

FAMOUS PEOPLE AND CULTURAL DIFFUSION

Performance Standards (16DUS/18A).I

Write about the family history of a famous person back to his/her roots after defining cultural diffusion (exchange) accordingly:

- *Knowledge:* identify cultural traditions from other lands and define cultural diffusion;
- *Reasoning:* analyze the traditions to show how they had an influence on American life; and
- *Communication:* write an essay that is well-organized, well-focused, well-detailed and has resources listed; all ideas are expressed in a way that provides evidence of knowledge and reasoning processes.

Procedures

1. ***In order to understand Illinois, United States, and world social history (16D), and compare characteristics of culture as reflected in language, literature, the arts, traditions, and institutions (18A)***, students should experience sufficient learning opportunities to develop the following:
 - Identify examples of cultural diffusion throughout United States social history, and
 - Identify cultural traditions from other lands that have been integrated into American life.
2. Have students review and discuss the assessment task and how the rubric will be used to evaluate their work.
3. Have students define cultural diffusion (spread of cultural traits from one society to another) and brainstorm examples as a class. Discuss how the influences of traditions from one country have influenced another. For example, a student could tell how singer Gloria Estefan's roots have influenced her music. Conduct research to further investigate one example of diffusion.
4. Have students write an essay (250 word-minimum) about the example they have researched. Be sure to include the following:
 - A definition of cultural diffusion.
 - The famous person's family history/roots (traced back to another country). For example, Gloria Estefan's roots can be traced back to Latin America.
 - The trait(s)/characteristic (s) that were influenced by their history diffusion was. For example, Estefan's "salsa" style music was influenced by her family/cultural history.
 - How that person in turn has impacted American life. For example, Estefan and her band have inspired other musicians in the U.S. to adopt similar styles.
 - A variety of sources (at least three) should be used for research.
5. Evaluate each student's work using the Social Science Rubric as follows and add the scores to determine the performance level:
 - *Knowledge:* the identification of cultural traditions from other lands and a definition of cultural diffusion are clear, complete and accurate.
 - *Reasoning:* the analysis describes the way the traditions have influenced American life in a logical manner.
 - *Communication:* the essay is well-organized, well-focused and well-detailed; documentation of at least three sources is evident; the knowledge and reasoning were completely and effectively communicated.

Examples of Student Work not available

Time Requirements

- One period for brainstorming
- Two periods for research
- One period for writing the essay

Resources

- Paper
- Pen or pencil
- Sources of information (primary and secondary) that include information about famous people and their family backgrounds.
- Social Science Rubric