



# If These Walls Could Talk: Seeing a Culture Through Human Features

From a wonderful book about famous walls, children learn about countries and their cultures.

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<b>Grade Level</b>	2-3
<b>Duration</b>	2-3 class periods

**National Geography Standards**  
**ELEMENT TWO; PLACES AND REGIONS**  
 4. The physical and human characteristics of places

**Arizona Geography Strand**  
**Grade 2**  
**Strand 4 Geography**  
**Concept 2 Places and Regions**  
 PO 1 Identify through images how places have distinct characteristics (e.g., Japan - Mt. Fuji; China -The Great Wall; United States - Washington Monument).  
 PO 2 Discuss human features in the world (e.g., cities, parks, railroad tracks, hospital, shops, schools).  
**Concept 4 Human Systems**  
 PO 4 Discuss cultural elements (e.g., food, clothing housing, sports, customs, beliefs) of a community or nation (e.g., Japan, China, India, United States).  
**Grade 3**  
**Strand 4 Geography**  
**Concept 2 Places and Regions**  
 PO 1 Locate major physical and human features on maps and globes (e.g., Greece, Italy, Hudson River,

**Other Arizona Standards**  
**Social Studies**  
**Grade 2**  
**Strand 2 World History**  
**Concept 1: Research Skills for History**  
 PO 4. Use primary source materials (e.g., photos, artifacts, interviews, documents, maps) and secondary source materials (e.g., encyclopedias, biographies) to study people and events from the past.  
**Concept 2: Early Civilizations**  
 PO 2. Recognize how art (e.g., porcelain, poetry), architecture (e.g., pagodas, temples), and inventions (e.g., paper, fireworks) in Asia contributed to the development of their own and later civilizations.  
**Grade 3**  
**Strand 2 World History**  
**Concept 1: Research Skills for History**  
 PO 3. *Use primary source materials (e.g., photos, artifacts, interviews, documents, maps) and secondary source materials (e.g., encyclopedias, biographies) to study people and events from the past.*  
**ELA Standards**  
**Reading**  
**Informational Text**  
**Key Ideas and Details**  
**2.RI.1** Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.  
**3.RI.1** Ask and answer questions to demonstrate

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New York Bay/ Ellis Island, Canada, Spain, France, United States, Mexico, Washington D.C.).

### **Concept 4 Human Systems**

PO 4 Discuss the cultural elements of a community or nation (e.g., food, clothing, housing, sports, customs, beliefs) in regions studied (e.g., Greece, Italy, United States and Canada).

### **Concept 6 Geographic Applications**

PO 1 Describe how physical and human characteristics of places change from past to present.

understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

**2.RI.3** Describe the connection between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text.

**3.RI.3** Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

### **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**

**2.RI.7** Explain how specific images (e.g., a diagram showing how a machine works) contribute to and clarify a text.

**3.RI.7** Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).

**2.RI.8** Describe how reasons support specific points the author makes in a text.

### **Writing**

#### **Text Types and Purposes**

**2.W.2** Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section.

**3.W.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

a. Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension.

b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.

c. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., also, another, and, more, but) to connect ideas within categories of information.

d. Provide a concluding statement or section.

#### **Production and Distribution of Writing**

**2.W.4 and 3.W.4** With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

**2.W.5** With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing.

**3.W.5** With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

#### **Language Standards**

##### **Conventions of Standard English**

**AZ.2.L.1** Write multiple sentences in an order that supports a main idea or story.

**AZ.3.L.1** Write and organize a paragraph that groups sentences about a topic.

# If These Walls Could Talk: Seeing a Culture Through Human Features

## Overview

There are many ways to introduce young students to culture. Some are obvious; some are not. Teaching students the importance of human features regarding a culture gives them an opportunity to see the factors that shaped it. Walls that stand for years can be a reflection of these cultures, their histories, values, and meaning to a group of people.

## Purpose

In this lesson, students will identify events that shape a culture and identify human features in their own community.

## Materials

- *Talking Walls* by Margy Burns Knight
- Writing paper and pencils
- Clipboard for each student (or slate or other hard writing surface)
- Student copies of a world map
- Colored dots or stars
- Transparency or wall map of the world

## Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Locate the country or continent where each wall in the story is located.
- Discuss the events that surround the history of each wall.
- Make a list of possible events that could have happened in view of a wall in the community.
- Write a paragraph about a particular wall chosen by the student while on a class walk.

## Procedures

SESSION ONE:

1. Introduce students to the book, *Talking Walls*.
2. Ask the following questions:
  - *Can walls really talk?*
  - *What do you think the title means?*

- *What is on the wall on the cover of the book?*
- *How do you think the pictures got there?*
- *What art materials do you think the artists used?*
- *Do you think the wall on the cover was created recently or a long time ago?*
- *What do you think the children are talking about?*

3. Read *Talking Walls*. (Note: Due to the book's length, teacher may choose to read portions of the book instead of the whole book in one sitting.)

4. Discuss the importance of each wall in the book to its culture.

5. Show students the locations of each wall on a world map.

6. Distribute a copy of a world map to each student.

7. Using the world map, assist students in placing a sticky dot or star on each country (or continent) mentioned in the book. (See Assessment Checklist)

SESSION TWO:

1. Review *Talking Walls* and discuss the importance of the walls to the cultures.

2. Ask students if they think there are any important walls in their city or neighborhood.

3. Take students on a walk to look at the walls around school.

4. In an urban setting, take a short walk around the block, pointing out walls around shopping malls, parks, restaurants, garbage containers, and backyard fences (if time permits). (Check on if you need parent permission to do this off campus activity.)

5. If there are no commercial buildings near the school, use the various enclosures, fences, or walls at the school. Stop at each wall and discuss what things the students have seen happen around the wall. Ask students to pretend they are one of the walls and describe what they have experienced. Encourage students to use all of their senses.

6. Ask students to choose one wall that they saw on their walk.

7. Explain the following assignment with students by saying, "We are going to write about some of the

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events that the wall you chose has experienced.

Pretend that you are the wall and make a list of everything that you see, hear, feel, taste, or smell. Be sure to use words that describe the senses so that the list comes alive to anyone who reads it.

After we have a class list, you are going to draw a picture and write a paragraph about something that your wall experienced. Your paragraph must have an introductory sentence, two or three sentences describing what your wall experienced, and a concluding statement."

- Outstanding – Students write an introductory statement, three descriptive sentences, and a concluding statement.
- Satisfactory – Students write an introductory statement, one or two descriptive sentences, and a concluding statement.
- Needs Improvement – Students are missing an introductory statement, write one or no descriptive sentences, or are missing a concluding statement.

### Assessment

#### World Map Checklist

Based on the countries described in the book, students will place sticky dots or stars in the following countries (or continents) on a world map with 80% accuracy (11 or more correctly identified):

- Great Wall of China - China (Asia)
- Aborigine Wall Art - Australia (Australia)
- Lascaux Cave - France (Europe)
- Western Wall - Israel (Asia)
- Mahabalipuram's Animal Walls - India (Asia)
- Muslim Walls - Saudi Arabia (Asia)
- Great Zimbabwe - Zimbabwe (Africa)
- Cuzco, Peru - Peru (South America)
- Taos Pueblo - United States (North America)
- Mexican Murals - Mexico (North America)
- The Canadian Museum of Civilization - Canada (North America)
- The Vietnam Veterans Memorial - United States (North America)
- Nelson Mandela's Prison Walls - South Africa (Africa)
- The Berlin Wall – Germany (Europe)

#### Paragraph Assessment Checklist:

- Is there an introductory statement?
- Are there two or three descriptive sentences about what the wall saw?
- Is there a concluding statement?

### Extensions

Students could create their own walls and write a story about what happened in view of the wall. Give each student or team of students the same craft materials to create the wall.

Ask students to choose a wall from the book and research the country in which it is located.

Students can make a Story Map tied to the book by going to: <http://mapmaker.nationalgeographic.org/>

### Sources

Knight, M. B. (1992) *Talking Walls*. Gardiner, ME: Tilbury House Publishers. ISBN 0-88448-154-9

Web sites:

<http://www.levitt.com/slideshow/s01p05.html>

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/438>

<http://www.vietvet.org/thewall.htm>

<http://www.remote.org/frederik/culture/berlin/>

<http://www.bradshawfoundation.com/lascaux/>