Big Question: Who Are We?
Grade 2

NCSS Standards:

1. Culture:
The learner can give examples and describe the importance of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups.
The learner can describe ways in which language, stories, folktales, music, and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture and influence behavior of people living in a particular culture.

4. Individual Development and Identity
The learner can describe the unique features of one’s nuclear and extended families.
The learner can explore factors that contribute to one’s personal identity such as interests, capabilities, and perceptions.

Duluth Public School Grade 2 Learner Outcomes:

History:
The student will explore African American history.

World Cultures:
The student will gain exposure to the ethnic/national backgrounds of community members.

Sub-Questions:
- What are your family traditions?
- Where are your ancestors from?
- What difficulties have our ancestors faced?
- How are we each similar and different from one another?

I hope to help the students:
- Learn about their own family history
- Recognize other cultures and traditions
- Realize the hardships faced by certain groups
- Discover similarities and differences among our classmates
- Embrace diversity

Ideas from the text:
- Big book *Aunt Flossie’s Hats (and Crab Cakes Later)*
- Making a carp kite
- World map to pushpin where our ancestors are from
- Making a peace dove and reading “Keep the Dream” poem
Goals and Objectives:
1. The student will learn about his/her traditions and ancestry.
   - The student will find the origin of their name and any special meanings.
   - The student will create a list of traditions their family has, and draw an illustration of one.
   - The student will share their find out where their ancestors are from, and create a Venn diagram with another student to display their differences and similarities.
   - The student will create a square of the classroom quilt to represent themselves and their ancestry.

2. The student will learn about a variety of cultural groups, including their past and traditions.
   - The student will participate in the creation of a Venn diagram to show the similarities and differences for the book *Masai and I*.
   - The student will create a carp kite to celebrate an Asian tradition.
   - The student will contribute to the class chart to show cultural groups and the hardships they have faced.
   - The student will write a Pourquoi story with two other students to celebrate a Native American tradition.
   - The student will create a peace dove to represent a commitment to equality.

Unit Schedule (9 days):
Intro Lesson, 45 minutes  
Lesson 2, 45 minutes  
Lesson 3, 45 minutes  
Lesson 4, 2 session of 45 minutes  
Lesson 5, 45 minutes  
Lesson 6, 45 minutes  
Lesson 7, 2 sessions of 45 minutes

Assessment:
Throughout the unit, students will be receiving credit for completion of the daily projects. They will receive a grade based upon a rubric for the folk tale that they write with two other students and for their final quilt square.

Folk Tale Rubric

3  
- The story is complete with a beginning, middle, and end.  
- The story stays on topic, includes details, and captures the reader’s attention.  
- The story has correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

2  
- The story is partially complete and adequately developed.  
- The story stays on topic and has some details.  
- Most of the story has correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

1
The story is missing a clear beginning, middle, and/or end.
- The story stays somewhat on topic, but has few details.
- Most of the story shows little use of correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

**Quilt Square Rubric**

3
- The square depicts the student’s ancestry.
- The square shows interests of the student.
- The square illustrates one of the student’s family traditions.

2
- The square is missing one of the above requirements.

1
- The square is missing two or more of the above requirements.
Who Are We?

NCSS Professional Expectations:
The learner can explore factors that contribute to one’s personal identity such as interests, capabilities, and perceptions.

Materials:
- the book *Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes
- large white paper
- markers
- copy of questionnaire for each student to bring home

Objectives:
- Students will listen to the story and participate in a large group discussion.
- Students will write a vertical name poem to tell the class more about themselves.

Procedure:
**Introduction**
1. The teacher will read the book *Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes.
2. After the story, the teacher will ask the students how they think Chrysanthemum felt in the book.
   The teacher will also ask the students if they have ever been teased about their name, or for any other differences they may have.
3. The teacher will discuss how names are an important part of our identity.
   The teacher will ask the students if they know what kinds of things names can tell us (the name of a relative, the country we are from, something else with meaning).
4. The students will then write a vertical name poem to tell the class more about themselves (teacher will show example on large white paper).
   ex. Makes good cookies
   Asks lots of questions
   Reads more during the summer
   Yawns when she’s tired

**Closing**
1. Students can volunteer to share with their poems with the class.
2. The teacher will have students bring home a questionnaire that will lead the class into the next lesson.
   Questions will include:
   - Are you named after anyone?
   - Does your name have special meaning?
   - Do you have any nicknames?
   - What is the origin of your last name? (country)
Lesson #2  
Grade: 2  
Time: 45 minutes  

**Who Are We?**

**NCSS Professional Expectations:**
- The learner can describe the unique features of one’s nuclear and extended families.

**Materials:**
- the book *Family Pictures* by Carmen Lomas Garza
- large white paper
- markers
- white paper and crayons for the students

**Objectives:**
- Students will listen to the story and participate in a large group discussion.
- Students will create a list of traditions their family has.
- Students will illustrate a tradition or fond memory they have with their family (or close friends).

**Procedure:**

**Introduction**
1. The teacher will read the story *Family Pictures* by Carmen Lomas Garza
2. After the story, the teacher will ask the students to list some of the fond childhood memories the author had mentioned in the story.
   - The teacher will then ask the students to share any memories they have with their families, writing them on big white paper.
   - The teacher will ask the students if they know what a family tradition is (things you do today that your family has done in the past).
   - The teacher will ask students to share any traditions their family has, writing them down on big white paper.
   - The teacher will also ask the students if we have any national traditions, or things that our country celebrates year after year.
   - What are some birthday traditions?
     - The teacher will write each of these on a pre-cut balloon and tape onto the board.
3. The students will then go back to their seats and illustrate a picture of a tradition that their family has, or a fond memory.

**Closure**
1. The students can volunteer to share their illustrations with the class.
2. The teacher will then ask the students to their thoughts on this closing question: Does where we come from affect our traditions?
3. The students will be asked to complete the next questionnaire at home, including the following questions:
   - How long has your family lived in the present neighborhood?
What other places have you and your family lived?
When did your family or ancestors come to the US, and where did they come from (or are they Native American)?
(include both mother and father’s side of family)

Lesson #3

Who Are We?

NCSS Professional Expectations:
The learner can give examples and describe the importance of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups.

Materials:
- the book *Masai and I* by Virginia Kroll
- large white paper
- markers
- big white paper for student pairs

Objectives:
- Students will listen to the story and participate in creating a Venn diagram.
- Students will share their findings from where they’re from, and locate that place on a world map.
- Students will create a Venn diagram in pairs to display their differences and similarities.

Procedure:

**Introduction**

1. The teacher will read the story *Masai and I* by Virginia Kroll.
2. After the story, the teacher will lead the class in creating a Venn diagram to show the similarities and differences of Linda’s life in an apartment building and life in a Masai building.
3. The students will then share their findings from the take-home questionnaire regarding where their family is from.
   - Students will come up and put a marker on the world map to show where they’re from.
   - The teacher will ask the students:
     What does this map show us?
     (that we’re from different places)
4. The teacher will then pair students up to create a Venn diagram to show the similarities and differences they have with one another.
   - Diagrams should include information on families, traditions, and origins, as well as likes/dislikes of the students.

**Closure**

1. The pairs of students will share the Venn diagrams with the class.
2. The teacher will ask the students:
   - In what ways are we different from one another?
   - How are we similar?
Lesson #4
Grade: 2
Time: 2 session of 45 minutes each

Who Are We?

NCSS Professional Expectations:
The learner can give examples and describe the importance of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups.

Materials:
- the book *My Grandfather’s Journey* by Allen Say
- the book *The Bracelet* by Yoshiko Uchida
- sheets of butcher paper
- pencils, markers
- glue, masking tape
- scissors
- string
- tissue paper

Objectives:
- Students will listen to the story and participate in the class discussion.
- Students will write in their journal about the kinds of hardships they might face living somewhere for the first time.
- Students will create a carp kite to celebrate the Asian culture.
- Students will contribute ideas to the class graph showing ethnicities and hardships.

Procedure:

**Introduction**
1. The teacher will read the story *My Grandfather’s Journey* by Allen Say
2. The teacher will ask the students:
   - Why did the grandfather come to America?
   - What did he miss about his homeland?
   - Has everyone come to America willingly—or by their own choice?
     (no, the African Americans did not)
3. The teacher will have the students write in their journals for 5-10 minutes about what kinds of hardships they would face living somewhere for the first time.
   Students will have the opportunity to share their ideas.
4. The teacher will read the story *The Bracelet* by Yoshiko Uchida.
   The teacher will ask the students:
   - What kinds of hardships did Emi and her family face?
   - Were they treated equally?
   - Why weren’t they treated equally?
5. To celebrate the Japanese and Chinese culture, students will create carp kites.
-The teacher will explain that kites have been flown for thousands of years in China and Japan.
-The festival of Clear Brightness in China is a kite-flying occasion to honor ancestors, and kites are flown in many gardens in Japan on Japanese Boy’s Day.

**Making a Carp Kite**
1. Have children fold the butcher paper in half-length wise and draw a carp outline using the fold as the top of the fish. Have them cut it out without cutting the fold.
2. Have children open the carp and use markers to decorate it adding gills, scales, eyes, and so on.
3. Assist children in strengthening the carp’s mouth by folding back the paper about ¼ inch twice. Insert a length of string around the inside of the mouth edge. Then have children glue or tape the fold down.
4. Have children refold the fish in half and glue all edges closed, except the mouth. Carefully stuff the tail of the carp with a sheet of tissue paper before flying.

**Closure**
1. The teacher will hang the carp kites around the room.
2. The students will start a class graph to show the hardships that certain ethnic cultures have experienced.
Lesson #5
Grade: 2
Time: 45 minutes

Who Are We?

NCSS Professional Expectations:
The learner can describe ways in which language, stories, folktales, music, and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture and influence behavior of people living in a particular culture.

Materials:
- big sheet of white paper
- markers

Objectives:
- Students will listen to the story and participate in the class discussion.
- Students will write a story in groups of three to tell a folk tale, or how something came to be.

Procedure:
Introduction
1. The teacher will ask the students to think back on the hardships that people might face in coming to live in a new country.
   The teacher will ask the students:
   - Who are Native Americans?
   - What kinds of hardships have they gone through?
   - What kinds of traditions do they have?
2. The teacher will read the story *Fire Race: A Karuk Coyote Story of How Fire Came to People* by Jonathon London.
   The teacher will ask the students:
   - How did they explain how fire came about?
   - Have you heard any other stories of how things “came to be”?
3. The students will then be divided into groups of three, and asked to write a short story to explain how something came about.
   Brainstorm some ideas with the students on the board.

Closure
1. The students will add to the class graph of hardships faced—this time by the Native Americans.
2. Ask students how they think life has changed for Native Americans since the arrival of Europeans.
Lesson #6
Grade: 2
Time: 45 minutes

Who Are We?

NCSS Professional Expectations:
The learner can explore factors that contribute to one’s personal identity such as interests, capabilities, and perceptions.

Materials:
- the book *Martin’s Big Words* by Doreen Rappaport
- large white paper
- markers

Objectives:
- Students will listen to the story and participate in a large group discussion.
- Students will create a peace dove.

Procedure:

Introduction
1. The teacher will ask the students to recall why the grandfather we read about came to America.
   What group of people were forced to come here?
2. The teacher will explain that more than almost 400 hundred years ago, the Europeans decided to take Africans from their homes and bring them to America to work for them. They were not paid, and they did not have a choice.
   For many, many years, the African American people fought for equality and freedom.
   There were many important people that helped African Americans gain equal rights, but one of the most important people was Martin Luther King, Jr.
   Fill out a KWL chart on Martin Luther King, Jr.
3. The teacher will read the book *Martin’s Big Words* by Doreen Rappaport.
   The teacher will ask the students:
   How were African Americans treated unequally?
   Why weren’t they given equal rights?
4. The teacher will pass out and read aloud the poem “Keep the Dream.”
   
   *Keep the dream,
    Keep the dream with Dr. King.
    Keep the dream,
    Keep the dream so all can sing.
    That each person on earth
    Is deserving of all that life can bring.
    -D.R. Katz*
   
   What does this poem saying?
   How can we “keep the dream?”
5. Have students create a “peace dove.”
   Teacher should hang around the room when finished.

Closing
1. Tell students that the peace doves hanging around the room will represent our commitment to equality and embracing differences.
Lesson #7
Grade: 2
Time: 2 sessions of 45 minutes each

Who Are We?

NCSS Professional Expectations:
The learner can give examples and describe the importance of cultural unity and diversity within and across groups.

Materials:
- the book *The Keeping Quilt* by Patricia Polacco
- white paper
- markers
- crayons

Objectives:
- Students will listen to the story and participate in a large group discussion.
- Students will create a square of the classroom quilt.

Procedure:
**Introduction**
1. The teacher will read the story *The Keeping Quilt* by Patricia Polacco. The teacher will ask the students:
   - What is a babushka?
   - What type of religion does Anna and her family worship?
   - Besides where we’re from, how else are we different or diverse?
2. The teacher will explain that less than 100 hundred years ago, millions of Jewish people were killed just because of their religion. Ask children if they know what this event was called (the Holocaust).
3. To celebrate our individuality and the ways that we are different, each student will illustrate a white square. This should be done first in pencil, then in colored pencil.
   These squares will be put together to create our final classroom quilt, which will represent our diversity and also our unity as one classroom. The squares must show the student’s country of origin (ancestry), a family tradition, and their likes and interests.

**Closing**
1. Ask the students to share what they have learned from the unit.
2. Ask the students:
   - How are we different from one another?
   - How are we the same?
   - What does this quilt represent?