inuksuk is unique - built from the stones at hand.

In Inuktitut, one of the languages of the Inuit, the word Inuksuk means "likeness of a person". While travelling in

some parts of Nunavut and Northern Quebec, you can see piles of rock slabs and stones which are usually built

to resemble the shape of a person with arms stretching out. The word Inuksuk now refers to all forms of piled stones.

Traditionally an Inuksuk would be used in many different ways. For example, Nuluq showed travelers and

hunters the way home, Nalunaikutauk to warn of dangerous places, Egunasii showed where food was stored,

and some were even used to help hunt caribou herds. Inuit placed the Inuksuk in such a way as to frighten the

caribou and guide them toward the waiting hunters who would be hiding behind a boulder.

In this way, the

Inuksuk did the work of humans. Inuit and their ancestors have lived in the Arctic for over 4,000 years.

In the winter, many Inuit lived on the sea ice where much of the season was spent comfortably within a snow

house. During this dark time of the year, the stars in the night sky were important. Their position was used to tell

time and to predict the return of the spring sun. Some Inuksuit were built to point toward the North Star, the star

which does not move.

Today, the Inuksuk is much more than just a stone marker. It has become a symbol of the North and of

leadership, cooperation and the human spirit.

As traditional ways are blending with contemporary ways, Inuit and non-Inuit sometimes build Inuksuit simply to

mark their presence both in the Arctic and across this country.

From <[http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ks/inukstrn\\_e.html](http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ks/inukstrn_e.html)>