

**Urban Education Roundtable PLC
Curriculum Unit**

Unit Plan Theme/Topic: All Together: Celebrations Around the World

Unit Goals:

1. Students will understand and appreciate diverse cultural celebrations around the world.
2. Students will gain a broader perspective on the similarities and differences in celebrations.
3. Foster a sense of respect and appreciation for cultural diversity by exploring celebrations with an open mind and understanding the value of various traditions in a given culture.

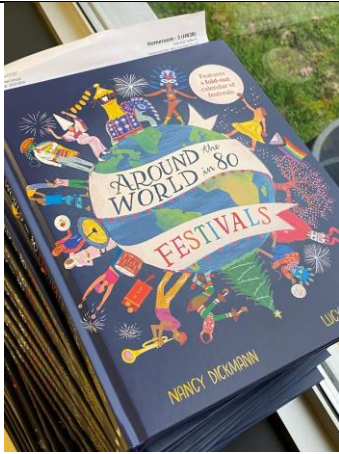


Overview:

This is a whole school project that required collaboration over several months. The theme is All Together: Celebrations Around the World. This ties in with Read Across America and the NEA’s theme of Create and Celebrate: A Nation of Diverse Readers. Each grade level will learn about a celebration and the country where that celebration is held. Students will read books about the celebration, view primary sources related to the celebrations, and create projects to demonstrate their learning. The projects will be displayed for an evening and families will be invited to the school to view the projects and learn about the countries and the celebrations. As families enter the building they will be provided with a paper passport. They will then walk through the building “visiting” each country and learning about the country and cultural celebrations. Students will receive a stamp in each area for the passport. Representatives from the Burlington County Library will also attend this evening to provide families with an opportunity to get a library card and learn about the resources the library can provide. The library will also bring books on the countries and celebrations that families can check out and borrow to continue learning at home. Each family will be provided with a book to take home to continue the learning- K-2 [A Ticket Around the World](#) and 3rd- 5th grade will receive [Around the World in Eighty Festivals](#) to continue the learning at home.

**We were able to apply for and receive the funding for this project through the New Jersey Education Association FAST (Families and Schools Together) grant. Other Suggestions for funding would be through Donors Choose.

Grade Level:K-5



Unit Length: 1 month of lessons, culminating with a project night where families will be invited to see the projects.

Suggestion: Planning started in September and culminated in March. We had a team of staff who met monthly to put all of the parts together before unleashing it to the whole school in January. We asked teachers to come up with lists of needed resources that the school could purchase before classrooms started to work on their projects. Once our supplies came in, teachers and students had about a month to research their celebrations/countries and create their projects.

Essential Questions:

1. How do celebrations contribute to a sense of community and identity within a culture?
2. In what ways do celebrations serve as a means to pass on and preserve cultural traditions?
3. What are the different ways people can celebrate their culture?
4. What traditions do people have in other cultures?
5. How do other people in my community celebrate their culture?
6. How do my culture and traditions make me feel part of a community?

Objectives:

Students will:

1. Develop an understanding of the cultural, historical, and religious aspects that shape celebrations around the world by researching.
2. Develop geography awareness of where countries are located.
3. Compare and contrast features of different celebrations.
4. Distinguish unique characteristics that might be influenced by specific geographical areas.

Materials & Resources:

(include links)

Celebrations around the world:

- Lunar New Year: China
 - [Lunar New Year Image](#)
- Tanabata: Japan
 - [Japanese woman carrying a lantern across a bridge.](#)
 - [Japanese Weaving](#)
 - [Festival Kites](#)
- Diwali: India
 - [Indian Festival](#)
- Dia de los Muertos: Mexico
 - [Day of Dead Headdress](#)
- Carnival: Brazil
 - [Carnival Images](#)
- Pingxi Lantern Festival: Taiwan
 - [Map of Taiwan](#)
 - [Map of Taiwan](#)
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Student Activities: (include links to handouts created in Google Docs)

1. For grades K-5th. Older students will be paired with younger classrooms to assist as needed.
 - a. All of the primary sources will be used to show students what the culture of their country is like and what activities can be done during the festival.
 - b. Students will use these images to recreate hallway displays and hands-on activities/crafts to showcase on Project Night, in March 2024.
2. Projects
 - a. Add their country/festival to a Google Earth Project
 - b. Create a hallway display about their festival

c. Create a craft/hands-on activity about their festival

Interdisciplinary Connections with Standards

Text Set for the Unit:

Celebrations around the world: Book Recommendations For Elementary Discussion

- [Around the World in Eighty Festivals](#)
- [A Ticket Around the World](#)
- Lunar New Year: China
 - [Ruby's Chinese New Year](#)
 - [Chloe's New Year](#)
 - [How to Catch a Dragon](#)
- Tanabata: Japan
 - [The Star Festival](#)
- Diwali: India
 - [The Light Within You](#)
- Dia de los Muertos: Mexico
 - [Dia de Los Muertos](#)
- Carnival: Brazil
 - [Bisa's Carnaval](#)
- Pingxi Lantern Festival: Taiwan
 - [Amah Faraway](#)
 - [Measuring Up](#)
 - [Sky Lantern Festival](#)



Lunar New Year: China Kindergarten

The students will participate in class discussion of several read-alouds.

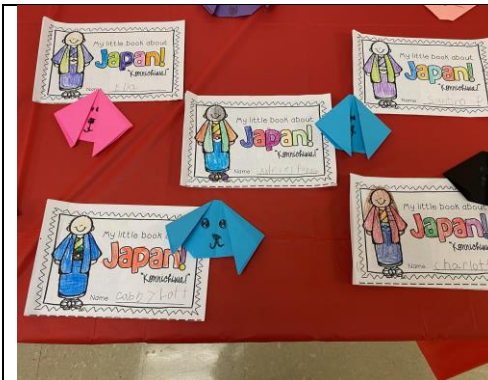
Project: Create a dragon

The zodiac animals will be discussed with the traits associated with each animal. The zodiac animal for the 2024 Lunar New Year is the Dragon. The students will work cooperatively to create a dragon out of cardboard boxes.

Students will develop comprehension skills of sequencing a text when reading and discussing *How to Catch a Dragon*.

Project: Lanterns

Students will make lanterns to display using construction paper.



Tanabata: Japan 1st Grade

Project: Book About Japan

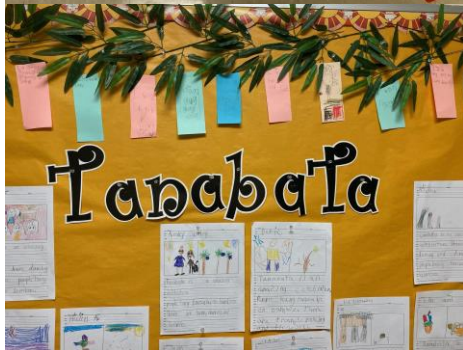
The students will create a book about Japan. Pages will feature a page about the map of Japan, the flag of Japan, a page of the capital Tokyo, popular foods, origami, and other facts.

Project: Creating Origami

The students will make origami learning to follow steps and developing listening skills.

Project: Display Wishes

The students will write wishes on paper and hang them on bamboo branches. Students will also make paper chains and paper lanterns to decorate.





Diwali: India
2nd Grade

Students will participate in various read-alouds and class discussions.

Project: Virtual Field Trip

Students will participate in a “Virtual Field Trip” with videos and a map. They will follow a festival itinerary and learn about what each day of the Diwali celebration is called and what they do to celebrate. This includes learning about the markets, homes, street food, and games of India. They will read various passages, read-alouds, and watch videos and complete a graphic organizer throughout the field trip.

Project: “Spreading Light on Diwali” Booklet Inspired by “Binny’s Diwali” by Thrity Umrigar
After a read-aloud of Binny’s Diwali, students will use what they learned by creating a booklet including facts about the celebration of Diwali and how each student would “spread the light”.

Project: Diwali Craft and Writing

Students will research what Diwali means, what it celebrates the victory of, how long it lasts, and what the main attractions are. They will create a candle out of paper and decorate the front with facts “All About Diwali.” On the other side, they will write a paragraph about the things that the student likes about Diwali.



Dia de los Muertos: Mexico 3rd Grade

The class will participate in several read-alouds and discussions about Mexico before working on the following projects.

Project: Mini Ofrenda Project

Students will bring in pictures of people they love who have passed. They will create an ofrenda with these pictures to honor those they love.

Project: Mexican Flag Banner

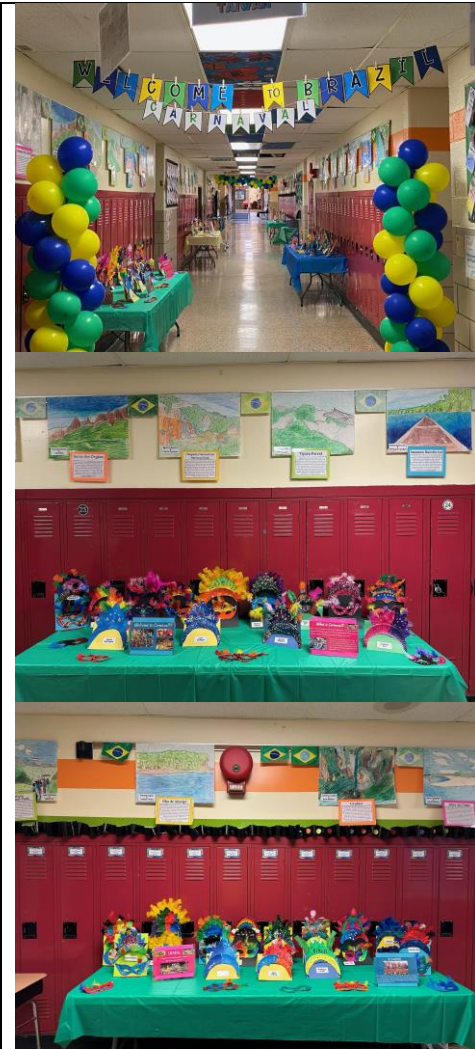
Students each get a Mexican Flag to color to create a colorful banner to drape across the hallway for Project Night.

Project: Day of the Dead Craft

Students will create their own skeleton figure to be placed in the hallway.

Project: Day of the Dead Lapbook

Students will learn about Mexico and then use that information to create a lapbook to show what they have learned.



Carnival: Brazil

4th Grade

Students will learn about all the aspects of a Carnival celebration in Brazil, including what people wear and how they represent their traditions and rituals.

After reading about the celebration of Carnival and viewing authentic images of past and present celebrations, all students will make a fact book (or slides) about the country of Brazil, including facts about Brazilian food, the Portuguese language, sightseeing, the Amazon rainforest, famous landmarks, and traditional dress.

Next, students will pick one of the following craft/projects to create:

Project 1: Paper Plate Carnival Masks

Students will make colorful masks with paper plates, craft paint, glue, scissors, gems, elastic string and colorful feathers.

Project 2: Colorful Maracas

Students will make maracas with cardboard paper tubes, popsicle sticks, and tape. They will use paint, gems, sequins, etc. to decorate the outside of their maracas.

Project 3: Brazilian Carnival Headdresses

Students will make traditional headdresses out of headbands, cardboard, colorful paper, feathers and gems with glue.

All booklets and project pieces will be displayed on Project Night.



Pingxi Lantern Festival: Taiwan 5th Grade

The class will participate in several read-alouds and discussions about Taiwan before working on the following projects.

Project: Quadrilateral Hanging Lanterns

During math class, students will create a lantern in the shape of a quadrilateral. They will use tissue paper, cardboard, string, and glue. Students will take the time to write on the tissue paper before it is turned into a lantern. Students will have the option of writing using traditional Taiwanese Mandarin or English. These lanterns will be hung in the hallway to add to our decorations. A battery operated tealight will be placed in the bottom of the lantern to give it light.

Project: Cherry Blossom Trees

For decorations in the hallway, students will create cherry blossom trees using paper, coffee filters, and markers.

Project: Hanging Postcards from students to their families about a trip to Taiwan

During reading class, students will use the information they have learned about Taiwan to create a written postcard describing what they did on a "trip." They will address it to their family. The images on the front will be painted with watercolors and students will be able to draw their own images or use the internet to find something to be printed. These postcards will be hung in the hallway to add to our decorations.

Project: Posters and Brochures about Taiwan

During Social Studies class, students will research information about Taiwan. They will use this information to create posters or brochures to be displayed on project night.

About the Authors:

	<p>Jen Allen has been teaching 5th Grade in Palmyra, NJ, for 10 years. She teaches social studies and science.</p> <p>Karla O'Connell has been teaching for 17 years in grades 1st- 4th. This is her 15 year in Palmyra.</p> <p>Lauren Bowen is a 4th grade teacher and has been teaching for 12 years. This is her 6th year in Palmyra, NJ.</p>