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Lesson Plan – PCCU Conference for Educators

Cross-Cultural Comparison between South Korea and the U.S.

“Belonging”

Reflection:

I currently teach at Westtown School, a Quaker boarding school in West Chester, PA. This academic year (2024-25), I am teaching an upper-level elective course called *Modern Asia*. Additionally, I am teaching a 9th grade year-long course called *Peace & Justice in World History*. In both courses, students spend time developing a strong sense of the ways in which humans build cultural identity and how these aspect of their identity shape their experience in life and within communities. In particular, the *Modern Asia* course emphasizes the various ways in which Koreans have formed a strong identity and maintained this identity over periods of political unity, during Japanese colonial rule, and subsequent political struggles in the post-WWII period. The *Peace & Justice* course examines various examples in which communities created activist movements formed by a shared identity and a common goal of establishing rights and recognition. This year’s PCCU conference on “Belonging” provides many resources and fresh ideas for both courses, and I plan to integrate a greater understanding of Korean culture and cultural take-aways within my curriculum. The workshop gave me several resources (reading recommendations, books, lesson ideas, and activities) that reinforced my own understanding of Korean identity as well as elements of cross-cultural connection to integrate into my classes.

As I reflect upon the specific presentations, I have already incorporated the *YouTube* video “South Korea Marks Unhappy Anniversary of the Asian Financial Crisis”

(https://youtu.be/h_TcP73_nmE?si=q3i1IYUg-KmPGOjv) into a greater lesson of Korean collective mindset and resilience. This video provided a brief introduction to our larger discussion of the **March First Movement** and its demonstrations in 1919. The students correlated the idea of Koreans providing family precious metals in the 1990s with an earlier period in which many gave their lives for independence and freedom. Similarly, I plan to incorporate elements from the “Belonging” workshop into my curricula.

Teaching Opportunity:

Beyond my own *Modern Asia* and *Peace and Justice* classes, I aim to share this lesson with my co-teaching colleagues (for *Peace and Justice*) and my colleagues who currently teach *U.S. History*. The lesson focuses on the Korean Cultural Center of Chicago and the neighborhood, Koreatown (Los Angeles), as two centers of preserving Korean culture within their communities. The lesson involves activities to familiarize students to cultural centers in general as well as the KCCoC and its programs, specifically. It is my hope that all teachers who access this lesson plan may find the readings, links to websites, and lesson plan ideas useful. It is intended for 7th-12th grade classrooms in a variety of subjects (History, English, Language Arts, Art). The lessons are designed for three days of activities for a standard 45-60 minute teaching period.

Lesson Objectives:

The aim of these lessons is to provide a basic understanding of how a Korean Cultural Center serves its community by building a strong sense of identity and belonging. These lessons help students to learn about the goals of a Korean Cultural Center, its programs and collections, and the diverse constituency that it serves. By the end of the three-day unit of lessons, students

should be more familiar with the important purpose of the Korean Cultural Center of Chicago and the historical role of Koreatown in Los Angeles.

Essential Understandings:

- Students will learn about the various ways in which Koreatown (L.A.) and the Korean Cultural Center of Chicago have provided a sense of belonging to Koreans and Korean Americans. Additionally, students will gain a better appreciation for cross-cultural understanding by seeing how these neighborhoods and institutions have interacted with others within the broader community. The concepts and ideas from presentation slides, companion resources, and group discussions from the **PCCU Cross-Cultural Comparison Conference – Belonging** will underscore the lessons and activities of this unit.

Unit Goals: By the end of this unit, students will gain an understanding of

- the purpose of Korean Cultural Centers.
- the wide diversity of programs, collections, and cultural events sponsored by the Korean Cultural Center of Chicago.
- important aspects of Koreatown in Los Angeles.

Standards: National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)

- Theme 1 (Culture): Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity
- Theme 2 (Time, Continuity, and Change): Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the past and its legacy.
- Theme 3 (People, Places, and Environments): Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments.

- Theme 5 (Individuals, Groups, and Institutions): Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions.
- Theme 9 (Global Connections): Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of global connections and interdependence.

Lesson	Theme	Resources & References	Procedure & Activities
Day 1	Korean Belonging: <i>Basics on the Korean Cultural Center in Chicago</i>	Kahoot: Link for Teacher (host) KCCoC: Link for Teacher and students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Warm-Up: “Kahoot: Korean & U.S. Cultures” Prior to class, follow the Kahoot link and prepare to host a short 7-question quiz. (https://create.kahoot.it/details/35334d7d-7bc7-4017-a6d9-d36eae8176c6). Students should work in pairs to increase discussion and sharing. The Kahoot will serve as a way to generate student discussion about the role of a cultural center and community. The team with the highest total wins the warm-up. <li> Reading & Discussion: “KCCoC & Belonging” After a brief follow-up discussion of the Kahoot quiz, student pairs will then be directed to the website of the Korean Cultural Center of Chicago (https://kccoc.org/all-programs/visual-arts/collections/). (Pair & Share) Working in pairs, students will generate ideas to share with the whole class. The teacher can ask: <i>What is the purpose of a community cultural center? According to the website, what are the mission and goals of the Korean Cultural Center of Chicago? (Answers will vary. But, the “Mission Statement and Goals” can be found under Visit>About Us).</i> Within the whole class discussion, the teacher will aim to explain and underscore the goals of KCCoC and other cultural centers. The goal of cross-cultural understanding is especially relevant for students (not from Korean heritage).

			<p>Small group presentation – Cultural Museum</p> <p>The teacher will direct students to the Visual Arts collections of the KCCoC (https://kccoc.catalogaccess.com/objects?search=&page=1&size=10&withImages=false).</p> <p>In preparation for Day 2, the teacher will assign small groups of 3-4 students to work together. Each small group will then select five objects from the collection that convey a sense of “belonging” within the Korean community.</p> <p>Teacher’s prompt for students: <i>Working with your partners, you will assemble a special museum exhibition called “Belonging.” As a team of curators, you will choose five objects, each in a different category, and create a set of slides of the objects. Your presentation will explain how the objects reflect Korean history and legacy, or how the objects support cultural exchange and understanding. How do they convey a sense of “belonging”?</i></p> <p>3. Exit ticket: Each student offers one important aspect of a cultural center to a growing Korean community.</p>
<p>Day 2</p>	<p>KCCoC Programs</p>	<p>K-Town is Your Town (link)</p> <p>KCCoC: Link for Teacher and students</p>	<p>1. Warm-Up</p> <p>K-Town is Your Town</p> <p>On a projected display, the teacher will show students the <i>K-Town is Your Town</i> website (https://photos.kycccla.org/) by scrolling down through the first 5 rows of pictures.</p> <p>Then, the teacher will provide the following prompt:</p> <p><i>Why do you think this website is titled “K-Town is Your Town: Portraits of Koreatown”? What portraits might we expect to find?</i></p>

			<p>After 4-5 responses, the teacher will then direct students to the website (https://photos.kyccla.org/) and provide the next prompt:</p> <p><i>Now, click on the portraits of 5 different people and read each person’s background (the first paragraph). After you’ve read five portrait backgrounds, turn to a neighbor and discuss the variations of the opening questions:</i></p> <p><i>Why do you think this website is titled “K-Town is Your Town: Portraits of Koreatown”? How did the portraits reflect what you expected? How did they differ from what you expected?</i></p> <p>2. Small group presentation – Cultural Museum</p> <p>Each small group of students will present the five objects from the KCCoC collection that they believe convey a sense of “belonging” within the Korean community.</p> <p><i>Depending on the objects selected, some might be repeated across groups. This is okay. The main objective is for students to consider which objects foster a sense of belonging among the Korean and Korean American community. The teacher may choose to allow time for questions.</i></p> <p>3. Exit ticket: Each student shares one idea (or detail) learned through the portrait activity or the Cultural Museum. (<i>Answers will vary.</i>)</p>
Day 3	KCCoC news	KCCoC News (link)	<p>1. Brainstorm</p> <p>Teacher’s prompt: <i>“What elements of Korean culture are most appealing to those in the U.S.: Art, Music, Dance or Food?”</i></p> <p>In small groups of 3, students will consider what elements of Korean culture appeal to</p>

those in the U.S. Each group should have a scribe who will share the group's response and reasoning afterwards. *It is important to note that the question can be answered in various ways. As students will see in the following activity, Korean Cultural Centers provide various programs that appeal to Koreans, Korean Americans, and the non-Korean heritage community.* Each group's scribe will share out the response and reason for their choice.

2. **Partner Research and Discussion**

KCCoC News

After the warm-up discussion, the teacher will then organize students into pairs (or small groups of 3 students) and direct them to the Korean Cultural Center of Chicago News (<https://kccoc.org/news/>).

Student pairs (or small groups) will identify and select three events that occurred at the KCCoC during the present year (Feb-April, May-July, Aug-Oct) that seem to project a sense of "***belonging***." Each group should be able to support their findings using the text description and the accompanying pictures. *This activity can be formed as a discussion or as a written assignment.*

Final reflection

Students will write a short essay (or share in a discussion) their understanding of the ways in which Korean Cultural Centers create a sense of belonging for Koreans in the U.S., Korean Americans, and the greater community. The aim is to draw together the major themes of the mini-unit.

Some queries to incorporate:

How have the communities in Chicago area and Los Angeles tried to maintain Korean culture? How have the KCCoC and Koreatown shared Korean culture with the greater community?

Resources and Additional Links for Students

Korean Cultural Center of Chicago (Wheeling, IL): <https://kccoc.org/>

The Sejong Cultural Society: <https://www.sejongculturalsociety.org/index.php>

Koreatown (Los Angeles)

- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation: <https://www.achp.gov/preserve-america/community/los-angeles-koreatown-california>
- Korean Cultural Center of Los Angeles: <https://www.kccla.org/ourmission/>
- Koreatown Youth & Community Center: <https://www.kyccla.org/>
- K-Town is Your Town: <https://photos.kyccla.org/>