

**Multicultural Lesson Plans**

***Cultures and Folklore***

**Title of Focus Book:** [The Dragon's Tears](#)

**Language Lizard Books Used:**

[The Dragon's Tears](#): Japanese/English

[The Dragon's Tears](#): Spanish/English

[The Dragon's Tears](#) CD: Multiple languages

\*\*Lessons can be adapted to use [The Dragon's Tears](#) in any dual language combination

**Focus Languages:** Chinese, Spanish, English

**Grades:** Fourth

**Topic:** Cultures and Folklore

**Authors:** April Gallagher and Amy Sperber

**Affiliation:** West Chester University of Pennsylvania, Students in the Teacher Education Program for Elementary Education

*Instructional Unit: Cultures and Folklore*

The three lessons presented in this unit of instruction have been designed to help students

- learn about different folktales, cultures and customs of people around the world and in the United States;
- hear and see new languages and text;
- build an appreciation of the diverse languages present in the world and in the United States;
- learn about other countries, and people similar to and different than themselves;
- introduce important Social Studies concept such as Culture and Geography;
- build positive relationships among students in the classroom to promote the acceptance of diversity among students as a part of the classroom environment.

The main Language Lizard book used in these lessons is: [The Dragon's Tears](#) in Chinese, Spanish, English and multiple languages included on [The Dragon's Tears](#) CD. Each of these titles is available in many other languages, and other language combinations can be substituted for or used in addition to the dual languages presented here.

This unit of instruction is easily aligned with state standards, and national standards in Social Studies and Language Arts. The National Council for the Social Studies Themes that these lessons support include: Culture, People, Places and Environment, Individual Development and Identity, Global Connections, Individuals, Civic Ideals and Practices, Groups and Institutions, and Production, Distribution, Consumption.

***Cultures and Folklore Unit Introduction:***

Introduce folklore to the students, and provide a definition and examples.

Folklore- the tradition, beliefs, legends, customs, etc, of a people.

Reinforce vocabulary- Culture, traditions, customs, legends, lore, beliefs, trickster

Example- Johnny Appleseed

Explain to students that Folklore is a collection of stories that are passed down through generations that represent people and their culture. Ask the students if they can think of any other stories that they have heard that might be considered folklore. Explain to students that folklore is a story that comes from a culture and tells a story or explains how things came to be. Every culture has folklore. Tell the students that there are different kinds of folklore. Some folklore involves stories of brains over brawn. Some folklore involves a character making a series of silly mistakes due to not having the right skills to make decisions. Other folktales involve tricksters. The type of folklore that we will be focusing on involves giving explanations for things in nature.

Introduce the story [The Dragon's Tears](#), a story from Chinese folklore.

Read the story aloud to the class.

Discuss with students why is it considered folklore and what the story is explaining.

*After hearing the introduction to the mini-unit, the teacher can help students locate the countries where the focus languages are spoken around the world. As a supplement, the teacher may offer instruction about these countries and the people who live in them currently. He or she may also share with student's information about each of the languages, including presenting how these languages are represented in the United States, in the state where students reside and in the local community.*

*The teacher may also integrate learning about the languages, countries/regions/areas where the languages are spoken throughout the lessons. The CIA World Factbook Online provides excellent information on countries and people of the world.*

*<https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>*

*Children can hear Chinese and Spanish phrases by using audio software or websites which provide translations, written and/or audio of common phrases. The following sites are examples:*

*<http://www.wku.edu/~yuanh/AudioChinese>*

*[http://www.smartphrase.com/Spanish/sp\\_general\\_words\\_voc.shtml](http://www.smartphrase.com/Spanish/sp_general_words_voc.shtml)*

**Lesson #1 Chinese Culture**

**Learning Outcomes:**

1. Students will complete a webquest to learn about China and Chinese culture.
2. Students will read about real children in China, and participate in activities representative of Chinese customs to learn about Chinese culture.
3. Students will share what they have learned about China and Chinese culture with their peers.

**Anticipatory Set:** To begin, refresh your students' memories about [The Dragon's Tears](#). Then play the disc in Chinese for the students. Tell them to listen to the language and see if they can figure out what kind of language it is. After the students determine the language, show them the text in Chinese with the dual language book "The Dragon's Tears." Tell the students that they are going to explore the Chinese culture.

**Procedures:**

1. Depending on the amount of computers available, either put the students in groups, or allow them to work on their own on the webquest. Give the students the webquest guide [Culture Webquest](#). Have them fill out the questions about the Chinese culture, as they go along. They will focus on the foods, games, holidays, and the location of the country. Talk about some of the things that they found.

2. *Read the story "My Name is Mengmeng" found at [www.kidspost.com](http://www.kidspost.com). This story illustrates a day in the life of a child in China. Then discuss with the students some of the similarities and differences that they have with Mengmeng.*

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A42924-2004Oct18.html?nav=rss\\_kidspost/journeys](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A42924-2004Oct18.html?nav=rss_kidspost/journeys)

3. Give the students the Chinese calendar. Have them pick out their animal and their family member's animals. Then talk with the students about the importance of animals in the Chinese culture. Then talk about [The Dragon's Tears](#) and how the dragon is used in the folktale. Tell them that the calendar says that the dragon symbolizes courage and that Chun Li showed courage in the book. The Chinese zodiac has great importance in their culture. Sometimes marriages are arranged around the zodiac! The dragon is especially important in Chinese culture because it was believed that the dragon could do almost anything... even control rainfall! Discuss the word courage with your students to make sure they understand its meaning.

4. Have your students make dragon masks. They can look at the picture of the dragon in [The Dragon's Tears](#). They should use paper bags, construction paper and even streamers to make their dragon masks. They should cut out eyes for their masks very carefully and with assistance. To add to the culture you could play music from China which can be found on the National Geographic website under world music. Explain to the students that dragons are constructed and used in many of the parades in China. They also use dragons in the Chinese New Year.

5. After the students make their masks tell them that they will be playing a game. The game is called Chinese Dragon. The students should form a single file line with one person being the head of the dragon, and the last person being the tail. The other students should hold on to the waist of the person in front of them. A piece of cloth or handkerchief should be placed in the back pocket of the student who is the tail. The head of the dragon chases the tail and tries to get the handkerchief. The students in the middle try to stay away from the head. When the head retrieves the handkerchief, the second person in line is the new head and the head becomes the tail.

Language Lizard Unit: *Cultures and Folklore*

**Closure:** Ask the students what they thought about the game. For homework, have them think about a game that is important to them or that they like to play and write about it using appropriate paragraphing. Tell the students that you would like them to look for a current event about China. You should give the students a list of websites for kids to find current events. If the students do not have home access to a computer, you should allow them time to do so in school. Some websites include:

[www.timeforkids.com/TFK](http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK), <http://yahooligans.yahoo.com/content/news/>,  
[www.washingtonpost.com/kidspost](http://www.washingtonpost.com/kidspost), <http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/> .

**Assessment:** Collect the students' webquests and informally assess that the information was correct and complete. Also assess the completion of the dragon mask and the students' writing about their favorite game which should be free of mechanical and spelling errors.

**Materials:** [The Dragon's Tears](#) in Chinese/English by Manju Gregory and Guo Lee, [The Dragon's Tears](#) disc, CD player, Webquest worksheet, computers, Chinese calendar, "My name is Mengmeng" by Edward Cody, paper bags, scissors, construction paper, markers, streamers, cloth or handkerchief.

Language Lizard Unit: *Cultures and Folklore*

Culture WebQuest:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Culture Webquest

Country \_\_\_\_\_

Go to [www.pbs.org/journeytoplanetearth/](http://www.pbs.org/journeytoplanetearth/)

Click on Country profiles

Click on country name

Click on the map to view the country. What does it look like? What are some bodies of water found in or around it? Is it a large or small country? How does the size/shape compare to the size/shape of the US?

What religions are present in this country?

What languages are spoken in this country?

Go to [www.nationalgeographic.com](http://www.nationalgeographic.com)

Click on people and places in the left hand corner.

Click on the country name

Click on music and listen

What does the music sound like? How is it similar to, or different than the music you enjoy?

Go to [www.ipl.org/div/kidspace](http://www.ipl.org/div/kidspace)

Click on Culture Quest on left side

Click on the area that the country is a part of

Click on the links about the country

Answer the questions below that apply to the country.

1. What kinds of games are listed and described? Choose one of the games and compare it to a game you play.
2. What kinds of crafts do they list?
3. What are some holidays in this country?
4. What are some of the foods or recipes listed? Have you ever tried any of them?

*Lesson # 2 Mexican/Hispanic Culture*

**Learning Outcomes:**

1. Students will complete a webquest to learn about Mexico and Hispanic culture.
2. Students will compare Chinese and Mexican folktales.
3. Students will share what they have learned about Mexico and Hispanic culture with their peers.

**Anticipatory Set:** Begin by sharing the current events that the students found about China. Then refresh the student's memories about "The Dragons Tears". Play the Spanish track on the disc [The Dragon's Tears](#). Ask the students what language that they think it is. Show the students the Spanish text in the book [The Dragon's Tears](#). Ask the students what they notice about the symbols, or letters, and how to they compare to the Chinese text.

**Procedures:**

1. Tell the students that [The Dragon's Tears](#) is a Chinese Folktale, and that today they will hear a Mexican folktale. Tell students that although Spanish is spoken in Mexico, it is also spoken in many other countries around the world. Read to the students "When Badger named the Sun". Make a venn diagram on the board comparing [The Dragon's Tears](#) and "When Badger Named the Sun". The students should notice that they both have animals in them. You may have to tell them that they are both explaining an occurrence in nature such as forming of the lakes in [The Dragon's Tears](#) and the naming of the Sun. Tell your students that in Mexico animals are very important as well. Many of their sports involve animals, for example bull fighting. The early Mexican calendar was based on twenty thirteen day weeks that included names of animals and other things in nature. Some examples are crocodile, wind, lizard, serpent, deer, rabbit, water, etc.
2. Tell the students that just as they did with China, they will be completing a [Culture Webquest](#) about Mexico. Go over the webquest with the students and discuss Cinco de Mayo with the students. Tell the students that it is a holiday celebrated in some parts of the United States as well. On this day the Mexican soldiers won a battle against the French. The Mexican people celebrate Cinco de Mayo with parades, parties, music, dancing and pinatas. Tell the students that Mexican people also celebrate their own Independence Day called El Grito. They celebrate their independence having parades and firework displays, and by ringing a bell.
3. Have students make a list of all of the holidays that they can think of that are celebrated in the United States. They should work in small groups to construct a list. Then ask the students what kinds of toys or games that they play on these holidays and make a list on the board.
4. **Next tell the students that they will be making a Mexican toy called a Bolero. The toy helps enhance hand-eye coordination. The students will use toilet paper rolls, empty thread spools, yarn, paint and or markers to decorate, and a hole punch. While the students are constructing their Mexican toys you could also be playing Mexican music which can be found at [www.nationalgeographic.com](http://www.nationalgeographic.com). After the toys are constructed, allow the students some time to try them out. The object of the game is to get the spool in the tube. You can also see how many times you can get it in a row.**

**Closure:** Ask the students what they thought of the toy that they made and played with. Tell the students that for homework they should think about their favorite holiday and some of the things that they do on

Language Lizard Unit: *Cultures and Folklore*

those holidays and write it in paragraph form. They should also think of a favorite toy that they have and describe it in paragraph form.

**Assessment:** Collect the students' webquests and informally assess their information seeing that it is correct and complete. The students should be assessed on the completion of their Bolero toy, and the paragraphs about their own toys and holidays which should be free of mechanics and spelling errors.

**Materials:** Culture Webquest worksheet, The Dragon's Tears by Manju Gregory and Guo Lee, The Dragon's Tears disc, "When Badger Named the Sun" found at [www.sacred-texts.com/nam/sw/yml/yml11.htm](http://www.sacred-texts.com/nam/sw/yml/yml11.htm), computers, CD player, toilet paper rolls, empty thread spools, yarn, paint, markers, hole punch.

**Lesson #3 Native American Folklore**

**Learning Outcomes**

1. Students listen to Native American Folktales.
2. Students will write similarities and differences that they have identified between folktales from various cultures.
3. Students will create a Native American spirit shield using accurate Native American symbols.
4. Students will present their spirit shields to the class demonstrating an understanding of the symbols.

**Anticipatory set:**

Link to previous lesson- Ask students to share a common tradition between the Spanish culture and their own culture. Ask for volunteers to share.

Review with students what cultures the folklore they have explored has come from. Ask the students if they think they know any American Folklore. Ask the students who they think would have developed the original Folklore of America. Desired answer- Native Americans.

Ask Students to think of any American folklore that they may have heard ex. Johnny Appleseed, Paul Bunyan, Pecos Bill.

**Procedures:**

1. Read the Native American folklore tale "How Corn came to the Earth,"  
<http://www.ilhawaii.net/~stony/lore73.html>
2. Ask the students to write a paragraph describing how this tale differs in two ways and how it is similar in two ways to the other folklore tales from the other countries.
3. Discuss how important the earth and nature is the Native Americans. Most folklore from the Native Americans includes nature and how things of the earth were created. Native Americans respect nature and all animals because they believe that they were are powerful. When Native Americans went into battles they created Spirit Shields which were shields that had pictures of different animals, plants and things from nature because they believed that each different creature or natural element had different powers and provided them with different protection.
4. Have the students create their own Spirit Shield. Provide each student with a blank "shield" paper. Use the symbols and what they represent from the book and provide it to the students so they can choose their own symbols for their personal spirit shield.  
Ask for volunteers to share their spirit shield with the class describing what symbols they used and why.

**Closure**

Review with students that the first folklore tales of American were developed by the Native Americans. Most folklore tales are stories of animals and creation because they once relied solely on the earth and nature to survive. They believe that all things of the earth should be respected and treated equally because they all possess different powers that would help them. Ask students who they think would have developed the folklore of America after the Native Americans. Since America was discovered by an already existing culture and many people from different countries came to America. Do you think they developed new folklore or brought the folklore that existed from their countries of origin?

**Assessment-**

Assess students on the compare and contrast that they developed based on the Native American Folklore and the previous folklore that was explored.

Assess the students' spirit shield for completeness and use of shield symbols adhering to the Native American conventions discussed.



Language Lizard Unit: *Cultures and Folklore*

**Materials-**

Blank Shield outline

Native American Folklore story- How Corn Came to the Earth,

<http://www.ilhawaii.net/~stony/lore73.html>

**Culminating Activity**

1. Review with students what culture is and how folklore represents culture.
2. Review some traditions of Spanish and Chinese culture, ex. Spanish Holiday, Chinese Games.
3. Discuss with student the concept of the "salad bowl" theory of people in America. Many different cultures come together in America; each retains its primary characteristics but enhances others as well. Rather than the "melting pot" theory where people blend into a single, undistinguishable culture, American culture can be viewed as a jigsaw puzzle with different cultures being the pieces that come together to form the American culture.
4. Have students explore their own personal culture by thinking about the following: Favorite Game or Sport, Holidays important to them, Favorite Food, Members of their Family, Traditions in their own Family such as vacations, holiday traditions. Provide each student with a large puzzle piece which they will use to make a collage of "student's culture."
5. Explain to students that they are making a collage they can draw, use pictures, and words to decorate the puzzle piece that will represent them and their own culture. The students will do a short presentation of their collage discussing what they included to represent their own unique culture. Then the students will put the puzzle together to represent the cultural melting pot of the United States.

**Teacher Resources:**

Geocities, <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/oracle/6676/>

The BBC, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/>

Chinetra, <http://www.chinetra.com/>

Kiddy House <http://www.kiddyhouse.com/Holidays/Cinco/>

PBS, <http://www.pbs.org/journeytoplanetearth/education/index.html>

The Washington Post, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/kidspost/orbit/kidspost.html>

National Geographic, <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/>

American Folklore, <http://www.americanfolklore.net/ee.html#6>

<http://www.pibburns.com/mythregi.htm>

Don Quijote, <http://www.donquijote.org/culture/spain/>

Time for Kids, <http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK>

Internet Public Library, <http://www.ipl.org/div/kidspace>

How Corn Came to the Earth, Native American Folklore, <http://www.ilhawaii.net/~stony/lore73.html>

Gust, John and Meghan McChesney. "Learning About Cultures". Teaching and Learning Company. Carthage, IL. 1995.

Yuan, Juliana Y. "China: A Cultural Resource Guide". Milliken Publishing. St. Louis, Missouri. 1992.