

IC-7 – Family Rituals

SUBJECT

FLA/ FSL

GRADE

10-12

LENGTH

~1.5 hours

OVERVIEW/RATIONALE

Family rituals reveal many products and practices that are embedded in particular cultural norms; however, they also reveal the underlying beliefs and values people possess. In this lesson, learners will explore family rituals associated with different cultural groups as a means to develop a critical, interpretive lens. They will also be exposed to the research of Geert Hofstede and use his cultural dimensions to analyze and gain clarity about different cultural beliefs and values embedded in actions. The purpose of this lesson is to develop interpretive skills rather than to learn about specific cultural manifestations.

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| OBJECTIVES | <p>Students will be able to identify differences in the dining rituals of different cultural groups.</p> <p>Students will be able to ascertain the influence of different cultural dimensions on the family rituals of different groups.</p> |
| MATERIAL | <p>Print off one copy of IC-7.1, IC-7.2, and IC-7.3 for each student in the class (Note: there are different versions of each story that can be used based on the language level of your students).</p> <p>Print off one copy of IC-7.4 for each student. This document will be used to introduce learners to some of Hofstede’s cultural dimensions.</p> |
| ACTIVITIES | <p>Welcome students and ask them to jot down notes about what their family gatherings look like. If they require additional vocabulary, encourage them to use a French-English dictionary before asking you. Have students join into pairs and each take turns describing what happens at their large family gatherings.</p> <p>Encourage a few students to share their stories with the whole class. As they are sharing, encourage their peers to note differences in the family gatherings described. Use the following prompts to promote discussion: <i>How were the family gatherings different? Quelles sont les différences entre les réunions de famille? Why do you think the family gatherings were similar/ different? Pourquoi pensez-vous que les réunions de familles étaient différentes ou similaires? What would influence how the family gatherings were orchestrated? Qu’est-ce qui aurait une influence sur la façon dont les réunions de familles se déroulent?</i></p> <p>Explain to students that culture is one important factor influencing how families gather and interact with each other and that today they are going to read stories about family gatherings in different cultural groups – English, French, and Blackfoot.</p> <p>Divide students into groups to conduct a jigsaw activity. The Home Group should consist of three students each and Expert Groups should comprise of two or three students, but not more. Organize students into their Expert Groups and have each group associated with a specific Home Group look at a different story</p> |

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(i.e., one group will look at the French Story, one will look at the English Story, and the last will look at the Blackfoot Story). In their Expert Groups, students should collectively read through the story provided and answer the accompanying comprehension questions. Students should be warned that they will be responsible to lead their Home Groups through an exploration of the story.

Organize students into their Home Groups. Each group should include one student who analyzed each of the three stories. The students should then take turns leading their peers in reading the story and answering questions. Students at a higher level could be encouraged to summarize the story for their peers and then engage in discussion about the dining rituals of the particular group. After groups have had a chance to explore each of the stories, ask them to highlight the differences they noted in the rituals of the different cultural groups.

As a whole class discuss the three stories and the differences in the family rituals between the three groups. Prompts to guide the discussion could include: What was a unique characteristic of each of the family rituals? *Quelle était une caractéristique unique à chacune des coutumes de famille?* What did you find surprising/interesting about each of the stories? *Qu'avez-vous trouvé de surprenant/intéressant au sujet de chacune des histoires?* What were some key differences in the rituals of the French, English, and Blackfoot families? *Quelles étaient quelques différences clés de chacune des coutumes de la famille française, anglaise et pieds-noirs?* These stories are representative of what a French, English, and Blackfoot gathering could look like; does that mean all French, English, and Blackfoot people will follow these rituals? *Les histoires sont représentatives de ce que pourrait avoir l'air un rassemblement français, anglais et pieds-noirs; est-ce que cela veut dire que toutes personnes françaises, anglaises et pieds-noirs suivront ces mêmes coutumes?*

Explain to students that cultural values and beliefs play a role in how people interact and the rituals they participate in. Ask learners if they can identify any cultural values or beliefs embedded in the gathering rituals in the English, French, and Blackfoot stories? *Pouvez-vous identifier des valeurs culturelles ou des croyances intégrées aux rassemblements rituels dans l'histoire anglaise, française et pieds-noirs?*

Hand out one copy of IC-7.4 to each student. Introduce Geert Hofstede to students – Geert Hofstede is a Dutch intercultural scholar who conducted research using data collected from IBM workers around the world. Based on the data collected, he identified a series of cultural dimensions that explain differences in the perspective and behaviour of different groups of people. Read through the three dimensions (Power Distance, Competitive Disposition/Gender Roles, and Tolerance for Uncertainty) and highlight the examples provided. Ask learners to identify additional examples they can think of to exemplify the concepts.

Organize learners into small groups and ask them to identify how the cultural dimensions could be used to explain the differences in the three stories. If students are struggling to identify examples in the stories, ask them to think about the following prompts: How do people greet each other? *Comment les gens se saluent-ils?* Is there a set time for dinner? *Y a-t-il une heure réglée pour*

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le souper? Are there predetermined roles for preparing the meal and completing other tasks? *Y a-t-il des rôles prédéterminés pour la préparation du repas et l'achèvement des autres tâches?* Is there a particular order in which people eat? *Y a-t-il un ordre particulier dans lequel les gens mangent?* Is there a defined routine for the gathering? *Y a-t-il une routine prédéterminée des tâches?*

As a whole group discuss how students identified the dimensions within the stories. Example responses could include:

- The family in the French story is more feminine in that men and women prepare the food and uncertainty tolerant because there is no set time for beginning and ending the meal
- The family in the English story is more masculine in that there are defined gender roles
- The family in the Blackfoot story is more masculine and high power distance in that there are set gender roles and clear power divisions, and more uncertainty tolerant in that the structure of the gathering is relaxed and flexible

*It is important to highlight that just because particular cultural traits were identified within these stories, it does not mean that all people within that culture share the same traits. There is great diversity between and within cultures. The cultural dimensions are not meant to be labels to define people, but rather an interpretive tool to understand cultural difference.

Ask learners to reflect upon where their families would fit according to the three cultural dimensions and then share with a partner.

RESOURCES

- IC-7.1 A French Story
- IC-7.2 An English Story
- IC-7.3 A Blackfoot Story
- IC-7.4 Hofstede's Dimensions

NOTES

This lesson plan can easily be split up into two sequential lessons.