

INCORPORATING TURKISH CULTURE BY UTILIZING STUDENT TALENTS

As a World Geography teacher, it would be incredibly easy to incorporate what I learn about Turkey into my classroom. Throughout the year, we learn about 10 regions of the world and nearly all of the units come with a project. One of the things that I have discovered about our students is that they enjoy a project more when they have choice, and when they can be creative by incorporating their own talents. The project I plan to create would include all of those elements.

In my research for this application, I referred to the Turkish Cultural Foundation's website and it was full of useful information! It would be a source that I will encourage my students to use for this project!

The project would allow students to choose from 6 different options. Our school not only has one of the top Math and Science programs, but also one of the top Youth Performing Arts Schools (YPAS) in the country. A large portion of my Geography classes are YPAS and VA (Visual Arts) students. To make the most of our school's resources, students would have access to many available studios. Our Visual Art Magnet includes eleven professionally equipped Art Studios. Example include: Drawing/Painting, Computer Graphics, Ceramics and Sculpture, Textiles and Fiber, Photography, and Darkroom. The 6 project options would allow them to not only be creative but utilize their talents.

There are so many elements of Turkish culture that are appealing not only to me, but I think to my students as well. I am interested in focusing on the arts, food and personal stories. I think my project will incorporate all of these elements and offer something for every student.

The ultimate goal of the project(s) will be to showcase Turkish culture through art. Not every student I have will be in YPAS or VA, so I have an option for them too! Since our students are incredibly talented and creative, I don't want to put too many parameters on the project that might stifle their own ideas. I want this to be a project that they really embrace and take ownership of so for the first year of implementation of the project, I want the rubrics to be broad and allow them to be as creative as they want!

First, students would be able to work alone, in a pair or a group of 3. A general overview of the 6 options includes:

- 1) CULINARY art: students could research and select a Turkish dish to make and bring to class on presentation day. (perhaps a Turkish dessert/sweet with maybe some Turkish tea) They would provide recipe(s) to the class
- 2) TRADITIONAL art: students would research and select a traditional art form - such as wood working, jewelry making, glass art or metal working. They could replicate or draw inspiration from Turkish pieces to create their own
- 3) CERAMIC art: students would research and select a Turkish ceramic piece to replicate or draw inspiration to create their own
- 4) FINE ARTS: students would research paintings, sculptures or graphic arts piece. They would replicate the original or draw inspiration from Turkish history or culture and create their own piece
- 5) PERFORMANCE art: students would research traditional/folk dances of Turkey and use them to choreograph their own piece that would illustrate an aspect of Turkish culture.
- 6) HUMAN art: this would be for the non YPAS/VA student. Since 2004, the city of Louisville has become home to over 500 Ahiska Turks. Students could choose to interview a member(s) of this community. Students could use their interview to create a written story, a story through photographs or a short film. Students would design interview questions, and meet with willing members of this unique community.

** Each project would require a research element, a written piece as well as a presentation.

On "presentation day" each student/group of students would present their project to the class.