

NDE Multicultural Report 2025-2026

Dorchester Public School - Dorchester, NE

Please include the following: The culture group, a short description of the topic, and the materials used.

Robin Musil (Pre-K): Robin Musil (Pre-K): In Preschool we use materials and books that focus on all races and cultures. During our "All About Me" unit, we explore the differences and similarities between us as people emphasizing that skin color and language (culture) should not make a difference in the way we should treat people. We have several Latino students so we celebrate their culture when we can. I use both English and Spanish words in the classroom. We also have the labels around the room in English and Spanish.

Bailey Schindler (Kindergarten): Our story from Wonders Unit 4 Week 2 discusses cultural festivals. We first start out by discussing what a culture and festival is. Next, we discuss the cultures we have here in the United States, the decorations we use, and the food we eat during those cultures. Then, we proceed to read the story that goes on to talk about important festivals in Mexico (Cinco De Mayo), India (Diwali), and Vietnam (Tet). In each culture that we read about, we compared it to our cultures.

Sarah Vyhnalek (Grade 1): **Traditions Around the World (December):**

First grade students traveled to four different countries and learned about holiday traditions from around the world. Students explored foods, decorations, clothing, and gift-giving customs through hands-on activities, crafts, and discussions. This helped students understand that families celebrate in different ways. In a couple weeks students will be learning about MLK jr. (**January**) They will be learning about his message of kindness, fairness, and helping others. Students will listen to age-appropriate stories, participate in class discussions, and complete simple art and writing activities focusing on treating everyone with respect and standing up for what is right. These activities will help students understand the importance of diversity, equality, and caring for others.

Lisa Lautzenhiser (Grade 2): Our story from Wonders Unit 2 Week 3 deals with Fables from different cultures and how they are similar and different. Also Unit 3 Week 3 shares a story from Columbia about how a man gives to his community. Unit 4 Week 3 is a story about cousins from Mexico and America and how they are the same/different. Unit 5 Week 3 is a story about Bessie Coleman, the first black woman pilot. January/February: we talk about Black figures that made a difference in our American Culture Martin Luther King. We do a brown/blue eye project at this time. In our SS we talk about Fredrick Douglas, Phillis Wheatley, Rosa Parks, Sarah and Angelina Grimke, Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad and slavery. We watch "Class Divided" and talk about racial stereotypes.

November: Native Americans and their role in helping the Pilgrims survive.

Brenda Nerud (Grade 3): Several stories from our Wonders Reading Series focus on cultural information and traditions. Our Unit 1 Week 2 story focuses on cultural traditions, storytelling, and dance. Also, our story from Unit 1 Week 3 is about people sharing their culture with others. Wonders also includes some biographies. One about an African American inventor and another about women not having equal rights. A couple of our stories are Historical Fiction but show how immigrants came to the U.S. and how African Americans were segregated. In Social Studies we read and discuss why immigrants come to the United States and how they share their language, music, dance, food, and more with us. We learn about several festivals around the world and how they celebrate with different foods, dances, storytelling, and activities like puppet shows. (Korea, China, Italy, and several countries in Europe)

We read a few stories on Hanukkah and Kwanzaa in December. Martin Luther King Jr. stories are read in January along with a few activities and vocabulary. In February I have books available for independent reading on Rosa Parks, Ruby Bridges, Jackie Robinson, Frederick Douglas, and more. I also have several books available on my library shelf for the students to read.

Cassidy Bruha (Grade 4): There are several stories in our Wonders Reading Series that focus on different cultures/traditions. U2, W1 is about a Persian merchant who utilizes the Silk Road to get goods for his shop. U2, W2 is about a Mayan princess who meets the Viceroy's son in Mexico. There are several Spanish words and customs that are mentioned. In U3, W2 we read a story of girls in Puerto Rico who share their traditions during Christmas time. In U3, W3 we read about Nelson Mandela and the fight for civil rights. In U5, W5 it discusses our Spanish beginnings at

St. Augustine, FL. In U6, W1 the traditions of the Ojibwe tribe are discussed, as well as how their lives were affected by colonists who took their land.

4th SS: NE History - We discuss different Native American tribes and how their lives changed based on the groups of people around them, such as settlers moving west. We also discuss several famous Americans throughout the year, as well as different holidays, traditions, and customs.

5th SS: American History - We discuss early civilizations and how they've impacted life today.

6th SS: World History - We discuss various countries and compare/contrast them to the U.S.

Brent Zoubek (Grade 5): Culture Group: People from China, Chinese Fairy Tale Where The Mountain Meets The Moon. It was our story in the Wonders Series the week of October 18th.(Unit 2, Week 2) Students made connections and related to other fairy tales they have heard. We're able to make connections about the types of characters that were used in the story.

Brian Rut (4th-6th Math): In 6th grade during topic 7, Lessons 1-2 we discuss the area, surface area, and volume. During this lesson we discuss how different shapes were needed to create the pyramids that the ancient Egyptians built. This then leads into lesson 7.6 where we figure out different surface areas of pyramids.

Randy Klooz (7-8 Math, 6-8 Science):

We do an inventor report/poster and will include a variety of inventors across the cultural spectrum. We also discuss how climate change affects different regions.

Audrey Schutte (9-12 English, Speech, Dual-Credit English):

1. NINTH: Students in this class use MyPerspectives. Unit 1: American Voices allows students to contemplate the diversity within the U.S. We read *To Kill a Mockingbird*, which highlights the vast difference between people in the states, in the 1930s South. During the second semester, they read *Romeo and Juliet*, a play by English writer William Shakespeare and set in 14th century Italy. Students also read *The Odyssey*, an epic poem by Greek poet Homer from the 8th century BC.

2. TENTH: Students in this class use MyPerspectives. They read *The Scarlet Letter* for Unit 2, and for Unit 3, they consider freedom in other parts of the world, i.e. Iran and parts of Europe during WWII. In Unit 4, they read short stories by authors from Peru, Vietnam, and Nigeria. In Unit 5, they read *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare.
3. JUNIORS: Students in this class use MyPerspectives: American Literature. In Unit 3 especially, students read literature by people from different cultures in the United States. This includes those of African American heritage, Asian-American Heritage, and Latino-American heritage.
4. SENIORS: This is British Literature. Every story takes place outside American culture. They too use a MyPerspectives curriculum. They study *Beowulf*, *Macbeth*, and also numerous short pieces from authors who lived in Great Britain.
5. SPEECH: Students are encouraged to give speeches on a variety of topics, which can include information from different cultures and regions. More so, students watch speeches/interviews from people outside their own culture, including Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche and Malala Yousafzai.
6. Dual-Credit English: Students read a variety of reports, essays, and fiction and several are written by either American Minorities or people from other countries.

Sandy Severance (7-8 English, Social Studies):

8th English: Students read excerpts from Anne Frank's diary and read 2 books about the Holocaust. Lisa's War & Kris's War . The students also watch Swing Kids, a video about 3 boys who start off all hating the Nazis but by the end of the film one has turned total Nazi, one has given up his life to stand up against the Nazis, and one has to decide which way he will stand. Issues addressed include but are not limited to prejudice, standing up for what is right, and why people will be prejudiced. Students for the first time see how one could so easily get caught up in the movement--How just thinking that someone should be treated differently because of how they look can have dire consequences. They also watch 2 other videos. Hidden in Silence is a true life story about how a Christian girl takes in more than 13 Jews and keeps them alive. The other is a documentary, Children of the Holocaust, on how the Jewish children made it through the Holocaust told from their perspective.

7thEnglish:

Students read short stories/poems including *The Wise Old Woman* by Yoshiko Uchida, a folktale from Japan; *Seventh Grade* by Gary Soto that looks at a Hispanic boy's view of school; *Mad* by Naomi Shihab Nye, a poem by an Arab American poet. *Thank You, M'am* by Langston Hughes, an African American writer. The story explores the African American boy's experience in the city.

8th English:

Students read short stories/poems including *Sympathy* by Paul Laurence Dunbar, one of the first nationally acclaimed black poets. The poem is about slavery, and is referenced in Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*.

7th English: Students read *Canyons* by Gary Paulsen. This is a book about a Native American boy who has an untimely death because of the army. The students get to realize the life of a Native American and the cover up of the army. The truth finally prevails. Students get to see the prejudice the army had toward Native Americans. They also see what life was like for the Native Americans of the Apache tribe.

7th Social Studies: Students learn about the Native Americans role in Nebraska history. They also learn how the settlers changed Nebraska and the Native Americans' life and lifestyle. The students also watch a documentary on Standing Bear. They get to witness the discrimination the government had towards Native Americans and special recognition is given to Standing Bear for standing up for Native American rights.

8th Social Studies: In all chapters there is a multicultural component. There is always at least one person or event that one can look more deeply into. *American Nation*, the text for American history, presents the rich cultural diversity of American history as an integral part of the narrative, including the frequent use of first-person accounts. Students understand how diverse cultural traditions affected American history and their lives today through reading "Our Common Heritage" extended footnotes. Students also read and discuss extended readings on important

multicultural people and events through biographies and essays. Students also watch a video on Frederick Douglass and his contribution to Am. history.

Examples: The First Americans :(Native Americans influence on America), The explorers impact on the Native Americans, Native American lives and culture, Slave trade and life on a plantation, North and South's attitude towards African Americans, African Americans' role in the American Revolution, the Underground Railroad, Trail of Tears, Native Americans moved to reservations, Civil War contributions, and many African American, Mexican American, Native American, Asian American contributors to American history. Ex. Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, etc.

Students also watch videos that back up many of these concepts and give more background the topic or person being discussed.

Chris Nelson (9-12 Science): Students learn the history of the scientific contributions of scientists from cultures all around the world. A couple examples would be, A&P created presentations on diseases and their prevalence throughout the world and the reasons for it. Chemistry and physical science created posters of elements including where and who discovered them.

Claire Tachovsky (7-12 Business / Info Tech): Students in computers and technology spend time researching cultural topics such as historical events, international holidays, food, languages, and sports in other countries for typing activities and presentations. Business students complete research activities regarding international business standards, international marketing strategies, and discuss the impact that cultural and demographic spending habits have on the US economy.

JeNae Kort (9-12 Math): When students are studying the Pythagorean Theorem, its discovery and history are discussed. Students also learn about the history of our base 10 system of numbers compared to that of others in history.

Corey Bird (K-12 Special Education): During a variety of reading and math interventions, students are instructed in the reading and math components while discussing cultural importances of financial hardship for families, relocating to America, finding jobs that meet their qualifications, and raising a family in a culture new to them. During specific special education minutes, a variety of 7-12 students

progress through topics such as: the Holocaust, current events in the United States, history of oppression of black individuals, and more. These students have in depth conversations about how to understand to be better than our previous generations, while discussing the importance of being an advocate for positive outlooks within their current lives.

Karma Ridpath (6th Reading / Title):

6th Reading Block - Unit 2 of 6th grade Wonders provides many opportunities to have multicultural conversations and read literature that has multicultural components. When we are working with information, especially from Week 3 and Week 5, we study ancient cultures/societies as well as compare history from the past and how it has affected our present day lives. Throughout this unit, our vocabulary and spelling words also lend themselves to cultural conversations.

6th WIN - The read A Single Shard which is set in 12th century Korea. Students work with a piece of literature that includes cultural information from a different century as well as information from a different country (culture). We work through vocabulary that lends itself to that time in history.

Reading Club/Classic - Many of the pieces of literature we read from the book list have ties to other cultures. What an awesome way to learn about customs, food, and vocabulary from other parts of our world.

Jaci Dunaway (Library / JH Study Skills / Health): Many opportunities to compare and contrast cultures and differing aspects of society, cultures, and customs through literature and making connections to self, others, and the real world. A few titles added this year depicting multicultural characters and settings include: "Land of the Cranes", "Linked", "Uncle Jed's Barbershop", "You Are a Star, Ruth Bader Ginsburg", "Frida", "Magic Trash: the Story of Tyree Guyton and his Art", "Ajay and the Mumbai Sun", "I Want to Ride the Tap Tap", "This is How We Do It: One Day in the Lives of Seven Kids from Around the World", "¿Que fue el Holocausto?", "¿Quien es Bad Bunny?", "What is Juneteenth?", "Where is the Great Wall?", "Where is the Congo?", "Who is Shohei Ohtani?", "Who is Ketanji Brown Jackson?", "Dumplings for Lili", "A Banquet for Cecilia", "Omar Rising", "Some of Us: A Story of Citizenship and the

United States", "Feasts and Festivals Around the World", "Solito: A Memoir". This is a fluid list and new titles are continuously added to our collection.

Native American History Month/Indigenous Peoples Day: In grades K-6, students read literature celebrating Indigenous people and their contributions to society. Children were also exposed to the Native American language, customs, and cultural celebrations. We read titles such as "Water Protectors", "We Are Grateful" and "Crazy Horse". A display with different tribal nations in the state of Nebraska and non-fiction, informational and fiction books depicting different tribes or characters associated with differing tribal nations.

Martin Luther King, Jr Day: K-6 library students learned the value and importance of Dr. King and his powerful message he sent for equality, social justice and change through literature. Students also listened to Dr. King's speech and Grades 4-6 students were tasked with comparing and contrasting history and the present.

Black History Month: K-12 students are exposed to and encouraged to read literature celebrating the contributions of African-Americans who have made an impact in society and in our world, as well as literature that teaches empathy, acceptance, social justice and change. We also read the book, "The Youngest Marcher: the Story of Audrey Faye Hendricks, a Young Civil Rights Activist"

Women's History Month: Researched and read about who and how women have impacted history and made contributions to society, not only in the United States but around the world and across all ages.

Christmas Around the World: Students, Grades K-6, studied customs and celebrations of differing cultures throughout the world and celebrated our global community.

Author Visit/Asian American and Japanese Culture: We had an author visit with Melissa Iwai as well as read many of her books with characters and stories that depict Asian and Asian/American culture as well as the Japanese language and compared

and contrasted customs of both the Japanese and American cultures, such as bowing vs. handshaking.

Library K-12: New literature/titles have been added to the library collection that celebrate and/or educate students on the topics of diversity, inclusion, differing points of view, social justice/injustice, and history across cultures. Literature is provided and utilized in multiple languages such as Spanish, Native American languages/dialect and English. 4th grade compared and contrasted the Indian and American cultures and customs while reading "Save Me a Seat". Added literature containing Jewish, African American, Japanese, and Arab characters as the protagonists of each piece of literature.

Health: 7th and 8th Grade students had the opportunity to learn and create presentations about well-known/famous athletes, actors/actresses, etc., of all nationalities, cultures and backgrounds and how they cope with mental/emotional health.

Study Skills: While learning multiple ways to study/strategies for study skills, students are given passages to read to create the study materials that include facts about Hispanic Heritage Month, Native American tribes in Nebraska, Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, and Chinese New Year.

Spencer Kotas (9-12 History / Social Studies): World Geography (9) Discuss different regions of the world and their customs, religions, types of people, government, history, etc. Students pick a country from each region and create a presentation to go more in depth

World History (10) Talk about different social structures that once existed in Europe. Specifically serfs and serfdom.

American History (11) Discuss civil rights and different civil rights leaders such as MLK Jr. Watch the movie Selma

American Government (12) Talk about how different groups have gained suffrage throughout the history of America. Beginning with only white male property owners and expanding to more and more diverse groups over the course of our nation's history.

Brandon Sullivan (K-12 P.E. / Health):

In physical education, students learn different sports that are popular among other cultures. For example, one unit that we will be covering is soccer, originating in Great Britain, which now is a popular game in Mexico and other spanish speaking cultures as opposed to the United States. Another game that the students learn is badminton which originated in China

Stacy Lutjemeyer (K-12 Art):Elementary--elementary classes have many projects that focus on other cultures and their customs, just a few we complete are Chinese New Year art, Mexican and Spanish Holidays, Dream Projects for Martin Luther King Day, Faith Ringgold Story Quilts, African masks and lions, and Ukrainian Pysanky Eggs. --
-Secondary ART II studies the timeline of art and multicultural art. African art Egyptian art--hieroglyphics and sarcophagus, Greek art--mosaics, pottery, and columns, Chinese art--Papercuts, watercolor lanterns, sumi painting, and batiking. There are really too many projects to list that are multicultural in the art room. This is just a few of them.

Steve Jirsa (K-12 Band / Choir / Music): In Instrumental and Choral Music we study music from a variety of different countries, cultures, and languages including but not limited to: China, Spain, Germany, Mexico, India, and various areas in the continent of Africa. We learn about different Games they play in some of these countries as well as how they practice some of their traditions by exploring what role music has in these traditions. The elementary holiday program we did this year is a perfect example of this. The program "December Nights, December Lights!" used music to explore many different traditions celebrated during the holiday season such as La Fiesta De La Posada, Quanza, and Hanukkah.

Brandon Bruha (Industrial Tech): Brandon Bruha (Industrial Tech): In our Intro to IT class we researched different opportunities and employments in various construction sectors. We discussed how the construction Industry has increased because of the latino workforce and the different job opportunities it has created because of it. Students had to pick a career that they were interested in and write a paper over their future career direction.

Jill Choyeski (Guidance):

I have used Choose Love Curriculum for elementary grades. Several lessons throughout the year discuss differences among people from different cultures and how

to appreciate people who are different than they are. Below are lessons that highlight this.

Kindergarten - Compassion in Action Unit, Lesson 3 - Compassion for Our Similarities and Differences. Students are able to notice similarities and differences with each other and in literature. Students listen to the book We Are All Alike, We Are All Different and we discuss how the children in the book were alike and different, they are able to compare themselves to students in the book. Students play the game Step Right Up to learn about similarities and differences amongst their classmates.

1st Grade - Gratitude Unit, Lesson 5 - Gratitude for Differences. A lesson that recognizes that students can be grateful for differences. Students recognize that gratitude helps manage and resolve interpersonal conflict. In this lesson a read aloud is listened to for the book Whoever You Are which tells a story about people that live all over the world.

2nd Grade - Gratitude Unit, Lesson 2 - Gratitude for Others. A lesson that focuses on different people in our communities and what they do to help us. Emphasizes showing gratitude for other people and what they do.

3rd Grade - Gratitude Unit, Lesson 2 - Gratitude for All. Students have the opportunity to practice greetings in different languages and to recognize there are many different people and things to be grateful for. Students listen to the read aloud The Thank You Letter by Jane Cabrera.

Gratitude Unit, Lesson 5 - Gratitude for Our World. The focus is on being thankful for all things in this world and what we receive from the earth. A read aloud entitled, We Are Grateful - Otsaliheliga is shared in class. This book focuses on the Cherokee Tribe and the things they are grateful for in each season. Students are exposed to different words in the Cherokee Tribe and the ways of life of the Cherokee.

4th Grade - Gratitude Unit, Lesson 5 - Gratitude for Differences. Discusses how gratitude can help us accept differences. Students hear and say how to say "thank you" in 10 different languages. Listen to a read aloud, The Name Jar, where the character moves from Korea to America and wants to change her name because students cannot pronounce her name and she is made fun of. Discuss empathy by trying to understand how someone might feel in this situation.

5th Grade - Courage Unit, Lesson 4 The Courage to Stand Up. This lesson discusses the importance of standing up for yourself and others and how this takes courage. The book that is shared in this lesson is Hidden Figures: The True Story of Four Black Women and the Space Race. The setting for this book is the 1960's and focuses on the significance that four black women had in the success of the space race. We

discussed the prejudice these women had to endure to be successful in their line of work, especially in that era.

6th Grade - Lesson 7 Exploring Courage. In this lesson we discussed how to use courage in everyday life. We talked about heroic acts of courage and everyday acts of courage. During the lesson Malala Yousafi was introduced to the class. Malala was a Pakistan woman who showed a great deal of courage in her life by standing up for her right to receive an education. The Taliban voted to kill her but she survived a vicious attack. She eventually won the Nobel Peace Prize for her courage. We talked about the rights or lack of rights people have in other countries, especially women.

8th Grade - We will watch the movie The Pursuit of Happyness. This true story gives many examples for the class to discuss struggles and triumph, as well as integrates many of the topics we have talked about in class throughout the quarter – soft skills, networking, transferable skills, education, compensation in the career field, how your career choices impact life decisions. Part of the discussion includes how the main character confronted many struggles in his personal and professional life including the challenge of entering a career field that, at the time, was predominantly held by white males. What challenges did this create for him, how he had to work extra hard to earn respect, getting asked to do things his counterparts were not asked to do.

Laura Barlow (Reading Intervention): During elementary interventions we use several different texts, leveled readers or books that deal with multicultural celebrations, holidays, and certain people of different cultures. We discuss the differences between what we do in America and what they do and how it is different. If we have ever celebrated a holiday in a different culture before. Cultural groups are latino, asian celebrations along with native american. Along with the wonders curriculum that we work on also talks about different multicultural activities as well. We have the same discussions which lead the students to great discussions about different types of multicultural happenings.