

MILWAUKEE'S CULTURAL CONNECT: HMONG AMERICANS

Teacher Guide

This program includes (1) your input (which can be modified any way you wish), (2) a video (divided into two parts) that describes the Milwaukee Hmong experience presented by a Hmong 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 Hmong Americans
2. Show students where China, Laos, and Thailand are 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 Hmong 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 local Hmong American
2. Tell them they will also see excerpts from a documentary where local Hmong Americans discuss their culture 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 after 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 the lives that the Hmong led before they came to America. Imagine that your lives were the same as the Hmong back then. Think about things that you would like if you led this simpler life.

2. Think about the things you would not like.

The video narrator will tell you when to pause the video

PART FOUR: STUDENTS RESPOND TO QUESTION

1. In their groups, students should come up with lists of things they would like if they led lives like the Hmong before coming to America.
2. In their groups, students should come up with lists of things they would not like if they led lives like the Hmong before coming to America.
3. Group leaders should report out, then hand in the lists with their group numbers on sheets of paper.

PART FIVE: VIDEO (LAST 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 select some topics in this section of the video to discuss later. Some might be the following:

PART SIX: TALKING POINTS

1. Do you remember the reference to the Hmong New Year?

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

Hmong New Year (see images on this site)

The video talked about a lot of things the Hmong did during the New Year Celebration. In addition, they dress in traditional clothing, enjoy traditional foods, dance, and make music and other forms of entertainment. Thousands attend from Milwaukee County. The events are usually held in December at the State Fair Grounds in West Allis or the Franklin Sports Complex in Franklin.

1. Do you remember the reference to Hmong gardening and food?

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

Hmong food (see images on this site)

The Hmong diet emphasizes rice and vegetables. Meat, fish, and dairy foods are less emphasized. They tend to eat a much broader selection of vegetables than other Americans do. A typical dish is a brothy soup of vegetables and noodles with cilantro and basil tossed on top. They also enjoy vegetable egg rolls. When they do eat meat they often prefer barbecue dishes.

PART SEVEN: GAME/EVALUATION

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