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TITLE

Westernizing South Africa: Creating or Losing Culture?

KEYWORDS

Assimilation; South Africa; Cry, the Beloved Country; Culture

GRADE LEVEL

9-12

OVERVIEW

Students will be introduced to the complexity of South African culture through readings, research and map analysis. Students will also be asked to reflect on the costs and benefits of the evolution of culture.

CONNECTIONS TO THE CURRICULUM

Geography, history, current events, linguistics

CONNECTIONS TO NATIONAL GEPGRAPHY STANDARDS

Standard 1: "How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective"

Standard 4: "The physical and human characteristics of places"

Standard 12: "The process, patterns, and functions of human settlement"

TIME

Two hours

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Blank Xpedition [outline map of South Africa](#) printed on legal sized sheet of paper, one for each student
- Colored pencils and rulers
- Mapping South Africa Handout, one for each student (optional)
- Tribes of South Africa Handout, one for each student
- Copies of the Durban Daily News Article, one for each student

KEY VOCABULARY

Assimilation, westernization, diversity, preservation, culture

GUIDING QUESTION

How far should a group go to preserve its traditions and customs?

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Spatially identify the provinces and languages of South Africa
- Analyze the contact between the European settlers and South African tribes
- Reflect on the evolution of South African culture

GEOGRAPHIC SKILLS

Acquiring Geographic Information

Organizing Geographic Information

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

Opening

Have students brainstorm everything they know about South Africa.

Development

Activity 1:

Have students label South Africa's nine provinces on their blank Expedition map. After completing this task, have them place a pie chart on or near each province that uses percentages to indicate the mother tongue spoken by the population within that area. If students are finding it difficult to find research on language percentages, the Mapping South Africa Handout can be used as a supplement.

Have students refer to their map to answer the following questions:

1. What inferences can you make about the South African culture by looking at your map?
2. Why might it be a problem that the main languages for politics and education are Afrikaans and English?

For Homework have student complete the Tribes of South Africa Handout

Activity 2:

The first European settlement in South Africa was established by the Dutch East India Company in 1652. Soon to follow the Dutch were the English. The contact between the European settlers and the many South African tribes led to a process of assimilation that would forever change the population of South Africa. In Alan Paton's Cry, the Beloved Country he speaks of the impact the Western world had on traditional South Africa. Using the following passages from the book have students identify and analyze Paton's opinion.

Passage 1 (chapter 5): The white man has broken the tribe. And it is my belief—and again I ask your pardon—that it cannot be mended again. But the house that is broken, and the man that falls apart when the house is broken, these are the tragic things. That is why children break the law, and old white people are robbed and beaten.

Passage 2 (chapter 7): I see only one hope for our country, and that is when white men and black men . . . desiring only the good of their country, come together to work for it. . . . I have one great fear in my heart, that one day when they are turned to loving, they will find we are turned to hating.

Passage 3 (chapter 11): This is no time to talk of hedges and fields, or the beauties of any country. . . . Cry for the broken tribe, for the law and the custom that is gone. Aye, and cry aloud for the man who is dead, for the woman and children bereaved. Cry, the beloved country, these things are not yet at an end.

Closing

Traditional customs of some modern South African ethnic groups are being challenged by the Westernization of South Africa. Have students read and reflect on the article entitled DA Call to Cronje on Nose Stud from the Durban Daily News 7/7/2006

SUGGESTED STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Traditional tribal culture of South Africa is being threatened by the domination of English and Afrikaans as the primary languages used in government and education. To get ahead in South Africa proficiency in English is a critical skill. Parents want to send their children to Model C schools, where English is the primary language used, in order to provide their kids with the best opportunities to succeed in life. Sometimes parents are making these decisions at the cost of their children losing their ability to speak their native tongue and in turn losing touch with traditions. Alternatively, the mixing of societies has often given birth to a new enriched culture. An example of this can be found through analyzing District Six. With this said, how far should a group go to preserve its traditions and customs? In answering this questions have students collect information on their own heritage. What traditions have they kept and by what means?

EXTENDING THE LESSON

- Hunger of Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez is an autobiography depicting the conflicts the author faced as a first generation Mexican-American.
- Lost Boys of Sudan by Mark Bixler is a novel that portrays the struggle four young Sudanese refugees faced trying to flee their native country and assimilate to American culture.
- Students may want to research Orania. A place where Afrikaners are trying isolate themselves to preserve their language and customs.
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/2500435.stm>

ADAPTATIONS

- Mapping South Africa Handout
- Cry, the Beloved Country movie could be used to replace or supplement the passages

RELATED LINKS

- Languages of South Africa
http://www.southafrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/demographics/language.htm
- National Geographic Africa <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/africa/>

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Overview of South Africa http://www.southafrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/
- District Six http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/District_Six,_Cape_Town

RELATED ACTIVITES

NOTE TO TEACHER

None

Name _____

Date _____

MAPPING SOUTH AFRICA

Directions: Using the information below complete a map of South Africa that includes:

- Labeling all nine provinces (use an atlas for reference)
- Identifying the percentage of the population that speaks each official language as their mother tongue. To do this you will need to create pie charts to be placed on or near each province

Official Languages of South Africa

Afrikaans

English

isiNdebele

Pedi

Sesotho (Sotho)

siSwati (Swazi)

Xitsonga (Tsonga)

Tswana

Tshivenda (Venda)

isiXhosa

isiZulu

Percentage of Population Who Speak Each Language as Their Mother Tongue

Eastern Cape:

Languages: isiXhosa (83%), Afrikaans (9.6%), English (3.7%)

Free State:

Languages: Sotho (62%), Afrikaans (14%), Xhosa (9.5%)

Gauteng:

Languages: isiZulu (21.5%), Afrikaans (14.4%), Sesotho (13.1%), English (12.5%)

KwaZulu-Natal:

Languages: isiZulu (80.59%), English (13.6%), isiXhosa (2.3%), Afrikaans (1.5%)

Limpopo (Northern Province):

Language: SePedi (57%), followed by XiTsonga (23%) and TshiVenda (15.9%)

Mpumalanga:

Language: IsiSwati (30.8%), followed by isiZulu (26.4%) and isiNdebele 12.1%

Northern Cape Province:

Language: Afrikaans (68%), followed SeTswana (20.8%)

North-West Province:

Language: SeTswana (65.4%), followed by Afrikaans (7.5%)

Western Cape:

Language: Afrikaans (55.3%), followed by English (19.3%) and isiXhosa (23.7%)

Name _____

Date _____

TRIBES OF SOUTH AFRICA

Directions: There are many tribes native to South Africa. Listed below are four tribes from the South African region. Research each tribe taking note of any customs and traditions.

Basotho:

Xhosa:

Pedi:

Zulu:

DA call to Cronje on nose stud

Ruling requires new school policy

July 07, 2006 *Edition 1*

Daily News Reporters

Kwazulu-Natal MEC for education, Ina Cronje, has been urged to develop a policy on the wearing of cultural and religious symbols in schools in the wake of this week's court ruling in which a Grade 12 Durban Girls' High School pupil won the right to wear a nose stud to school.

The call was made by the DA in the province after two Pietermaritzburg Appeal Court judges overturned a decision of the Durban Equality Court that the school was justified in refusing to allow Sunali Pillay to wear the nose stud, even though she claimed that it was part of her cultural and religious tradition.

Reacting to the ruling, DA leader in the province, Roger Burrows, who is a former teacher said:

"The court ruling has raised a number of issues pertaining to all schools' code of conduct. These would include the wearing of religious clothing, hair styles and the wearing of religious symbols. I think that it is going to be necessary for MEC Ina Cronje to look at the ruling and to advise schools on how they should be interpreting this. It certainly does not only apply to Durban Girls' High School," he said.

ANC spokesman Mtholephi Mthimkhulu also welcomed the ruling.

"As the ANC we welcome the ruling because it is our standing policy to respect the ruling of the court of law. It is important to realise that our Constitution respects all cultures. This court ruling will reinforce the notion of our strength as a society which is derived from our diversity," he said

Describing the court ruling as a landmark judgment, KwaZulu-Natal former premier Lionel Mtshali, who is the leader of the IFP in the provincial parliament and is also a former schools' inspector, said:

"We believe the school codes - which forbid the wearing of nose studs as incompatible with the school uniform - genuinely stand in the way of respect for all diverse religious and cultural traditions represented in the schools where they apply," he said.

Fritz Gaerdes, an attorney with Lawyers for Human Rights, said the ruling had set a precedent.