

EXPLORING CIVICS THROUGH HISTORIC SPACES:

A MODEL FOR CIVIC LEARNING AT MUSEUMS,
HISTORIC SITES, AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

THIRD GRADE

90 minutes

COMMUNITIES AND TRADITIONS



OVERVIEW

This activity is geared toward students in third grade and is intended to take place in a museum setting.

Students will learn how a sense of community was created for those connected to a historic site/museum and discuss similarities between that community and their own experiences. They will learn about traditions within a community and how communities help individuals feel welcomed.

Finally, students will explore how many communities and cultures celebrate with food and create their own “food” out of model magic that they might eat if they were part of that community.

OBJECTIVE: Students will be able to identify traditions celebrated by community members connected to the [name of historic site/museum] and share their significance.

MATERIALS

■ PRIMARY SOURCE FOCUS

Example of food eaten as part of a celebration or tradition

- Menu, recipe, artwork showcasing food or primary source discussing food or celebrations

➤ Touch object recommendations: objects related to food, celebrations and jobs within the community.

- Model magic clay or relevant art materials
- Optional: paper plates or trays

LEAD DRIVING QUESTIONS

Our Changing Landscape

HDQ2.2

- How did different groups of people understand and express their connections to the land?

PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION (5 MIN)

Ask students to define “community.”

- Community is a group of people living or working together.
- What communities are you a part of?
- Communities may include families, schools, neighborhoods, religious institutions, towns, etc.

Encourage students to think about how they contribute to different communities/groups at home, school, and in other spaces.

2. INVESTIGATION (30-45 MIN)

Introduce students to the historic site/museum space using an object in the collection. Let students know how the historic site/museum was founded, how many people lived there, and how people came to live together in that area. The community members at the historic site/museum had many needs, just like the members of your community have many needs.

- What things might you need in a community of this size?
- What would you want with you if you lived here?
- Who might make food? Who might help if you get sick? What forms of entertainment are important to you?

Bring students to a space connected to food or display collection items/touch objects (Dining areas, cooking areas, recipes, cooking or eating utensils).

Ask students:

- What do you think this space/object was used for?
- How is it similar to spaces/objects in your own home or community?
- How is the space or object designed? Why do you think it is designed this way?

Share recipes that might have been cooked or eaten in this space. Share what food was served for specific celebrations.

EXAMPLE FROM THE INTREPID MUSEUM

Museum Educators defined an aircraft carrier with students and shared how some called the aircraft carrier *Intrepid* a “city at sea” because it carried 3,000 men for 6-9 months at a time. Almost an entire school year!

Feeding that many men was a huge undertaking, but food was a major way that the Navy made sailors feel at home onboard.

Navy cooks chose recipes from around the country to cater to the wants and needs of sailors from every state and even other nations.

The eating area could be decorated to reflect an area of the country or a significant culture. The area students discussed had a Western theme!

Ask students:

- What recipes are important to your family?
- If you lived here, what food could be cooked here to reflect your community?

Eating a specific food to celebrate an occasion can be a tradition, belief, or custom handed down from one generation to another. These traditions may take place each time we celebrate a holiday, milestone, or other celebration. Have the group turn and talk about any traditions their families might have.

- A possible sentence starter could be, "Every _____, my family eats _____."

OPTIONAL:

Show a sleeping space (or other living area) at the historic site.

- *How is this space similar or different to your own sleeping area at home?*

Bring students to a space connected to a specific job. Discuss what individuals wore as they performed the job you are focusing on.

- *Why was this job important for the community?*
- *What goods or services does the job provide? How do those goods or services support the community?*
- *What special uniforms do people wear in your community?*

Bring students to a recreational space where community members relax, play games, or entertain. Discuss what takes place in that space with students.

- *What activities do you like to do when you are not at school?*
- *Where do you do these activities?*
- *What might your community be like without these spaces?*
- *Who do you enjoy spending time with when you are not at school?*
- *Why is it important to enjoy activities like this with people in your community?*

EXAMPLE FROM THE INTREPID MUSEUM

Museum Educators showed students a menu for Thanksgiving onboard the ship. Educators allowed students to select food off the menu that they would enjoy eating. Educators emphasized that the ship's kitchen wanted to make as many people as possible feel at home. Food is a big way to do that.

Museum Educators brought students to the aircraft elevator and shared its dual use as a functional elevator and a space for sailors to hang out, play sports, and have celebrations.

Educators emphasized the importance of sailors having a place to relax when they had a break from the difficult and often stressful work they performed on the ship.

3. ACTIVITY (25-40 MIN)

Bring students to a classroom space. Share a particular celebration or tradition that may be unique or very important to the community at the historic site/museum.

Have students look through primary sources related to that celebration and have students take part in an art activity where they create food out of model magic. If food is not relevant to the celebration you are discussing, have students take part in art activities, like making cards or creating decorations for the occasion.

4. ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (5 MIN)

Students will share their creations. **Ask:**

- What traditions or celebrations are important to your community?
- What traditions or celebrations were important to the community at the historic site/museum?
- How did community members at the historic site/museum celebrate their traditions (foods, decorations, clothing, etc)?

EXAMPLE FROM THE INTREPID MUSEUM

Museum Educators told students about the “Crossing the Line” ceremony, which was celebrated every time the ship crossed the equator.

During “Crossing the Line,” sailors who had never crossed the equator before (“polliwogs”) dressed up in silly outfits, ate goofy foods, and had to do challenges.

After the ceremony, they became shellbacks.

Educators asked:

- Does your family or community have any silly traditions?
- Do you ever dress up in costume for a special occasion?

Museum Educators had students look at the menu of food served for sailors who had previously crossed the equator, which included foods like steak, chocolate cake and french fries.

Students then looked at food served for the “polliwogs,” which was identified as boiled seaweed with sowbelly, fisheye pudding, and jellyfish sandwiches.

Students then received a recipe worksheet and created their own menu items for a Crossing the Line ceremony, combining one silly food with one common food to make a polliwog food. They received one pack of model magic and sculpted their new foods.



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THIRD GRADE

50 minutes

COMMUNITY VALUES



OVERVIEW

This activity is geared toward students in third grade and is intended to take place in a museum setting.

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Finally, students will explore how many communities and cultures celebrate with food and create their own “food” out of model magic that they might eat if they were part of that community.

OBJECTIVE: Students will be able to identify traditions celebrated by community members connected to the [name of historic site/museum] and share their significance.

MATERIALS

■ PRIMARY SOURCE FOCUS

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➤ Touch object recommendations: objects related to food, celebrations and jobs within the community.

- Model magic clay or relevant art materials
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LEAD DRIVING QUESTIONS

Our Changing Landscape

HDQ2.2

- How did different groups of people understand and express their connections to the land?

PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION (5 MIN)

Review the definition of community.

- What people make up your communities?
- Your family? School? Neighborhood?

Ask students if they have ever made an agreement relating to how they should behave in their community. Their class, for example, may have a list of expectations or agreements for each student.

- What behavior is expected of you in your classroom community?
- How do you know what your classroom expectations are?

2. INVESTIGATION (20 MIN)

Share a primary source that shares expectations of community members at the historic site/museum, whether that is a poster, set of rules, job posting, fable, or poem.

Ask:

- What qualities are described in this source?
- Why would the community want their members to behave this way?
- How could a member show this quality?
- Who does this list not describe?

Share, if applicable, how the policies and practices of the time of the primary source impacted who had influence in the community represented. The qualities identified in the primary source may not have had specific identities in mind.

Ask students:

- Is there anything you would add to this list of qualities to make it welcoming to more people?
- How could the creator of this primary source make this more applicable to everyone?

3. ACTIVITY (20 MIN)

Pass out worksheets and writing utensils. With their tables, ask students to develop a list of "Qualities of a Great Student." Students may write or draw the qualities.

- What makes a good member of your school community?
- What expectations does the school have for students and staff?

EXAMPLE FROM THE INTREPID MUSEUM

Museum Educators shared "The Bluejackets' Manual" with students. The Bluejackets' Manual is the U.S. Navy's introductory book of rules and regulations.

In the World War II era, it included a list of "Qualities of a Good Navy Man." This list reflected a sailor's expected demeanor and work ethic while in the service.

Students read the qualities together and educators asked:

- What does this quality mean?
- Why would the Navy want their sailors to behave this way?
- How could a sailor show this quality?
- Who is this list not describing?

One of the qualities is "be cheerful."

- Do we always have to be cheerful and happy to be successful?
- Why do you think the Navy included this quality in their list?

After 10 minutes, ask students to share their qualities and record them on a big sticky note. Mark qualities that many students wrote.

Ask for examples of how a student can carry out each quality within their school community.

Ask students:

- How is their list of qualities similar to the historic site/museum's? How is it different?
- Why do these similarities and differences exist?

Every community is different and has different needs. However, students will notice common threads, like telling the truth and being fair, in every community they are a part of.

4. ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (5 MIN)

Every community is different and has different needs. However, students will notice common threads between the qualities that every community values.

Ask:

- What traits or qualities are important to be a successful member of any community?
- What can you do to be a good member of your community?

EXAMPLE FROM THE INTREPID MUSEUM

Museum Educators shared that during World War II, not everyone had the same opportunities in the Navy.

Black sailors were not allowed in most jobs and could not rise in the ranks to become officers. Women could not serve in the regular Navy until after World War II and could not work on ships like *Intrepid*.

LGBTQ+ sailors could be discharged if their identity was found out. Today, all people can serve in the Navy in every role.

Educators asked:

- Is there anything you would add to this list for the Navy today?
- How could the Navy make their list of a good Navy sailor more applicable to all sailors?



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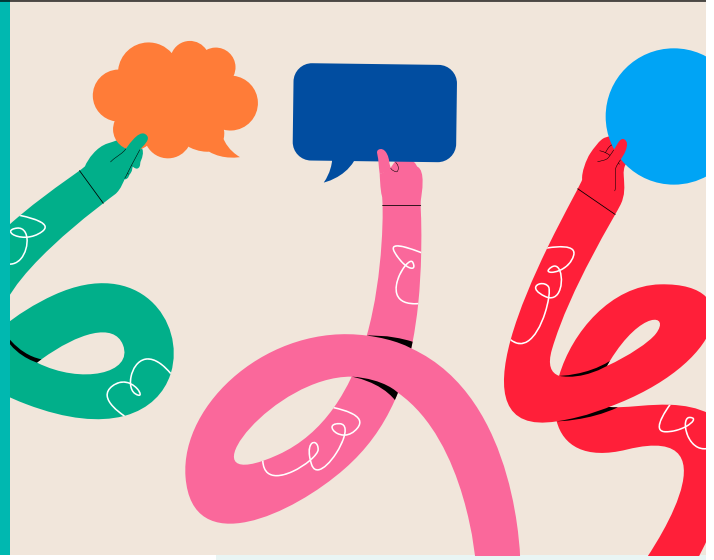
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THIRD GRADE

50 minutes

CULTURAL EXCHANGE



OVERVIEW

This activity is geared toward students in third grade and is intended to take place in a school setting.

Many factors can lead to different communities interacting with one another. The interactions between two or more communities may create tension, foster cooperation, or impact community members in many other ways.

In this lesson, students will learn about an interaction between a community connected to the historic site/museum and another community, the factors impacting the relationship between these two communities, and reflect on what information might be useful for someone visiting their own communities for the first time.

OBJECTIVE: Students will make connections between a community connected to the historic site/museum, engaging with others and the ways their own communities interact and form relationships.

MATERIALS

- **PRIMARY SOURCE FOCUS** Image or account depicting community members interacting with another community
- Paper, folded in half
- Coloring materials

LEAD DRIVING QUESTIONS

A People in the World

HDQ6.2

- How have nations cooperated in the past? What are the costs and benefits of cooperation?
- What have nations had conflict over in the past?
- What were the consequences of these conflicts?

CDQ6.2

- How do we work with and against other nations?

PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION (5 MIN)

Review the definition of community with students.

- What communities are you part of?
- What does your community value?

2. INVESTIGATION (15 MIN)

Provide context about a situation that led community members connected to the historic site/museum to engage with an outside community.

Ask students:

- Have you ever traveled to a new place?
A new city/state/country?
- What is it like entering a community that's different from yours?
- How does it feel to go somewhere you have never been before?

Share a primary source depicting community members interacting with another community. Provide context for the groups involved in the primary source, including more information about their first interactions and what factors might have impacted their relationship.

Ask students:

- Have all Americans always had the same rights or access to opportunity?
- How are the communities similar or different from one another?

Provide additional context on the policies and practices impacting community members' civil rights and liberties.

- How might policies and practices of this time have impacted the relationship between these two groups of people?

After investigating the primary source, **ask students:**

- What might each community have thought of the other when they interacted?
- How did one community help the other feel welcome?
- How do communities make people feel unwelcome?
- How is this done intentionally or unintentionally?

EXAMPLE FROM THE INTREPID MUSEUM

Museum Educators shared that while out to sea, *Intrepid* would make stops every few days or weeks to refuel, restock its supplies, and allow sailors to have some free time.

Intrepid would make stops all over the world. These were called "ports of call." At each port of call, sailors would have "liberty," or free time, to explore and enjoy themselves.

Many students at PS 51 had recently come to New York from Latin America, primarily Venezuela. This was an opportunity to recognize that many students have recently entered many new communities and ask "What has that been like?"

3. ACTIVITY (20 MIN)

Ask students:

- When you enter a new place, how do you figure out where to go and what to do while you're there?
- If you were entering a community you had never been around before, what information would you want to know?

Have students create a guide for a person coming to their community using a folded piece of paper. They can create a cover of their booklet to represent a community of their choice, including their neighborhood, city, country, after-school program, and cultural group.

The cover could include people, places, or things in the community. Brainstorm with students beforehand and leave this list in a place where students can see it.

- What communities are you part of?
- What kinds of activities, food, or landmarks are in those communities?

Inside, have students write or draw five things someone can expect when they come to this community for the first time. Have students share their finished booklets with the whole group.

4. ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS (5 MIN)

Students will share their booklets with the group.

Ask students:

- How was the community at the historic site/museum similar to your community? Different?
- How have communities interacted at the historic site/museum?
- How have you interacted with a community you are not part of?

EXAMPLE FROM THE INTREPID MUSEUM

Museum Educators shared oral history clips from two former *Intrepid* crew members, explaining some of their experiences on liberty and at different ports of call. Educators shared the video [Ports of Call](#).

Educators prefaced the video by telling students that these sailors served between 1943 and 1968. All three sailors are Black men. Educators discussed specific parts of the video and asked the following questions:

- How was life different for Black Americans before and during the Civil Rights Movement?
- Have all Americans always had the same rights?
- How do you think the Black sailors felt when they were going to a new place?
- How did the other communities make the sailors feel welcome?



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APPENDIX:

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Provide students with a historic and/or contemporary travel guide of their neighborhood or city.

Ask students:

- How is this guide similar to the booklet you created?
How are they different?
- Is there anything you would change about your booklet after seeing this guide?
- Is there anything you would change about the travel guide (add, omit, tweak)?

EXAMPLE FROM THE INTREPID MUSEUM

Museum educators shared that the crew on *Intrepid* didn't have cell phones or Google to figure out what to do during their free time in the new place.

Instead, they were given Port of Call booklets. Port of Call booklets were pamphlets designed to prepare sailors for the city or country they were going to enter. The booklets contained maps, restaurant and entertainment recommendations, cultural customs, basic language guides, and other helpful tips.

Museum educators shared copies of the booklets with students and had them look through them.

Educators asked:

- What kind of information is inside the Port of Call booklets?
- Why do you think the Navy gave sailors these booklets?

Students then created their own "Port of Call" booklet for a person coming to their community.

FAMILY CULTURE DAY



OVERVIEW

This activity is geared toward students in third grade and is intended to take place in either a school or museum setting.

Over the course of the Educating for American Democracy program, students in the third grade have learned about different communities, cultures, and traditions. The culminating event will allow students and their families to participate in a potluck where they share food from their culture. The day will culminate with students having a discussion on what we can learn from other cultures.

OBJECTIVE: Students will be able to identify where other members of their community come from and make connections between the foodways of their peers. Students will be able to describe the blended nature of their community.

MATERIALS

- Note cards
- Coloring materials
- Pencils
- Interview a Classmate's worksheets
- Suggested Materials for food: Chafing dishes with racks, sternos, napkins, tablecloths, plastic cutlery, paper plates, plastic cups, water bottles/ water cooler

EAD DRIVING QUESTIONS

Our Changing Landscape

CDQ2.2

- How has the concept of what it means to be a “people” changed over time?

PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION

Ask students to bring a dish from their culture or community to the historic site/museum or school. Students may also dress in traditional clothes or bring a few traditional artifacts (jewelry, hats, shoes, etc) to the event.

2. INVESTIGATION/ACTIVITY

When students arrive, they will decorate a notecard with their name, the name of the dish, and the dish's culture, country, or community of origin.

Each student will also receive a worksheet to interview another student before lunch. While students wait for others to arrive, they will interview each other about their food and communities. Family members can assist students in sharing information about traditional foods and their communities.

Once students have a chance to interview each other, have them share what they have learned about their classmates with the whole group.

Ask students to share with the group any similarities or differences they noticed between their cultures/communities and others that they saw or learned about today.

Review the fact that all communities have similarities and differences, but we can learn a lot about each other when we come together and share our traditions and cultures.

3. ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Once students have finished eating, ask the following for the whole group.

- What is one thing you learned about another person or community today?
- What was your favorite food you tried?
- Did you eat any foods that were similar to those you have in your community or culture? Any that were totally different?

EXAMPLE FROM THE INTREPID MUSEUM

The Family Culture Day was held in an event space at the Museum. The day was structured in the following order:

11am: Set up in event space

Noon: Family Check-in, Scavenger Hunt, or wait activity for families as they arrive

12:50pm: Lead families to event space

1pm: Interview Activity among students and parents

1:20pm: Share Out

1:30pm: Food served

2:30pm: Final Remarks

Museum Educators asked families to bring food in half-size chafing dishes.



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INTERVIEW A CLASSMATE!

Name of classmate:

What dish did your classmate bring today?

What community does that dish come from?

Why is the dish important to that community? (Is it a holiday food? Does someone specific have to make it? Does it have special ingredients?)

What other communities is your classmate a part of?

One fun fact about your classmate is. . .