

Common Core Standards are being implemented in many states www.corestandards.org

NCTE and IRA Standards for English Language Arts www.ncte.org

1. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.
2. Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.
3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.
7. Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.
8. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.
9. Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.
10. Students whose first language is not English make use of their first language to develop competency in the English language arts and to develop understanding of content across the curriculum.
11. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.

NCSS Curriculum Standards for Social Studies www.socialstudies.org

I. Culture

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.

II. Time, Continuity, and Change

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the ways human beings view themselves in and over time.

III. People, Places, and Environments

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments.

IV. Individual Development and Identity

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of individual development and identity.

V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions.

IX. Global Connections

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of global connections and interdependence.

Worksheets

Film Analysis Framework

Rites of Passage Worksheet

Release Form

To Prepare

- Preview the film and consider whether to “chunk” it in two or three parts or show it in its entirety.
- Review and adapt activities, extensions, worksheets, and resources for your students. Students may take notes on notebook paper or use the worksheets. The Film Analysis Framework provides scaffolding to cue students to look for elements of filmmaking. The Rites of Passage Worksheet helps viewers analyze rituals and other cultural events. The Release Form is for students’ interviews. Print out and copy any worksheets students will use.
- Think about how different cultural groups in your community mark rites of passage, especially weddings since this film focuses on Pakistani wedding traditions among immigrants in New York City.
- Use the Rites of Passage Worksheet to deconstruct a rite of passage in your life so you can share your experience with students. In addition to a christening, *bris*, *bar* or *bat mitzvah*, *quinceañera*, wedding, or funeral, think about life passages such as starting kindergarten, getting a driver’s license, graduation, first job, and so on.

Procedure

1. Before Viewing

Prepare students by brainstorming how documentaries differ from feature films.

Ask students to brainstorm what they know about weddings. Have students attended weddings of religious or cultural groups different from their own? How do weddings among cultural groups in your community differ? How are they the same? Every cultural group marks birth, coming of age, marriage, and death in significant ways. What do students know about other rites of passage?

Tell students about a rite of passage in your life. Review elements on the Rites of Passage Worksheet to prepare students to record relevant information while viewing the film.

Self-Inventory: Tell the students that the film is about a contemporary Pakistani Muslim immigrant to New York City who paints brides with henna, then she herself marries. Ask them to write briefly what they expect to see and hear as they view the film.

2. During Viewing

Prompt students to write down the basic film information (filmmaker, date, etc.) and take notes as they watch the film. They should write words or terms that interest them or are unfamiliar (see Vocabulary) and quotes that are meaningful to them. To organize observations they may take notes on notebook paper or use either or both worksheets: the Film Analysis Framework and Rites of Passage Worksheet.

3. After Viewing

Open discussion by asking students to review their self-inventories. How did the film differ from what they expected? What surprised them? What tensions and contradictions did they sense? What values were expressed? What is the main message? What are subtexts? What would they ask the filmmakers? Someone in the film?

Use one of these quotations spark discussion.

“Without mehndi, something’s missing.”

“After the wedding, the bride steps into reality.”

“If all the ladies . . . are singing and dancing, then who is going to take care of the kitchen, who is going to run the small errands, who is going to serve the food? That’s where you need men.”

“I work with Americans all around, speak their language, dress up like them, and I’m like a part of them. But, in the evening when I go home, I still preserve my own traditional values and culture.”

“Even being in America you’ll do all these traditional things.”

“Will I be able to do the traditional ways, get all the stuff?”

“In spite of having a traditional Pakistani wedding, I still had the reception in America, so the way the food was served was a little Americanized. Actually, I had the wedding cake, the cake cutting ceremony, the throwing of the bouquet.”

In addition to the worksheets, the questions below also offer ways of unpacking the film. Students may refer to their notes.

-Marriage is a significant rite of passage in every cultural group. What bridal customs are students are familiar with? The Rites of Passage Worksheet provides scaffolding for describing or documenting a wedding or other customary event.

-How do pre-wedding parties in the film compare with celebrations such as showers, rehearsal dinners, or bachelor parties in students’ cultural groups? What’s the same, what’s different? They may use Venn diagrams to aid analysis.

-Immigrants to the U.S. bring wedding traditions from around the world and they integrate American customs into their weddings. What do students find familiar in Shenaz Hooda’s marriage? What is unfamiliar?

-How do the roles of women and men differ in *The Painted Bride*? What about in weddings in students' families? How have gender roles in courtship and marriage changed over time? For example, some wedding showers in the U.S. are for both men and women and some brides choose to have both parents escort them down the aisle. Why do students think weddings change?

-Shenaz Hooda's girlfriends sing traditional wedding songs in Urdu and play a couple of types of drums and tambourines. What songs and instruments do students sing and play during their rites of passage? What are ways students relieve tension as they prepare for rituals and other events? Do they ever improvise song lyrics, as the women in the film do as they joke about the groom and his family?

-As an artist in the schools, Shenaz Hooda describes *mehndi* to elementary students. What cultural expressions would students be able to teach to others? How would they do this? What supplies would they need? What would they want a 5th grader to know about this process?

Suggested Activities

English Language Arts: Assign students to write a personal narrative about a wedding or other rite of passage. Students may also write a film synopsis or choose words or phrases from the film to use in writing a poem about the film or weddings in general.

Ask students to compare a Pakistani or Indian wedding with a wedding in a novel or short story they have read. They may use a Venn diagram.

Social Studies, English Language Arts, Family Life, Service Learning: After a class discussion about the role of weddings in students' lives, families, and the community, students may investigate further by conducting fieldwork research on wedding traditions among different cultural and religious groups. Courtship and marriage are rich topics for meaningful connection across generations, and older people will remember many wedding customs. Working individually or in teams, students may use the Rites of Passage Worksheet and Release Form to interview, photograph, or make a film about weddings in your community. They will be creating primary sources that they may give back to the community through an exhibit, web site, film, or contribution to local archives.

Visual Art, Film, Media Literacy: How do students think this documentary film compares with other documentaries? Popular feature films? Ask them to analyze this film in class discussion or in writing using elements from the Film Analysis Framework relating to filmmaking techniques and aesthetics. They can also write a critical review of the film. Comparing film critics' reviews of documentaries with feature films reviews may strengthen their critiques. Making a storyboard is another way of analyzing the film.

Music, Social Studies: *The Painted Bride* features Pakistani traditional music such as the playful songs at the *mehndi* party and more formal music of the wedding ritual. Ask students to research wedding music in your community. They may design a simple survey form and collect data from several people or choose people to interview in depth. They can present their findings through audio or video recordings, by performing songs,

or using graphs to analyze the most popular songs or music genres. They may focus on the main ceremony or include receptions and pre-wedding celebrations.

Social Studies, Family Life: *Mehndi*, drawing henna designs on the body, is common throughout India, Pakistan, the Middle East, and North Africa and crosses religious lines. Hindus, Muslims, and Sephardic Jews incorporate *mehndi* into their wedding customs, with cultural specialists such as Shenaz Hooda painting brides' hands and feet. Have students work in teams to research weddings in various parts of the world for multimedia class reports. They can include courtship, engagement, clothing, music, artifacts, foodways, symbols, dance, vows, roles for family members and friends, gifts, related celebrations, images, photos, sacred and secular elements.

English as a Second Language: Describing familiar traditions makes writing more fluid, so rites of passage are good prompts for students studying English language. They may interview family and community members in other languages and then write or report orally in English. They should use the Release Form if they will be publishing their stories.

Visual Art: Hooda is a Pakistani Muslim, so she paints only geometric patterns, no representations of people or animals. Repeating patterns in Islamic art symbolize unity and harmony. People around the world have been piercing, tattooing, and painting their bodies for millennia in both permanent and temporary ways. Body art and decoration on men as well as women signal a person's place in society, mark a life passage, or simply follow a fashion. Assign students to research *mehndi* and other forms of body art such as tattooing and body painting. Ask them to look for images in fine art prints and popular media to share in class and to choose a form of body art to report on in teams or individually.

Social Studies: Pakistan borders not only India but Afghanistan, Iran, and China. Its territories were under the British rule of India until 1947, when partition of majority-Muslim provinces separated the newly independent India from Pakistan. Many aspects of Pakistani and Indian culture are similar, despite religious differences. Have students research the history and culture of this strategically vital nation, which figures prominently in U.S. foreign policy today for class reports.

How does Shenaz Hooda differ from students' preconceptions about Pakistanis? About recent immigrants to the U.S.? How does she fit their preconceptions? Have students take the online immigration quiz on the PBS web site for the documentary *The New Americans*.

This film was made in 1990. How might the filmmakers have addressed Muslim immigrants to the U.S. differently if they had made the film in 2007?

Extensions

Assign students to research bridal traditions of different eras and cultural groups. They may use the Rites of Passage Worksheet to organize their work.

What are some indicators in your community that wedding customs have changed over time? Why do weddings change? How do social changes and contact with newcomers from other countries or regions of the U.S. affect wedding customs?

Have students compare feature films about weddings with *The Painted Bride*. How do feature films differ from documentaries? Screen all or part of a commercial film about cross-cultural weddings, for example, *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* or the Bollywood extravaganza *Bride and Prejudice*. Or screen scenes from *Monsoon Wedding*, which is about a contemporary Indian wedding in New Delhi. They may use Venn diagrams to compare weddings.

If students were filming a documentary of a wedding in their community, how would they storyboard it? When would the film start? When would it end? Whose wedding would they choose? What point of view would they choose? What would the title be?

Shenaz Hooda knew no one except her immediate family when she first moved to Queens. She made girlfriends by attending a local mosque. Ask students to write about how they would adapt to moving to a new country? How would they make friends? How would they mark holidays and rites of passage far away from home?

Students can research Muslim courtship and wedding traditions of Pakistan and India, for example, arranged marriages, the progression of parties leading up to the final ceremony, foodways, clothing, and music. Ask them to make multimedia presentations.

In many parts of the world *mehndi* is for men as well as women to mark many celebrations, not just weddings. Since the 1990s henna painting has become popular among many Americans. Do any students know how to do *mehndi*? A team of students can research the process and paint geometric designs on classmates' hands. The henna lasts about two weeks.

Evaluation/Assessment Strategies

Products Completed worksheets, personal narratives, synopsis, poetry, Venn diagrams, interviews, storyboards, multimedia presentations, rites of passage fieldwork, graphs, reviews

Process Class discussions, reflections, interviewing, creating presentations, analysis, comparing and contrasting

Vocabulary

Body art

Courtship

Henna

Immigration

Mehndi

Muslim

Pakistan

Rites of Passage
Urdu
Weddings

Resources

Feature Films

Monsoon Wedding, directed by Mira Nair, 2001. Rated R so teachers should choose portions to show the class.

My Big Fat Greek Wedding, directed by Joel Zwick, 2002. Rated PG.

Bride and Prejudice, directed by Gurinder Chadha, 2005. Rated PG-13. A cross-cultural Bollywood take on the classic Jane Austen novel.

Publications

Dresser, Norine. *Come As You Aren't: Feeling at Home with Multicultural Celebrations*, M. Evans, 2006.

Zeitlin, Steve, et al. *A Celebration of American Family Folklore*. Pantheon Books, 1982.

Web Sites

Body of Evidence www.nmafa.si.edu/exhibits/evidence National Museum of African Art
CARTS Newsletter 2004 excerpts on teaching with rites of passage, including "Cajun Weddings," by Jane Vidrine and "*Rangoli*: Traditions of the Threshold," by Amanda Dargan on an Indian custom of painting temporary designs in front of a home

<http://locallearningnetwork.org/library/articles>

Louisiana Voices www.louisianavoices.org Unit IX The Cycle of Life and Rites of Passage

The New Americans www.pbs.org/independentlens/newamericans Follow a diverse group of immigrants and refugees as they leave homes and families behind and learn what it means to be new Americans in the 21st century. Find teaching resources and take an immigration quiz.

Rites of Passage in America online exhibit
www2.hsp.org/exhibits/Balch%20exhibits/rites/rites.html

The Smithsonian Folklife and Oral History Interviewing Guide

www.folklife.si.edu/explore/Resources/InterviewGuide/InterviewGuide_home.html

The Story of Movies www.storyofmovies.org is an online interdisciplinary curriculum introducing students to classic cinema and the cultural, historic, and artistic significance of film. The site provides many tools for studying film and the National Film Study Standards.

Tattoos National Geographic www.nationalgeographic.com/tattoos/photo1.html

Related Folkstreams Films

Two Homes, One Heart