

Cultures in American Life

Grade 3 • SOCIAL-STUDIES • Students recognize examples of how different cultural traditions contribute to American food, music, celebrations, and community life. • Standards: D2.His.4.3-5, D2.Geo.4.3-5

Read each example about how people share their cultures in America. Then answer the question that follows.

1. Maria's family makes tamales during winter holidays. Tamales are corn dough wrapped in corn husks. Is this an example of food, music, or a celebration?
2. At the community center, Mr. Chen teaches children how to play drums for the Lunar New Year parade. Is this an example of music, food, or a building?
3. The Johnson family celebrates Kwanzaa in December by lighting candles and talking about their African heritage. Is Kwanzaa a type of food or a celebration?
4. At the neighborhood festival, people from many countries brought different dishes to share. This is called a potluck. Does a potluck help people learn about different cultures through food or through sports?
5. Liam's grandmother taught him an Irish folk dance called step dancing. Now he performs it at the community talent show. Which two things does this example show: music and dance, or food and buildings?
6. At the summer street fair, a group plays steel drums, which came from the Caribbean islands. The music makes people want to dance. How does this tradition contribute to community life?
7. Aisha's family celebrates Eid by wearing special clothes, saying prayers, and sharing sweet treats with neighbors. Name two ways this celebration contributes to American community life.
8. A bakery in town sells bagels, which Jewish immigrants brought to America over 100 years ago. Now people from all backgrounds eat bagels for breakfast. How has this food become part of American life?

9. During Diwali, the Festival of Lights, Indian families light small lamps, share sweets, and wear colorful clothes. Some schools now learn about Diwali in class. Explain one way this helps students understand different cultures.

10. Jazz music was created by African Americans in New Orleans by blending African rhythms with American instruments. Today, jazz is played around the world. Explain how this shows that cultural contributions can spread beyond one community.

Answer Key — Cultures in American Life

For the teacher / parent. Do not distribute with the worksheet.

1. food (*Tamales are a type of food from Mexican culture that many families share during holidays.*)
2. music (*Playing drums is a musical tradition that is part of Chinese New Year celebrations.*)
3. celebration (*Kwanzaa is a cultural celebration that honors African American heritage and values.*)
4. food (*A potluck where people share dishes from their cultures helps others learn about different foods and traditions.*)
5. music and dance (*Step dancing is a traditional Irish dance that is performed to music and shared in community events.*)
6. It brings people together to enjoy music and celebrate (*Steel drum music is a Caribbean tradition that adds to community celebrations and brings people together.*)
7. It shares traditions and brings neighbors together (*Eid is an Islamic celebration that contributes by sharing cultural traditions and building community connections through giving and sharing.*)
8. It started in one culture and is now enjoyed by many people (*Bagels began as a Jewish food tradition and have become popular across many cultures in America.*)
9. Students learn about celebrations and traditions from India (*Learning about Diwali helps students understand and respect the traditions and celebrations of Indian culture.*)
10. A tradition from one cultural group became popular everywhere and influenced many people (*Jazz started in one specific cultural community but grew to influence music worldwide, showing how cultural contributions can spread and be appreciated by many different groups.*)