



## Who's a Noodlehead?

Students use humorous "noodlehead" stories from around the globe to learn about world cultures.

|                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Author</b>      | Cheryl Wiens    |
| <b>Grade Level</b> | 6-7             |
| <b>Duration</b>    | 3 class periods |

### National Geography Standards

#### ELEMENT TWO: PLACES AND REGIONS

- 4. The physical and human characteristics of place.
- 6. How culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

### Arizona Geography Strand

#### Grade 6 Strand 4 Geography Concept 2 Places and Regions

PO 3 Describe the interactions of people in different places and regions

#### Concept 4 Human Systems

PO 5 Identify cultural norms that influence different social, political, and economic activities of men and women.

#### Grade 7 Strand 4 Geography Concept 2 Places and Regions

PO 1 Describe the human and physical characteristics of place and regions

PO 3 Compare the historical and contemporary interactions among people in different places and regions

#### Concept 4 Human Systems

PO 6 Describe the distributions and patterns of cultural characteristics (e.g., religions, language, standard of living) over time.

### Other Arizona Standards

#### ELA Common Core Standards

#### Reading Literature

#### Key Ideas and Details

6. RL.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

7. RL.1. Cite several sources of textual evidence when useful to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

#### Writing

#### Text Types and Purposes

6.W.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.

b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.

d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.

e. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

7.W.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.

## Who's A Noodlehead?

- b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
- c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
- d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
- e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

### Language

#### Conventions in Writing and Speaking

6L2. Observe conventions of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

a. Use commas, parentheses, or dashes to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.\*

b. Spell correctly.

7LL.2 Observe conventions of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

a. Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.

b. Spell correctly.

6.L3. Make effective language choices.

a. Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.

7.L.3. Make effective language choices.

a. Choose words and phrases that express ideas concisely, eliminating wordiness and redundancy.

Based on *Noodlehead Stories: World Tales Kids Can Read and Tell* by Martha Hamilton & Mitch Weiss.

## Overview

The human characteristics of places around the world form a cultural mosaic. Looking at differences in cultures is illuminating because we are reminded of our human commonalities. One way to look at differences and similarities in our world's cultural mosaic is through folk tales.

## Purpose

In this lesson, students will read noodlehead tales that bring out cross-cultural humor and then write one of their own.

## Materials

- Overview of Cultures - Handout 1
- Noodlehead Tales - Handout 2 and Answer Key
- Noodlehead story Writing Prompt - Handout 3
- Brainstorming Graphic Organizer – Handout 4

- Teacher copy of *Noodlehead Stories: World Tales Kids Can Read and Tell* by Martha Hamilton & Mitch Weiss
- World map

## Objectives

The student will be able to:

- define culture.
- recognize that cultures create a cultural landscape around the world.
- analyze cultural differences and commonalities.
- write his/her own noodlehead story, fictionalized and/or based on his/her own experiences.

## Procedures

1. Lead the class in a discussion defining culture. What makes a culture? (social behavior patterns,

## Who's A Noodlehead?

arts, beliefs, institutions, language, products of human thought, and artistic activity)

2. Students will read Handout 1, overview of the four countries and their cultures. Locate the countries (Puerto Rico, Indonesia, Philippines, and Russia) on an outline map by coloring and labeling. Talk about commonalities and differences between the countries.

3. Discuss characteristics of noodlehead stories. (A noodlehead does something foolish. For instance, some noodleheads think they are being clever by following directions, but they act very idiotically. Some noodleheads look for a complicated solution to a simple problem. Some noodleheads create a problem that never existed and then try to solve it. Other noodleheads think they are someone else when they wear another person's clothes, or believe they are wearing clothing when they are not.)

4. Read aloud the four noodlehead tales, leaving out any names of countries. As the students listen, they will match the titles to the countries and their cultures on Handout 2.

5. Generate discussion of characteristics of noodlehead tales and expectations of students' writing. Students will write their own creative story, either based on their own numbskull adventures, or make up their own tale. A possibility would be to begin by using one of the characters from the stories in the book. As a brainstorming activity and to further emphasize the concept of culture,

students should list four elements of their story's culture on the graphic on Handout 4.

## Assessment

Evaluate students' noodlehead stories for Ideas, Word Choice, and/or Convention. (See Handout 3, Prompt for writing a Noodlehead Tale.) Score with the 6 Traits Writing Rubric. Mastery will be considered a score of 4 or higher on each of the specified traits.

## Extensions

Use different genres of folk tales from various cultures, such as trickster tales or scary stories.

Students can memorize their own creative noodlehead tale or one from another culture to tell the rest of the class.

Small groups of students can group-write a noodlehead tale.

## Sources

*Noodlehead Stories: World Tales Kids Can Read and Tell* by Martha Hamilton & Mitch Weiss: August House Publishers, Little Rock: 2000. ISBN: 0874835844  
*CultureGram '99*. Published by Brigham Young University; David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies