

CULTURE IN A BOX

In this eTwinning kit we propose that students produce a PowerPoint presentation or "Culture in a Box" on their partner country in groups. To be able to do this, students will gather information about their own country and send it to their partner school, which will be responsible for producing the PowerPoint presentation on their partner country's cultural assets.

Pedagogical Value

Students will have a chance to look for, classify, talk about, share, write, compare and present information on their culture and that of their partner.

Objectives:

Students will:

- Consider the definition of culture, and reflect on what this means to them
- Share relevant information about their culture with their European partners
- Create "Culture in a Box" presentations
- Reflect on what they learned about the other country and the differences and similarities between the two cultures
- Write reflective essays on what they have learned

PROCESS:

Step 1 - Getting Started:

Brainstorming

Students reflect about these questions and share their responses

- *What is cultural heritage?*
- *How does your cultural heritage define who you are? Consider your language, religion, value systems, neighborhood, etc.*
- *How would you present yourself to others?*
- *How do you think other people in Europe see us?*
- *Do these two perceptions match in your opinion? Why?*
- *What is the role of cultural heritage in the way we see ourselves and the way others see us?*
- *Is there a common European cultural heritage?*
- *How do you think the cultural factors you have identified might change for your future children, grandchildren and great grandchildren?*

Looking at an example of what a "Culture In a Box" presentation is

Show the students an example ready to be filled in the file [culture in a Box presentation](#). You may see an example of a Greek "Culture in a Box" presentation zip file 544kb in www.netschoolbook.gr/culturecapsuleGR.zip

Step 2: Collecting information

The students in each class get into groups. It is important that there is the same number of groups in the two classes, as they will have to send each other the information they collect.

They group will first have to select 10 cultural aspects about their own country, and write about them, find pictures, links, etc. This is a list of possible themes to pick from:

- Geographical data
- Statistical data: population, climate, death and birth rates, minimal wages, average height, rainfall...
- Survival language: Examples of some useful sentences and phrases in their language
- Music
- Food
- Typical leisure activities
- Famous people
- Important dates in history
- Famous books or magazines
- Proverbs
- Legends
- Poems
- Inventions
- Discoveries
- Landscapes
- Cities
- Typical products
- Festivals
- Do's and don'ts

Each group prepares information cards for each of the 10 selected items to send to their partner group via e-mail, video conference, etc. One possibility for an information card is:

- Title of slide:
- Suggested text:
- Suggested pictures:
- URL(s) where you can find pictures:
- URL(s) where you can find additional information:

These information cards will be the basis for their partner's Culture in a Box presentation.

The groups must try to provide an answer to the question: *"What will give my partners the most complete picture of my country?"* They should remember that slides for presentations must be brief.

Step 3: Exchanging information

As class A will make their "Culture in a Box" presentation on country B, and class B will work on country A based on the information provided by their partner group, now it is the time for students inform their partners about the 10 items they chose, and send their information cards to each other. They will be able to do that using the e-mail facilities of the shared workspace we offer on the portal, the TwinSpace.

Step 4: Preparing the "Culture in a Box" presentations

The different groups work on the "Culture in a Box" presentations of their partner's country, by completing the [presentation file](#).

Outcome

Pupils produce PowerPoint presentations on the 10 main characteristics of the partner's country. These presentations can be filed in the TwinSpace, so that pupils in both schools can see what their peers have done.

Evaluation

Students evaluation will be based on

- Their productions during the brainstorming stage, if any.
- Participation in class and group discussions
- Systematic research on particular culture aspects,
- The quality of their "Culture in a Box" presentation"
- Their teamwork abilities
- The quality of their information exchange with their partner group

Follow up Options

Option 1:

Misinterpretation in the “Culture in a Box” presentations

As each group produces a presentation of the partner’s culture, one can expect some misinterpretation. If that is the case, the natives of the country must reason any suggested changes when they think a cultural aspect has not been clearly understood by their partner group. They can do this via the e-mail, chat, and bulleting board facilities in the TwinSpace or video-conference.

Option 2:

Oral Presentation of the “Culture In a Box”

The groups will orally report on the presentations” they or their partners have made to the rest of their class, focusing on the cultural aspect they have found more interesting. The goal is for the class as a whole to gain appreciation for the variations and similarities among different cultures. A chat or a video-conference with the partner class could be organized to discuss about the results of these oral presentation afterwards.

Option 3: Essay writing

Each student may write an essay reflecting upon the activity and their own personal experience. These productions could be shared in the TwinSpace.

Some suggested essay topics:

- *Describe your own cultural heritage and identity.*
- *Imagine you were an immigrant in the country of your partner group.*
- *How does your cultural heritage compare with the culture of your twin class? What are the similarities? What are the differences?*
- *Why is it important for future generations to know about and understand other people’s cultural heritage?*

Original idea by Theresa Yiakoumatou (Greek Ministry of Education)

Adaptation for eTwinning: Núria de Salvador

Age group: 10-16

Duration: 5-6 sessions

ICT tools: e-mail, bulletin board, chat, video-conferencing, file sharing, other software (PowerPoint presentation)

ModelSubject: Europe, Geography, History/traditions, Informatics/ICT, Language and Literature, Foreign languages