

“Understanding Ourselves, Understanding Others”

Fulbright Thailand—Unit Outline

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Background: This unit is not designed as a unit on Thai or Vietnamese culture. It is a unit that uses my experiences in Thailand and Vietnam as a gateway for students to open themselves up to other cultures. My application essay to the Fulbright program elaborated on the agoraphobia, biases, racism, and ethno-centricity that I witness daily in my school. Although my school is a diverse one with 86% free and reduced lunch, 51% African-American, 8% Hispanic, 4% English Language Learners from varying countries, and the remaining Caucasian Americans, many students feel uncomfortable with people from cultures not their own and foster negative and even hateful stereotypes of others. This unit sets out to change this phenomenon by first, understanding how others in the world view Americans and second, by researching a culture unlike their own so that students may become knowledgeable and more tolerant of others. It is also differentiated according to student need. Because I have independent learners, collaborative learners, and learners who need constant teacher directives in the same classroom, I have differentiated the materials and assignments for each group accordingly. The outline for these can be found on the following pages noted Blue, Green, and Yellow groups.

Objectives:

1. Students will understand how other cultures view American culture through works of literature of various genres and analyze another culture through thorough research.
2. Students will write multi-media essays about American culture based upon the format from the book, *Very Thai: Everyday Popular Culture* by Philip Corwel-Smith and John Goss (photographer).
3. Students will read a book independently either about another culture or a subculture or their own, analyze it, and present it to a group.
4. Students will conduct research of another culture and create a product that represents that culture based upon the research.

Common Core English Language Arts Standards (Kentucky, 7th Grade Specific):

Reading—

RL.7.1: Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.7.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

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RL.7.3: Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

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RI.7.2: Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

RI.7.3: Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events).

RL.7.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

RL.7.5: Analyze how a drama’s or poem’s form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.

RI.7.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

RI.7.5: Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.

Writing—

W.7.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

W.7.7: Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.

W.7.8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

W.7.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Speaking, Listening, and Observing—

SL.7.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

SL.7.2: Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.

Resources and Materials:

- *Very Thai: Everyday Popular Culture* by Philip Cornwel-Smith and photographs by John Goss
- *Writing Across Cultures: A Handbook on Writing Poetry and Lyrical Prose*
- *A Multicultural Reader: Collection Two* published by Perfection Learning *many of the text selections in the group assignments come from this text
- Outrageous Lesson materials include eggs, Thai clothes, materials for a Thai cooking lesson, handmade natural dye and scraps of fabric or clothes,
- Students will need cameras for pictures or the ability to download and print internet images
- Computers with internet access

Unit Agenda:

PART 1: UNDERSTANDING OURSELVES THROUGH THE EYES OF OTHERS

Day 1—

The whole class will read “Fish Cheeks” by Amy Tan while discussing the clash of cultures throughout Teacher will break an egg and separate the yolk and whites into two clear bowls while conducting a discussion of how two can come together, yet be very separate

Read “Notes for a Poem on Being Asian-American” together and discuss the connection to the memoir and the demonstration

Reflection: What do you think the authors of the two pieces we read today think about American culture as a whole and why? Use evidence from each text to support your answer.

Day 2—

Play “Bafa Bafa” or “Nacimrema” as a way to think about perception of culture, specifically American

Discuss and reflect: How might our perceptions of a culture influence our behavior toward others of that culture? Explain.

Day 3—

OUTRAGEOUS LESSON! Teacher enters dressed in Thai clothes, waiing to students as they enter, and smiling incessantly. Discussion of what the students thought of teacher upon first impression.

Read “Melting Pot” together and discuss the overall theme of the unit—learning to understand ourselves and others.

Hand out unit letter, discuss thoroughly while answering questions, and divide into groups.

Day 4—

Mini-lesson: understanding cultural differences.

Teacher discusses Thai/Vietnamese customs versus American customs.

Discussion: how might Thai and Vietnamese people view Americans?

Group work

Day 5—

Mini-lesson: cultural artifacts. Students interact with touch-kits and photos and discuss inferences about the cultures

Discussion: what would be in an American touch kit?

Group work

Day 6—

Mini-lesson: food as culture, using *Very Thai* articles.

Mini cooking lesson while students take notes about what the ingredients and preparation tell us about the culture.

Discussion: What are some traditional American dishes? What do they say about American culture?

Group work

Day 7—

Mini-lesson: visual art within cultures, using *Very Thai* articles.

Students create ty-dyed handkerchiefs using homemade dye.

Discussion: What does a culture's art tell us about it? What are traditional American art forms?

Group work

Day 8—

Mini-lesson: proverbs...what does a culture's sayings tell us about the people? (From the book, *Writing Across Cultures* by Edna Kovacs.

Students write poetry using Iu-Mien Proverbs from Southeast Asia.

Share.

Reflection: what are traditional American sayings or proverbs that most Americans adhere to? Explain.

Group work

Day 9—

Mini-lesson: holidays and traditions, using *Very Thai* articles.

Discussion: What do a culture's traditions tell us about that culture?

Group work

Day 10—

Mini-lesson: personal interests and ideals, using *Very Thai* articles

Discussion: How do the individuals in a society influence the whole? How does a whole society influence an individual?

Group work wrap-up

Day 11—

Prewriting for *Very American* photo essays

Day 12—

Writing workshop for *Very American* photo essays

Day 13—

Writing workshop for *Very American* photo essays

Turn in essays to be compiled into a book entitled *Very American* (can be made into a website if technology capabilities allow)

PART 2: UNDERSTANDING OTHER CULTURES FOR TOLERANCE AND UNDERSTANDING

Day 13-17

Conduct research

Day 18-20

In-class work time to create products and prepare presentations

Day 21-22

Presentations

Yellow Group Cross Cultural Unit Outline and Rubric

Directions: As the Yellow group, you have been identified as students who like to and work better with a teacher directing you. You also need advanced study from many other students in the class. This unit will be self-directed for you. Below is an outline for the requirements for you to succeed in this unit. It is divided into activities you must do with your teacher and the other Yellow group members and activities in which you have some choice. This is also a contract. You will write what you have chosen to do in the choice section and sign the bottom. Your teacher will keep a copy and you will use the original as a checklist for your independent work. The other Yellow group members, as well as your teacher, will serve as guides for you and you will conduct any discussions of reading or writing assignments with each other. Good luck and have fun!!

Activities You MUST Do: Below is a Tic-Tac-Toe. **As a whole yellow group**, we will choose 3 in a row diagonally, horizontally, or vertically to complete. When you have finished, staple all three together and place in your unit folder. Then you may move on to your chosen assignments.

Read "I Want to Be Miss America" by Julia Alvarez and complete the reading activities.	Read "Roots: Random Thoughts on Random Hair" by Tatsu Yamato and complete the reading activities.	Read "The Woman Warrior" by Maxine Hong and complete the reading activities.
Read "Familiar Strangers" by Ray Suarez and complete the reading activities.	Read "Indians are People, Not Mascots" by Fred Veilleux and "Suburban Indian Pride" by Tahnahga and complete the reading activities.	Read "Black Men and Public Space" by Brent Staples and complete the reading activities.
Read "Sonia" by E.R. Frank and complete reading activities.	Read "Sure You Can Ask Me a Personal Question" by Diane Burns and "In Answer to Their Questions" by Giovana Capone and complete reading activities.	Read "Coca-Cola and Coco Frio" by Martin Espada and "White Lies" by Natasha Trethewey and complete the reading activities.

When you have finished a Tic-Tac-Toe sequence, you must read the examples from *Very Thai* and write your own *Very American* essay with photos or drawings that describes something uniquely American that you have discovered through your readings.

Activities You Have Choice in How You Do Them: Choose a culture and, after conducting some research using the class library and computers, complete the chart below for what activities you will do to more fully understand this culture. You may choose a partner from the Yellow group to work with on this assignment.

What culture do I choose to research?	What aspect of this culture will I focus my research on?	What sources or texts will I use to begin my research?	What final product will I create to demonstrate my knowledge of this culture?

Independent Reading Assignment: You will choose ANY book of your choice that either focuses on another culture or highlights specific elements of American culture. During designated class time, you will discuss the book you've chosen with your group members and you will complete a final assignment on the book of your choice. This assignment will be determined as the end of the unit approaches. Most of your homework during this unit will have to do with the book you've chosen.

Rubric:

To receive an A, I will...	To receive a B, I will...	To receive a C, I will...	To receive a D, I will...
Choose a sequence of required readings and thoroughly complete all required components for each.	Choose a sequence of required readings and complete all required components for each.	Choose a sequence of required readings and complete most of the required components for each.	Choose a sequence of required readings but do not complete most required components for each.
Write a <i>Very American</i> essay that is creative and demonstrates insight into American culture.	Write a <i>Very American</i> essay that demonstrates insight into American culture.	Write a <i>Very American</i> essay that demonstrates some insight into American culture.	Write a <i>Very American</i> essay but it demonstrates little insight into American culture.
Research a culture thoroughly in the	Research a culture in the aspect I have	Research a culture in the aspect I have	Research a culture and take some notes on the

aspect I have chosen and take effective notes on the research I conduct.	chosen and take notes on the research I conduct.	chosen and take notes on the research I conduct, but the research and notes show little evidence of thorough research.	research I conduct, but the research shows little gained knowledge and notes are ineffective.
Use the research I found to create a product that shows creativity, effort, skill, knowledge, and insight.	Use the research I found to create a product that shows effort, skill, knowledge, and insight.	Use the research I found to create a product that shows some effort, skill, and knowledge.	Use the research I found to create a product that shows little or no creativity, effort, skill, knowledge, or insight.
Use my individual time wisely and effectively.	Use my individual time wisely and effectively.	Use my most of my individual time wisely and effectively.	Use little of my individual time wisely and effectively.
Read a book independently and complete a final assignment that shows thorough knowledge and insight into the book.	Read a book independently and complete a final assignment that shows knowledge and insight into the book.	Read a book independently and complete a final assignment that shows some knowledge and insight into the book.	Read a book independently and complete a final assignment that shows little knowledge and insight into the book.

I agree to the terms listed above and believe that I am capable of completing them. I promise to put forth the most effort I can to achieve the goals listed above.

Print name: _____

Signature: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Parent phone number and/or email:

Green Group Cross Cultural Unit Outline and Rubric

Directions: As the Green group, you have been identified as students who work at a faster pace than others but often need to collaborate with your peers to succeed. This unit will be self-directed for you, but will also give you opportunities to work with other Green group members in collaboration. Below is an outline for the requirements for you to succeed in this unit. It is divided into activities you must do and activities in which you have some choice. This is also a contract. You will write what you have chosen to do in the choice section and sign the bottom. Your teacher will keep a copy and you will use the original as a checklist for your independent work. The other Green group members will serve as guides for you and you will conduct any discussions of reading or writing assignments with each other. Good luck and have fun!!

Activities You MUST Do: Below is a Tic-Tac-Toe. Choose 3 in a row diagonally, horizontally, or vertically to complete. When you have finished, staple all three together and place in your unit folder. Then you may move on to your chosen assignments.

Read "Sure You Can Ask Me a Personal Question" by Diane Burns and "In Answer to Their Questions" by Giovana Capone and complete reading activities.	Read "Coca-Cola and Coco Frio" by Martin Espada and "White Lies" by Natasha Trethewey and complete the reading activities.	Read "The Struggle to Be an All-American Girl" by Elizabeth Wong and complete the reading activities.
Read "Familiar Strangers" by Ray Suarez and complete the reading activities.	Read "Indians are People, Not Mascots" by Fred Veilleux and "Suburban Indian Pride" by Tahnahga and complete the reading activities.	Read "Black Men and Public Space" by Brent Staples and complete the reading activities.
Read "Sonia" by E.R. Frank and complete reading activities.	Read "Caucasian Mummies Mystify Chinese" by Keay Davidson and complete reading activities.	Read "Interlopers" by Saki and complete the reading activities.

When you have finished a Tic-Tac-Toe sequence, you must read the examples from *Very Thai* and write your own *Very American* essay with photos or drawings that describes something uniquely American that you have discovered through your readings.

Activities You Have Choice in How You Do Them: Choose a culture and, after conducting some research using the class library and computers, complete the chart below for what activities you will do to more fully understand this culture. You may do this assignment with a **partner from the Green group only.**

What culture do I choose to research?	What aspect of this culture will I focus my research on?	What sources or texts will I use to begin my research?	What final product will I create to demonstrate my knowledge of this culture?

Independent Reading Assignment: You will choose ANY book of your choice that either focuses on another culture or highlights specific elements of American culture. During designated class time, you will discuss the book you've chosen with your group members and you will complete a final assignment on the book of your choice. This assignment will be determined as the end of the unit approaches. Most of your homework during this unit will have to do with the book you've chosen.

Rubric:

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Write a <i>Very American</i> essay that is creative and demonstrates insight into American culture.	Write a <i>Very American</i> essay that demonstrates insight into American culture.	Write a <i>Very American</i> essay that demonstrates some insight into American culture.	Write a <i>Very American</i> essay but it demonstrates little insight into American culture.
Research a culture thoroughly in the aspect I have chosen and take effective	Research a culture in the aspect I have chosen and take notes on the research I	Research a culture in the aspect I have chosen and take notes on the research I	Research a culture and take some notes on the research I conduct, but the research

notes on the research I conduct.	conduct.	conduct, but the research and notes show little evidence of thorough research.	shows little gained knowledge and notes are ineffective.
Use the research I found to create a product that shows creativity, effort, skill, knowledge, and insight.	Use the research I found to create a product that shows effort, skill, knowledge, and insight.	Use the research I found to create a product that shows some effort, skill, and knowledge.	Use the research I found to create a product that shows little or no creativity, effort, skill, knowledge, or insight.
Use my individual time wisely and effectively.	Use my individual time wisely and effectively.	Use my most of my individual time wisely and effectively.	Use little of my individual time wisely and effectively.
Read a book independently and complete a final assignment that shows thorough knowledge and insight into the book.	Read a book independently and complete a final assignment that shows knowledge and insight into the book.	Read a book independently and complete a final assignment that shows some knowledge and insight into the book.	Read a book independently and complete a final assignment that shows little knowledge and insight into the book.

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Blue Group Cross Cultural Unit Outline and Rubric

Directions: As the Blue group, you have been identified as students who like to and work better independently. You also need advanced study from many other students in the class. This unit will be self-directed for you. Below is an outline for the requirements for you to succeed in this unit. It is divided into activities you must do and activities in which you have some choice. This is also a contract. You will write what you have chosen to do in the choice section and sign the bottom. Your teacher will keep a copy and you will use the original as a checklist for your independent work. The other Blue group members will serve as guides for you and you will conduct any discussions of reading or writing assignments with each other. Good luck and have fun!!

Activities You MUST Do: Below is a Tic-Tac-Toe. Choose 3 in a row diagonally, horizontally, or vertically to complete. When you have finished, staple all three together and place in your unit folder. Then you may move on to your chosen assignments.

Read "What Means Switch" by Gish Jen and complete the reading activities.	Read "Two Kinds" by Amy Tan and complete the reading activities.	Read "The Struggle to Be an All-American Girl" by Elizabeth Wong and complete the reading activities.
Read "Rib Sandwich" by William J. Harris and "On the Subway" by Sharon Olds and complete the reading activities.	Read "Indians are People, Not Mascots" by Fred Veilleux and "Suburban Indian Pride" by Tahnahga and complete the reading activities.	Read "The Man to Send Rain Clouds" by Leslie Marmon Silko and complete the reading activities.
Read "Sonia" by E.R. Frank and complete reading activities.	Read "Caucasian Mummies Mystify Chinese" by Keay Davidson and complete reading activities.	Read "Checkouts" by Cynthia Rylant and complete reading activities.

When you have finished a Tic-Tac-Toe sequence, you must read the examples from *Very Thai* and write your own *Very American* essay with photos or drawings that describes something uniquely American that you have discovered through your readings.

Activities You Have Choice in How You Do Them: Choose a culture and, after conducting some research using the class library and computers, complete the chart below for what activities you will do to more fully understand this culture.

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