

# Unit Openers - Fifth Grade - Heritage

Everybody Cooks Rice

Submitted by: Obi Okediashi

Nearly every culture has some variation of a rice dish. Read students the book, *Everybody Cooks Rice*.

You can then have students each bring in a rice dish representative of their heritage to share. Students experience the diversity of the different cultures at the same time that they see the similarity.

*Yoko* by Rosemary Wells is another book about a child who was teased for bringing sushi to school for lunch but ends with an appreciation of everyone's culture when the students have an international food day.

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Heritage Quilt

Submitted by: Shelly R. Kirk

I have always found heritage a hard concept to teach in-depth to students but after this lesson I have noticed a huge increase in the students' understanding of what heritage is. The visuals, examples and initial discussion has proved to be a good way to really get the students (and teacher) excited about the unit. An added bonus for the teacher is he/she gets to know his/her students better.

Theme Opener:

When introducing the theme I read *The Keeping Quilt* (Aladdin Picture Books) by Patricia Polacco. As a whole class we discuss the significance of the quilt, heritage and the way that each generation continues to "pass down" the story of the quilt. In the story, it also shows how things are added and left out of the next generation's original heritage. If you spend time on this it really will help lay down the foundation and understanding of what heritage is. Discuss the story after each page and allow examples from your students. This allows for you to correct false ideas of what the students think heritage is.

Then I have a sample quilt piece (made out of paper--see bottom for materials used) that I have already made of different parts of my heritage. I explain how everything on the quilt represents some part of my heritage. I then post it on the white board so students may reference it during the theme.

I explain to the students we will each be making a piece of this quilt. I let them know to make the quilt "authentic" they will need to talk to immediate family members and relatives. (For those who have been adopted or are not in a traditional family due to circumstances out of their control I modify and help them with ideas, including allowing them to use American Heritage research to add to their quilt piece.)

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I encourage the students to bring in things from home to help create the quilt. After the initial lesson is taught the students only get to work on the quilt during the "may do" part of workshop.

## Unit Closer:

After we have tied the pieces of the quilt together, each student will do an oral report on their piece of the quilt explaining their unique Heritage.

## Materials:

8 1/2 x 11 white paper  
markers, crayons, colored pencils  
various colored construction paper  
any--student materials they want to decorate their quilt with  
student picture (the small ones we get as extras from school pictures) give to student to put on their piece

## Student Guidelines:

Prior to giving the students the white paper I give a couple of specific guidelines:

1. They are not to cut the white paper.
2. They must use 6 words to define their heritage. Example: Country they are from, food item, celebrations...

After the guidelines are given I answer very little questions on may I put this on or that-- my generic answer is "This is your heritage so I can not give you an answer except When presenting your piece of the quilt to the class can you explain how it fits into your heritage?"

## Putting the Quilt together:

After the students are finished with their piece, they glue the piece on a 11 1/2 x 14 piece of colored construction paper. (Lengthwise)

I cut down the excess with the paper cutter in order to have some uniformity with the border.

As far as tying the pieces together there are various ways to do this but due to time limits we use the 3 whole punch and do a bow tie with thicker yarn.