

A World of Differences and Similarities

Suggested Grade Levels: 4-6

Subject: Social Studies/History, Reading and Writing

Character: Kindness/Empathy

Materials and technology to be used:

- Computer with projection capabilities – **x1**
- Books on different countries (books that focus on animals in other countries is a PLUS) – **x enough for all students**
- Computers and/or tablets (optional) – **x enough for each small group (5-6)**
- Small, plastic country flags – **x however many you would like**
- Whiteboard/marker – **x1**
- Chart paper – **x2 sheets**
- Notebook or other paper – **x2 sheets per student**
- Pencils – **x1 per student**
- Poster boards – **x1 per small group (5-6)**
- Crayons, markers, and/or colored pencils – **x enough for each student**

Objective(s):

Students will learn about how different countries treat various animals and will be able to compare these views.

Anticipatory Set/Hook:

Display a variety of small flags from various countries (you can get a bundle of smaller, plastic ones for cheap at certain “party” stores or teacher stores) around the room or project a running slideshow of different countries’ flags. Ask students to give you a thumbs up if they have ever been to a different country before. Ask every student with a thumbs up to tell you which country they have been to and write it on the board. Tell students that today they are going to get to explore how different countries treat various animals.

Lesson Beginning:

1. Ask students: “How do people in the United States treat animals?” Have students turn and talk with a neighbor. Discuss.
2. Ask students: “How are companion animals (pets) in the U.S. treated differently than wild animals?”
 - Create a ‘T-Chart’ on large chart paper and write down student responses. Review the

differences and display the chart for all to see throughout the lesson.

3. Make sure every student has a notebook, paper, and a pencil. Students will engage in “Brainwriting” for the next question. They will have one minute to think about the question in their **brains**, and then three minutes to **write** about their answer in a notebook.
 - Write the following question on the board: “Are there certain animals in the U.S. that are considered important and others that are not? What are they and why?”
 - Call on volunteers to share their thoughts out loud. Discuss.
4. Ask students: “What do you know about how animals are treated in other countries?” Turn and talk with a neighbor. Have a couple of students share their thoughts out loud with the whole group. Tell the students that they are going to explore this question further.

Middle of Lesson:

1. Divide the class into five to six small groups. Assign a country to each group.
2. Provide each group with a variety of books about their given country to use for their research. If you have computer and/or access to tablets students may want to look at related websites to research.
3. Have students complete research on the treatment of animals in other countries.
 - Have them focus on **how the people in that country view and treat domestic animals** and **what kinds of pets are common in that country**. Write this research prompt on the whiteboard for all to see.
 - Have each student be responsible for listing at least five facts on a piece of paper.
 - The entire group should then work together to compile their facts onto a poster and report what they learned to the rest of the class.
4. After all groups have shared their posters, display the posters in the classroom or hallway.

End of Lesson:

1. Pull out the chart paper again – Draw a **Venn Diagram** and compare/contrast the different customs regarding animals of two of the different countries. *How are they different? How are they similar?* Call on student volunteers to answer and discuss.
 - Ask students: “How do these customs compare with the United States?” Have students turn and talk with a neighbor. Share.
 - After you complete one Venn Diagram as a whole class, you can split the class back up into small groups and have each small group complete an additional Venn Diagram if you would like to compare/contrast the other countries.
2. Engage students in a Post-Discussion:
 - *Why is it important to understand and respect other cultures and customs? How can this help us to be more tolerant of others?*
 - *What is diversity and why is it important? Discuss the diversity in the U.S. and emphasize that even though we all live in the same country, we have many different customs and traditions.*

Closure:

1. Provide students with one minute to reflect on what they have learned from this lesson.
2. Either verbally, or in writing, have students answer the following question: (This can be an “Exit Ticket” question.)

“What was the most interesting thing that you learned about each country?”

Extension Activity:

1. Invite someone from a different country to speak to the class about their customs and traditions. Ask the students to bring (or make together in class) a special food or a type of art that is representative of that country.