

3rd Grade  
Unit 1: Interrelationships: Communities and their  
Environments



Essential Question #5: In what ways does community and environment shape human culture?

**Lesson Title:** The Elements of Culture

**Standard II, Objective 2**

**Implementation Time:** 45 minutes

**Media Resources Needed:** any picture book that illustrates the elements and contributions of different cultures such as *The Magic Bean Tree* by Nancy Van Laan

**Resources Needed:** Acrostic poem example

**Materials Needed:** sticky notes (3-5 per student)

**Procedure:**

1. Write the word *culture* on the board and ask students to share their understanding of its meaning. Explain that culture is defined by many elements, including a group's **language, religion, custom, and art**. Write these four words on the board under *culture*.
2. Give each student 3-4 sticky notes and direct them to write examples of culture (one example per sticky note) they encounter in the book you read aloud. Read the picture book to the class, directing them to look and listen for elements of culture (you may need to point out the more subtle elements). Model the first few pages and record examples under the correct element. Have students share their examples and sort them under the correct heading. Discuss as a class.
3. Assign students to brainstorm the elements of their own culture, including language, religion, customs, and art/expression. Explain that students will be writing an acrostic poem about their culture, using the letters of their first name. Share the example of C-U-L-T-U-R-E. Encourage students to think about how their/our culture is unique.



**Assessment:**

Write and illustrate acrostic poems. Allow students to publish their poems on a bulletin board or share with classmates.



## Acrostic Poem

**C**hildren have culture regardless of place

**U**nited States of America, Africa, Mexico or Greece

**L**anguage, stories, customs

**T**raditions, and music are key to

**U**nderstanding the similarities and differences between you and me.

**R**eligion and art are part of culture, too

**E**veryone has culture, from here to Timbuktu!

*-Dawn Hauser*

Directions: Use each of the letters in your first name as the first letter of a sentence or word in your culture poem.