

MILWAUKEE'S CULTURAL CONNECT: GERMAN AMERICANS

Teacher Guide

This program includes (1) your input (which can be modified any way you wish), (2) a video (divided into three parts) that describes the Milwaukee German experience presented by a German American anthropologist, (3) talking points with images you can print out from this site, (4) a game of jeopardy to help students retain information, and (5) a pre-/post-test survey to evaluate the program.

Small prizes may be offered. Or you might print out the cultural FACEBALL CARDS on this site as prizes.

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. Explain that students will be learning about the practices and history of German Americans
2. Show students where Germany is located on a worldwide map
3. Explain the concept of “culture” to the students

Culture

Cultural traits are any kinds of behaviors or ideas or beliefs that are SHARED by a group—meaning that a high percentage of the people practice these behaviors or beliefs. The cultural traits develop because people are adapting or adjusting to something in their environment. For example, if the group lives in an area where people are at war all the time, they might become more of a warrior society themselves to protect their group, and they might then believe that the finest people are those who are good fighters. If a group is discriminated against, they might learn that their only way to survive is to really stick together as a group, as they can't rely on help from the outside.

4. Pass out German American timeline (if desired)
5. Conduct the pre-test survey (if desired)
6. Have students count off to divide into four groups (numbered one, two, three, four) and pick group leaders, for later discussions and game

PART TWO: EXPLAIN HOW THE VIDEO WILL WORK

1. Tell students that the cultural anthropologist is a Milwaukee German American
2. Tell them they will also see excerpts from a documentary where local German Americans discuss their culture and the Milwaukee German Socialist movement in their own words
3. Tell them that parts of the video will be covered later in discussions and a game of Jeopardy—hence they might want to take notes
4. The video will be paused once so students can take part in discussions
5. Explain that you will write questions on the board for discussion later when the video is paused

PART THREE: VIDEO (FIRST SECTION)

While the video is on, write these questions (and any others you deem important) on the board:

1. The video talked about two German leaders that ended up harming a lot of people—Otto von Bismarck and the Catholics and Adolph Hitler and the Jews. Do you know of leaders today that are or could harm a lot of people?

2. The video talked about how hard it was for the Jews to get into America when they were threatened in Europe. Can you think of similar happenings today?

The video narrator will tell you when to pause the video

PART FOUR: STUDENTS RESPOND TO QUESTIONS

1. In their groups, students should come up with lists of today's leaders that are or could harm groups of people.
2. In their groups, students should come up with lists of people needing new homes in America but are having hard times coming and staying here.
3. Group leaders should report out, then hand in the lists with their group numbers on sheets of paper

PART FIVE: VIDEO (SECOND SECTION)

While this section is aired, you can tabulate the best responses on the lists, for later prizes, if applicable.

Here you might give out Facebook Cards (or some other prizes) to the students and may select some topic in the previous section of the video to discuss. Some might be the following:

PART SIX: TALKING POINTS

1. Do you remember the name Otto von Bismarck? He had a lot of influence on Europe and on America.

You might first ask what the students already know about this.

Otto von Bismarck (see image on this site)

Bismarck dominated Germany and much of Europe between the 1860s and 1890. In the 1860s he led wars to unify the separate German states into a large German Empire. He later extended his power through diplomacy throughout Europe. His regime stripped Catholics of much of their land and rights, sending German Catholics to America. Because Germany/Prussia also ruled parts of Poland, many of the Catholic Poles also left their homeland for America. Through his policies the ethnic landscape of the United States was changed forever

1. Do you remember the reference to the beautiful German buildings in the city?

You might first ask what the students already know about them.

German architecture in Milwaukee (see images on this site)

Some of the most beautiful buildings in Milwaukee were designed by German architects. Henry C. Koch, for example, designed Milwaukee's City Hall. He also designed Turner Hall and the Pfister Hotel.

The Basilica of St. Josaphat was designed by Erhard Brielmaier. He also designed St. Anthony's Church on 9th and Mitchell.

PART SEVEN: VIDEO (LAST SECTION)

PART EIGHT: GAME/EVALUATION

1. Engage the four groups in the game of Jeopardy, which can be accessed on this site (prizes or Facebook cards may be handed out, if desired).
2. Conduct the post-test survey (if desired), which can be accessed on this site.