

Preserving Family Traditions

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Overview:

Students will gather information about their own family's traditions and consider ways to preserve them.

Standards:

- History Standard 1: Students understand the chronological organization of history and know how to organize events and people into major eras to identify and explain historical relationships.
- History Standard 3: Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time.
- Reading and Writing Standard 1: Students read and understand a variety of materials.
- Reading and Writing Standard 2: Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Objectives:

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Interview members of their family and do family history research.
- Identify celebrations, customs, and ways of doing things that are part of their family tradition.
- Take the initiative in recording and preserving family traditions.

Inquiry Questions:

- What is a family tradition?
- What celebrations, customs, and ways of doing things are part of your family tradition?
- How can you find out more about your family's traditions?
- How can you help preserve your family's traditional customs?

Procedure:

1. Have the class brainstorm things that their families do that might be considered family traditions. Prompt them to think about things they do and eat at birthdays, holidays, or seasons of the year.
2. Ask your students to choose one of their traditions and write a paragraph describing it. Then ask them to explain in writing how they would feel if that tradition suddenly ended.
3. Break into small groups, sharing paragraphs and feelings.
4. Have the students take the paragraph home to share with their mother, father or whoever is responsible for keeping that family tradition alive. They should interview that person to find out about its origin and to gather information that will preserve that tradition. This could include recording the procedure, writing down the recipe(s) or learning the skills involved.
5. The product of this activity could be an informational poster, sharing the tradition with the class, or depositing a written record about the tradition in the class archives. Sharing food is nice, too!