Activity: Cultural Universals: Create Your Own Culture

Recommended Grade Level: K - 3rd, 6th
Subject(s): Social Studies
TEKS Requirements Met: SS: K.5, K.6, K.7, K.8, K.10, K.11, K.12, K.14, K.15; 1.1, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.14, 1.17, 1.18; 2.7, 2.11, 2.14, 2.16, 2.17, 2.19; 3.2, 3.4, 3.13; 6.7, 6.9, 6.12, 6.13, 6.15, 6.16, 6.17, 6.18, 6.19, 6.20, 6.22
Time Required: 25-30 mins

Objectives: Students will gain an understanding that people in all cultures have the same basic needs. Students will learn to appreciate other cultures not just for their differences but for their similarities.

Materials:
- Cultural Universals Checklist (provided below)
- Examples of universals (some example pictures provided below but you may want to add more)
- Paper
- Pencils/Color Pencils

Background: Tell the students that all cultures have the same basic needs. We call those needs “Cultural Universals”. These universals are: food, shelter, clothing, environmental resources, belief system, traditions (like holidays), family structure, economic structure (trade, barter, currency), technology, transportation, method of communication, art, and entertainment

Procedure: Before giving the students the Cultural Universals Checklist, ask them if they can think of anything that all cultures might have in common. Write their answers on the board. Explain why or why not these may be considered cultural universals. Go over the Cultural Universals Checklist and pass a copy to each student. Next, tell the students to divide into groups of 4 or 5. Each group will be responsible for creating their own culture. The cultures must be designed to have all the universals of culture. Give the groups the list of cultural universals and let them discuss. The students can write down or draw their universals. Tell them to GET CREATIVE!! To close, have all of the groups present their culture to the class.
CULTURAL UNIVERSALS CHECKLIST

☐ Food

☐ Shelter

☐ Clothing

☐ Environmental Resources

☐ Belief System

☐ Traditions (holidays)

☐ Family Structure

☐ Economic Structure (trade, barter, currency)

☐ Technology

☐ Transportation

☐ Method of Communication

☐ Art

☐ Entertainment
Cultural Universals Example Pictures: