

Cultural Alphabet Book Assignment Sheet

Purpose of this assignment

This project will increase your knowledge of a world culture and improve your reading, writing, technology usage, and researching skills.

Step 1: Choose a culture

- Choose a culture that you would like to learn more about. This could be your own culture if you were born outside of the United States, your parents' culture, or just a culture that you are interested in. You may also choose to focus on a specific state or region within the United States.
- Find other students who are interested in learning about the same culture and form a working group of no more than four students.

Step 2: Conduct research to find information about your selected culture.

a) Use sources of cultural information

There are many ways to find information about other cultures. Some resources are on the Internet, some are in the classroom, some are in the Media Center, and others could be right at home. Listed below are typical sources for a research project:

- Books
- Encyclopedias
- Websites
- Magazines (such as *National Geographic*)
- Maps
- Photographs and posters
- Movies and music

b) Make a list of possible artifacts

Once you've found some good resources, start making a list of items, or *artifacts*, that are important to your selected culture. Artifacts tell us interesting things about a culture. Every culture has artifacts that have religious, social, or medicinal significance. Listed below are typical artifacts:

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- **Official symbols or emblems**, such as a flag, motto, song, prayer or pledge, hero, coat of arms, food, flower, costume, and bird or other animal
- **Famous people, places, and events**, such as educators, authors, artists, and celebrities; buildings, monuments, or statues; and holidays and historical events (be sure to avoid catastrophic events)
- **Features of everyday life**, such as traditional dance, popular music, celebrations, etiquette, public services, and religions or forms of worship

c) Schedule an interview with a person of that culture

- Schedule a time in advance so that everyone has a chance to prepare.
- Review the list of questions beforehand and either share them with the person being interviewed or give that person an idea of what you want to cover.
- Bring a notepad and pen to the interview. If you plan to record the interview, be sure to have a tape recorder, microphone, extra tapes, and batteries.
- During the interview, don't limit yourself to the written questions. If you think of a new question while you are talking with the interviewee, go ahead and ask it.

Step 3: Select a cultural symbol to represent each letter

- **Select words**

As you collect information, try to connect the events and information to a letter of the alphabet. Avoid general statements such as "J is for Jamaican" or "E is for Ethiopian." The goal is to present the unique languages, beliefs, and traditions of your selected culture.

- **Write sentences**

Show respect and understanding of your selected culture by avoiding negative stereotypes.

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- **Choose illustrations**

Use clip art, a photograph, or a drawing to represent each word. Be sure that your illustrations show respect to your selected culture's dress, dance, and beliefs.

Step 4: Create an alphabet book about your selected culture

You have been researching a culture over the past few weeks. Now it is time to put everything together into an attractive alphabet book so you can share what you have learned with your families, classmates, and others.

Your alphabet book should include the following:

Book Requirements	Points
An eye-catching cover page that includes title, illustration, your names, and date	10
An acknowledgement page that gives thanks to those who helped in your research efforts	5
One page for each letter A–Z (26 pages) with illustrations supporting the text and a sentence that explains the cultural significance of that letter's concept or artifact	60
Correct capitalization and punctuation	10
Neatness and appearance	10
Turning your project in on time	5

Extra points will be awarded for

- An attractive poster
- Samples of traditional arts and crafts, food, or clothing
- Examples of common phrases in your culture's language with translations
- Any other creative additions you can think of!

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Step 5: Present your alphabet book to an audience

- State the name of the culture that you studied and the title of your alphabet book.
- Introduce each group member and tell the audience what work he or she did during the project.
- Read your book aloud. You may choose to have one group member read or pass the book around and take turns reading a few pages each. If there is not enough time to read your entire book, read only a few of your favorite pages.
- If you have brought samples of food, clothing, or other artifacts, talk about them and pass them around the audience.
- Talk about three favorite facts that you learned about the culture and why you find them so interesting.