

Intercultural competencies at B1 level

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DESCRIPTION

In this pathway we will consider why in this age of globalisation and the widespread use of English as a “lingua Franca” it is becoming ever more increasingly important that cultural awareness is not only key for the teacher and students but also should be seen as a fundamental language skill in its own right and not something simply tacked onto reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Through comparison with our personal experience and self-reflection teachers can focus students to understand more about both their culture and the target culture, so demonstrating how well planned new teaching practices can help to break social and cultural stereotypes by building awareness and ultimately intercultural communication.

The principle objectives for the teachers and students are two-fold:

Both in and out of the class teachers will:

- promote cross-cultural comparison and develop linguistic and intercultural awareness to overcome stereotypical ways of thinking towards other cultures

While students will:

- develop linguistic and intercultural awareness while building interpersonal skills such as group working, negotiating and compromise when engaging in communicative research activities.

Why intercultural competencies

Teachers will begin by looking at why we need to be prepared for the development of intercultural (*communicative*) competencies (IC) both now and for the future. Through self-reflection and a series of guided questions in the form, (*Do we want our learners to keep meaningless stereotypes? How can we change this? Is Culture a set of learnable “facts”?*), and then comparing these with current prevailing thoughts and methodology, teachers will come to realise that intercultural awareness should be seen as a fundamental language skill in the classroom.

How can learners develop intercultural competencies?

In order for our students to develop the skills necessary to attain cultural awareness they first need to understand how they are seen in the world.

This is presented through the site “*where the hell is Matt?*” (<http://www.wherethehellismatt.com/>). This very simple idea of a man travelling and dancing in different countries around the world is readily exploitable for the discussion of culture. His journal and comments page can be used to help students gain a valuable insight into how both the world

and fellow Italians see their cultural identity. For full instructions on how to access the video and journal pages see the lesson plan.

From this starting point learners can go on to create their own definition of what culture is and what it includes, extending from the basic idea of language, traditions. With our topic areas in place, various activities in and out of the class, in the form of a webquest, are used to demonstrate how student awareness can be raised.

The internet offers the opportunity to bring culture into the classroom through an endless supply of interesting videos and articles for B1 learners to contrast, compare, listen, analyse, understand and evaluate English Culture. For example: The *Premier skills* website offers many activities and is extremely interesting for looking at foreign attitudes and beliefs on British Culture while the *learnenglish*, *learnenglish Teens* and *Project Britain* websites are excellent places for our learners to begin their journeys into English culture.

By allocating different topic areas to different groups of students, research can be collected, shared, edited and modified through “Dropbox” both in and out of the class. In all cases the web sites put forward here are just the tip of the iceberg and simply demonstrate the principles that can be exploited for our learners. Any web search on the internet will bring up a multitude of possibilities for reading, listening and discussing etc. in the field of culture.

The World Wide Web has a wealth of authentic materials, activities, resources and opportunities to learn from on all potential topics. However, much of the material available, while not impossible would certainly be extremely challenging if not distracting from our aims for B1 level learners. Fortunately, there are alternatives in the form of free online sites that can be readily exploited.

The *Project Britain*, *LearnEnglish*, *LearnEnglish Teens* (for 13-17 year-olds) and *Premier Skills Teachers* websites all offer well researched safe material that B1 learners can access and learn from. There are lots of materials for practicing grammar and vocabulary as well as fun activities, videos, games and puzzles. For our purposes there are many sections that can be exploited (*Britain today*, *UK culture*, *overcooked*, *life in UK*, *video UK* etc.) that learners can use for learning, comparing and contrasting beliefs and attitudes towards the UK.

“Dropbox” is a simple free service that lets student research, documents, photos and videos, even those made with Smartphones, all be placed and stored in one place. By allowing users to create a special folder on each of their computers or smartphones, “Dropbox” synchronizes this as it appears to be the same folder (with the same contents) regardless of which computer or smartphone is used to view it.

This has great potential for teacher and students alike, in and out of the classroom. Teachers can monitor progress and contributions while students have the opportunity to share research and collaborate in a modern “digital native” user friendly environment.

ACTIVITY

Step 1

Why

Kramsch (1993) states in the relationship between language and culture: "Language is the principle means whereby we conduct our social lives. When it is used in contexts of communication, it is bound up with culture in multiple and complex ways". This link is undisputable but what does culture cover? Traditions, values, the way of behaving of a particular community are all popular starting points. The Council of Europe Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) has several cultural references spread throughout it covering areas such as sociocultural knowledge including knowledge of the society and its characteristic features relating to: Everyday living (public holidays, working hours), Interpersonal relations, (family structures), Body language, Social conventions (punctuality, dress). Yet, the understanding of culture is more than facts; it is developing "Cultural Competencies" and how we can develop sensitivity and the skills to build awareness and the qualities needed for our learners to operate successfully with people from other cultures.

If we are to consider **Cultural Competencies** in the classroom and their value to the teaching programme we must first consider some questions:

Reflect on the questions below and make notes for comparison before moving onto the next section.

- What is Culture?
- Why is the development of Intercultural Communication (IC) of great importance, today?
- Do we want our learners to keep meaningless stereotypes? How can we overcome this?
- In what way is IC an integral part of the classroom?
- Is Culture a set of learnable "facts"?
- What does IC actually consist of?

Now look at the next video and compare your ideas with those presented.

How and what

Mastery of a language does not just mean understanding the rules and using the four skills, reading, writing, speaking and listening perfectly. It also requires a mastery of culture. All too often it has been assumed that if you learn a language you learn the culture, however, this is simply not the case. You can learn a lot of cultural features but it does not teach you sensitivity or awareness or how to behave in differing situations.

The aim of learning a language is more than to imitate a native speaker, we should be aiming for teachers to provide language learners with the cultural aspects of the target language but they should not aim for “enculturation” (*the process by which people learn the requirements of their surrounding culture and acquire values and behaviours appropriate or necessary in that culture*), but rather “acculturation” (*cultural modification of an individual, group, or people by adapting to or borrowing traits from another culture*).

“*Language is a part of culture and culture is part of language*” is a common referenced phrase. What culture covers are the commonly held traditions, values and ways of behaving of a particular community. It is composed of varying elements; these include myths, values, norms, customs, legends, history, religion, and geography. Culture is a puzzle and its elements are the pieces. To have a clear understanding and vision of the target culture each piece or element must be considered.

Globalisation, migration, outsourcing, emailing, phone and video-conferencing are just some of many linguistic and socio-economic reasons that have pushed English to the forefront of national curriculums and it being internationally recognised as a lingua franca. Most text books nowadays make room for a “culture spot” and while this is not real integration into the syllabus and could be said to be something “tacked on” to the topic area of the textbook unit, it does offer the teacher a resource and starting point.

However, culture should be more than following a textbook by numbers. Little benefit will come from reading a document or looking at an image, to build real awareness; pragmatics (the ways in which language use is influenced by social context), non-verbal as well as verbal aspects such as gestures, haptics, chronemics and proxemics all need to be factored into the learning programme.

The white paper on Intercultural Dialogue: “Living together as equals in dignity” focuses on Europe’s increasing cultural diversity and how it can be faced through “promoting intercultural competences in education”. Learners

should be aware of the complexity of identities and the need to interact with people of different social identities on equal terms. Teaching culture, while considered important by most teachers now, still remains insubstantial and sporadic in most language classrooms. Why? Lack of time? Uncertainty about which aspects of culture to include? A lack of practical techniques? If we want our learners to break meaningless stereotypes the language classroom must explicitly and implicitly address cultural elements in a way as Corbet puts: *"learners are encouraged to function within the new culture while maintaining their own"*.

Teachers need to seek ways to develop cultural awareness through more than knowledge accumulation. The real task is how to develop sensitivity and cultural skills. This covers what qualities they need to deal successfully with other cultures, understanding how to use language to accept difference, to be flexible and tolerant of ways of doing things which might be different to yours in order to operate successfully with people from other cultures.

Summary

As we have become more global and digital, the nature of classrooms has drastically changed. Despite the fact that culture is now perceived as an important element in the classroom and the curriculum, there is very little formal input or education on how to approach teaching culture. When we discuss the teaching of cultural awareness as opposed to cultural information we have to consider moving away from using culture as a topic area for practicing reading, writing, listening or speaking but rather providing our learners with the sensitivity and cultural skills to deal successfully with other cultures, without prejudice, while maintaining their own identity.

In this pathway we ask ourselves why cultural awareness should be seen as a fundamental skill in the language classroom. Through comparison and reflection with our own personal experiences, teachers can focus students to understand more about both their own and the target culture before moving on to use new teaching practices in the form of a 'Webquest' that reflects the modern 'digital native' environment to help our learners break social stereotypes and build intercultural communication.

Step 2

Task 1 – An introduction to Cultural competencies

Task 1.1 – Reflecting about Culture in the classroom

Reflect on your personal experiences:

- What type of cultural activities in English do you do in your class?
- How do you present/introduce cultural activities in your lessons? Ad Hoc? Culture Corner? Following the textbook? Realia?
- What contact do your learners have with the target culture outside the classroom?
- What kind of activities could you use to teach cultural competencies?

Look at the following and compare with your ideas:



Task 2 - Classroom activities to develop cultural awareness at B1 level

Task 2.1 – Introduction

Culture is wide and diverse area so it is important to provide a variety of tasks for our learners. A wide range of materials are available for the teacher to exploit, including textbooks, TV and radio broadcasts, videos and podcasts, newspapers and magazines, any kind of “realia” that can be produced in the classroom and in this context the internet which offers an unlimited source of relevant, usable and adaptable material for us to use.

Outlined above, are the kind of materials which the teacher and students will need to research, compare and contrast for cultural information. It is important to remember that, as already stated, little will come from simply displaying a London underground ticket or reading an article on the internet. Effective use requires careful planning by the teacher and a task oriented approach characterised by co-operative learning to stimulate students’ intellectual curiosity. To Raise empathy and increase cross-cultural understanding – both awareness of their own culture, as well as that of the target culture does not imply behaviour change in our students but merely awareness and tolerance of the cultural influences affecting one’s own and others’ behaviour.

Below is a range of activities a teacher could use as the basis for future lessons or adapt to suit student needs in their own classes.

As you experiment, evaluate your teaching by making notes about the lesson:

- What did you do?
- How did you do it?
- How did students respond at each stage?
- What was successful in the lesson? Analyse why it was successful.
- What didn’t work so well? Why?
- What would you do to improve the lesson next time?

Task 2.2 – Setting the stage: Getting Students to reflect about Culture

Task 2.2.1

In order for our students to develop the skills necessary to attain cultural awareness they first need to understand how they are seen in the world.

Preparation: Students begin by watching the video “*where the hell is Matt?*” from 2006 on this site: <http://www.wherethehellismatt.com/>

This can be reached by going to the videos section on the top bar or using the youtube link below:

https://www.youtube.com/embed/bNF_P281Uu4?rel=0

Task 2.2.2

While not offering any real *learning* it will capture the students’ attention and activate their personal schemata in the direction of culture.

a) With pens down students watch the video. At the end ask learners in pairs/groups to write down all the countries they can remember (recommended).

b) Covering up the lower section of the screen ask learners to write down all the countries they recognise while viewing.

After a brief discussion on did they enjoy the video? Would they like to do what Matt does? Which countries they would choose to visit? Focus the learners on to his journal page: <http://www.wherethehellismatt.com/journal>

Find Italy and ask learners to read first the entry by matt about Venice.

http://www.wherethehellismatt.com/journal/2006/05/venice_italy_st.htm

!

Task 2.2.3

Ask the learners to discuss and compose in pairs how they would respond and what they would like to write in response to Matt’s entry. Now move on to the comments. Ask your students to read these and discuss the following questions in pairs:

- Do you think the comments are right/fair? Yes/No Why?
- How do you think the world sees your cultural identity?
- Do you see any cultural stereotypes in the comments? Which?

By discussing what they would like to write and more importantly reporting back on what they have read, students will gain a valuable insight into how both the world and fellow Italians see their cultural identity.

Task 2.2.4

Discuss with your class their opinions on what they have read then give them the question “What is a cultural stereotype?”

In pairs/small groups students write their definition in no more than 30 words. Check answers and compare theirs to:

An ethnic/cultural stereotype is a simplified and often misleading representation of an ethnic group, composed of what are thought to be typical characteristics of members of a given ethnic group.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic_stereotype

Task 2.2.5

In groups ask your students to list all the stereotypes on “Italians/Italy” they can think of. Collect all the ideas and discuss them with your class. A good source for comparison and extension would be:

<http://rinaz.net/2010/08/italian-stereotypes/>

or for images

https://www.google.co.uk/search?q=italian+stereotypes&safe=off&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ei=vM_CUaWEF8WL0AW4m4H4Dg&sqi=2&ved=0CAcQ_AUoAQ&biw=1024&bih=643

Task 2.2.6

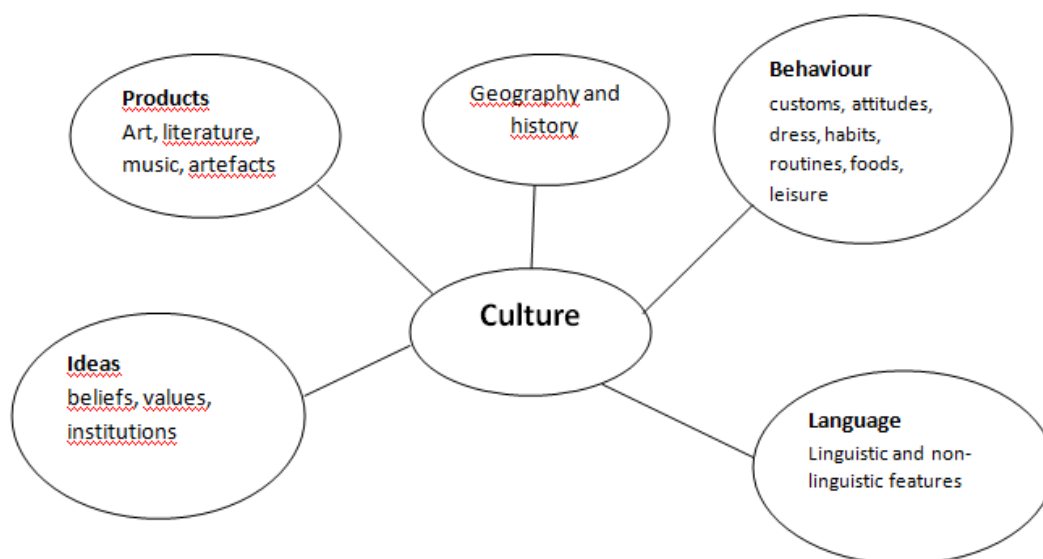
Now ask your learners individually to think of the first 3 words that come to mind when they hear the words England or English. Collect ideas and ask students to go onto the *Project Britain* site to compare their ideas with what is presented:

<http://resources.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/stereotypes.htm>

Follow up with paired discussions:

- Are cultural stereotypes negative? Do they give a positive or negative image of the country and its people? Yes/No Why?
- Why is it important that we look beyond cultural stereotypes in the world today?

Check answers and opinions and reinforce the concepts of globalisation, migration and the digital age. Present your students with an empty version of the mind map below (leave the words in bold) and ask them in groups to complete it with their ideas on what culture actually is.



Task 2.2.7

Ask what they think this really means, and then tell your students they are going to quickly reference Wikipedia

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intercultural_competence)

on cultural competencies to build up knowledge on the importance of having this skill.

In pairs/small groups students read and collect ideas. Feedback on their ideas they have learned from reading and the key points on the whiteboard:

Now in open class reveal the following phrases one at a time, comparing these key elements with those of the students and discussing/eliciting any opinions on what they are reading to reinforce the concepts that cultural skills and awareness is more than just “facts”, it is more about tolerance and acceptance.

Phrases to reveal:

“Intercultural competence is the ability to be able to work effectively with other cultures through an understanding of the attitudes and customs of other countries or organisations.”

“The traditions and customs that you are accustomed to may not be acceptable in your host country.”

“Intercultural competence is all about being aware of differences and keeping an open mind when dealing with people from different cultures.”

"Intercultural competence is also about understanding other ways of thought and being receptive to these different ways of thinking."

"With the world becoming more and more international nowadays, it is not uncommon to communicate and work with different countries, which is why intercultural competence is so important. A lack of sensitivity can offend and affect relationships."

"Training in intercultural skills is seen as useful for anyone working in an international or multicultural environment."

"What can we do to improve this skill? The main thing is to be open and understanding to other communities. Don't make assumptions about people based on their, or your, culture."

"Cross-cultural competence training enhances people's skills, and therefore future employment opportunities."

Task 3 – British Culture Webquest

Task 3.1 – Extending the ideas: Going on a Journey

The area of culture is enormous. It consists of all institutions, all the behaviour, in fact all the man-made aspects of a very large group of non-homogeneous people. It has been said that culture is like an iceberg, that only ten percent of it is visible and the other ninety percent is hidden below the surface and the best we can do is to provide some pathways to enter into it more. We cannot know everything about culture and we should not be disappointed that we cannot teach everything, just as not all cultural facts will be of interest to all your students all the time.

However, through personalising activities, allowing our learners to relate to the same issues in their own lives and providing a variety of practical approaches that reflect the modern day digital classroom we will be able to engage our students. Moreover, through taking a task based approach that encourages learners' autonomy and collaborative skills, our students will have more opportunities for using the target language, discussing the target culture, and gaining additional perspectives on their own culture.

Webquests

As more students gain access to the Internet, there is growing pressure on teachers to help their students use this valuable resource as an effective study tool. A webquest is an activity that requires learners to use the Internet in order to complete a task. Webquests can extend over an entire course, several classes or be integrated into a single lesson. Essentially, webquests are mini-projects in which a large percentage of the input and material is supplied by the Internet.

There are many persuasive reasons for using webquests in the classroom, including:

- They are an easy way for teachers to begin to incorporate the Internet into the language classroom.
- They are group activities and as a result tend to lend themselves to communication and the sharing of knowledge. They encourage critical thinking skills, such as comparing and classifying.
- Learners are not able to simply regurgitate information they find, but are guided towards a transformation of that information in order to achieve a given task.
- They can be both motivating and authentic tasks and encourage learners to view the activities they are doing as something “real” or “useful”.

For more information on webquests go to:

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/articles/webquests>

Task 3.2 – Introduction

Tell the students what a *webquest* is: a journey on the internet and they will be looking at the following areas on British Culture:

Festivals, Food, Manners, Gestures, Sports and British symbols.

Britain has many traditions and culture which have been around for hundreds of years. They are famous all over the world and if asked most people will say drinking tea, eating fish and chips or carrying umbrellas. However, there is more to Britain than just those things.

Tell learners in this project they will have to collect information about British culture. They will be able to save all their work using drop box. After

editing and correcting all the information the final product can be placed online and shared through:

- a **Blog** - for how to create a class blog, see here <https://www.youtube.com/BloggerHelp>;
- **Glogster** - an online poster blog, for more information see here <http://www.glogster.com/>.

Tell students they will be working in small groups of 3/4 people, depending on class size, and each group will investigate a topic area on British Culture. In this way they will understand British culture and traditions better and be able to tell the similarities and differences with their own and British culture.

Task 3.3 – Procedure Overview

1. Organise students into groups of 3/4.
2. Each group will be assigned one of the following topics:
 - The Royal Family;
 - Festivals and Holidays;
 - Symbols of Britain;
 - Sports and Free time;
 - Food and Drinks in Britain;
 - Manners;
 - Suggestions for Tourists;
 - British Government(s).
3. At this stage students work in small groups where they will find useful information on their topic. Remember the sites proposed are recommendations only, if students wish to look further they can. This stage can take one or two standard lessons depending on resources and ability of the class using the computers at school. If more time is needed, it can be finished at home.
4. Students share, edit and correct the information they have researched and decide what to include in the final project. This can be done both at school in the classroom and at home using “dropbox”.
5. Students present their findings orally in 10/15 min presentations in the classroom using PowerPoint (if possible) or posters (see further recommendations). The final digital work can be placed on a shared online working space (e.g. blog or glogster) for all the school to see.

Task 3.4 – Lesson procedure

Topic Choice

On the board place the following topics on British Culture:

THE ROYAL FAMILY	FESTIVALS AND HOLIDAYS	SYMBOLS OF BRITAIN
SPORTS AND FREE TIME	FOOD AND DRINKS IN BRITIAN	MANNERS
SUGGESTIONS FOR TOURISTS	THE GOVERNMENT	

Give time for each group to choose a topic area to investigate, ensuring all topic areas are covered. After groups have been established, hand out the appropriate information to each group (see below) and let students begin their research on computers. For larger classes more topic areas could easily be created i.e. music, dance, geography and countryside, clothes, legends etc.

Webquest information sheet

The Royal Family

Your Topic is THE ROYAL FAMILY. Below are some ideas on what you have to include in your final project. You'll find the information in the links provided below:

The Royal Family:

- The Queen and her role;
- Members of the Royal Family;
- Why isn't the Queen's husband King?
- Royal Family's Surname;
- Royal Coat of Arms;
- Buckingham Palace and other Royal homes;

- 2 more ideas your group can include.

Links:

<http://projectbritain.com/theQueen.htm>

<http://projectbritain.com/royal/role.htm>

<http://projectbritain.com/royal/family.htm>

<http://projectbritain.com/royal/family.htm>

<http://projectbritain.com/london/attractions/buckinghampalace.htm>

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/english-skills-practice/life-uk>

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/freetime/video-zone>

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/britain-great-episodes/heritage-great>

Festivals and Holidays

Your topic is FESTIVALS AND HOLIDAYS. Below are the list of some festivals and holidays you have to include in the final project. You'll find the information in the links provided below.

Festivals and Holidays:

- Burn's Night;
- Shrove Tuesday;
- St Patrick's Day;
- April Fool's day;
- Notting Hill Carnival;
- Halloween;
- Bonfire Night;
- Christmas;
- 1 more holiday your group can add;
- 1 more festival your group can add.

Links:

<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/holidays.html>

<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/index/festivals.htm>
<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/english-skills-practice/video-uk>
<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/english-skills-practice/life-uk>
<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/freetime/video-zone>
http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/britain-great?utm_source=learnenglish&utm_medium=homepage-advert&utm_campaign=le-adverts

Symbols of Britain

Your topic is SYMBOLS of BRITAIN. Below is a list of questions that can help your group to decide what to include in the final project. You'll find the information in the links provided below:

Symbols of Britain:

1. What are the capital cities of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland? Find more information about each of them. Location? History of their name? Significant dates in their history.
2. What is the national flag of the United Kingdom? How is it created?
3. What is the United Kingdom? What is Great Britain?
4. What are the national symbols of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland?
5. Why is the whole of Ireland not part of the United Kingdom?
6. What is the origin of the national anthem?
7. What other objects/things/monuments can be said to be symbols of Great Britain? Explain why these different objects/things/monuments are symbolic.

Links:

<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/index/introduction.htm>
<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/nationality.htm>
<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/symbols.html>
<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/english-skills-practice/video-uk/classic-british-car>

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/britain-great-episodes/english-great>

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/english-skills-practice/video-uk>

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/english-skills-practice/life-uk>

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/freetime/video-zone>

Sports and Free Time

Your topic is SPORTS AND FREE TIME. Below are some ideas on what you have to include in the final project. You'll find the information in the links provided below.

Sports and Free time:

- Popular sports;
- Popular games played at school;
- Important sporting events;
- Leisure time activities;
- Famous British Sporting events/dates/people (i.e. Roger Bannister) and why?
- How Professional sports people find British culture and sport different to their country;
- 2 more ideas your group can add.

Links:

<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/sport.html>

<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/freetime.htm>

<http://premierskills.britishcouncil.org/en/on-the-pitch/player-interviews>

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/english-skills-practice/life-uk>

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/freetime/video-zone>

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/britain-great-episodes/sport-great>

Food and Drinks in Britain

Your topic is FOOD and DRINKS in BRITAIN. Below are some ideas on what you have to include in the final project. You'll find the information in the links provided below.

Food and Drinks in Britain:

- Popular foods and drinks in Britain;
- Typical meals and meal times in Britain;
- How international food is changing the British diet;
- Main meal dishes;
- Desserts;
- Tea (why the British love Tea);
- Present 2 recipes of traditional British dishes.

Links:

<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/food.html>

<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/questions/food/index.htm>

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/english-skills-practice/life-uk>

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/freetime/video-zone>

http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/britain-great?utm_source=learnenglish&utm_medium=homepage-advert&utm_campaign=le-adverts

Manners

Your Topic is MANNERS. Below are some ideas on what you have to include in the final project. You'll find the information in the links provided below.

Manners:

- Dos and Don'ts and the rules of British etiquette
Gestures, body language (touching, kissing, bowing, hugging etc.),
facial expressions;
- Chronemics (different ideas of time...);
- Proxemics (personal space in different cultures);
- Greeting;
- Visiting;
- Thanking;
- Say how these differ from your culture and compare to other cultures

also.

Links:

<http://projectbritain.com/index/people.htm>

<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/behaviour.html>

http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/behaviour_questions.htm

<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/greetings.htm>

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/english-skills-practice/life-uk>

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/freetime/video-zone>

http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/britain-great?utm_source=learnenglish&utm_medium=homepage-advert&utm_campaign=le-adverts

Suggestions for Tourists

Your Topic is SUGGESTIONS for TOURISTS. Below are some ideas on what you have to include in the final project. You'll find the information in the links provided below.

Suggestions for tourists:

- The Weather;
- Best time to visit and why;
- Currency, changing money;
- Opening and Closing hours;
- The best way to move around Great Britain;
- Making phone calls;
- Clothes and shoes – what to wear and when;
- Essential things you must do and landmarks you must see when in Great Britain;
- 2 more ideas your group can add.

Links:

<http://projectbritain.com/index/dailylife.htm>

<http://projectbritain.com/money.html>

<http://projectbritain.com/transport.html>

<http://www.londontopic.co.uk/practicalities.htm>

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/english-skills-practice/life-uk>

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/freetime/video-zone>

http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/britain-great?utm_source=learnenglish&utm_medium=homepage-advert&utm_campaign=le-adverts

The Government

Your Topic is THE GOVERNMENT. Below are some ideas on what you have to include in the final project. You'll find the information in the links provided below.

The Government:

- Is the UK a republic or a monarchy?
- Who runs the UK?
- The British Parliament: House of Commons, House of Lords, Houses of Parliament;
- The Prime Minister;
- Famous Prime Ministers in British history and why?
- Who is Guy Fawkes and why is he famous?
- 2 more ideas your group can add.

Links:

<http://projectbritain.com/index/government.htm>

<http://projectbritain.com/government/westminster.htm>

<http://projectbritain.com/government/index.htm#lords>

<http://projectbritain.com/government/primeminister.htm>

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/english-skills-practice/life-uk>

<http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/freetime/video-zone>

http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/britain-great?utm_source=learnenglish&utm_medium=homepage-advert&utm_campaign=le-adverts

Task 3.5 – Further Recommendations

- Students arrange the information on a PowerPoint presentation and present projects orally in the classroom to classmates.
- Students arrange the information on a class *blog* or create online *glogster* posters to present to other classes through school social network.
- Students create class displays / posters to exhibit throughout school
- Students create “roleplays”, “simulations”, “games” to present and act to school to highlight differences and similarities between Italian and British cultures.
- Cross-cultural dialogues with other schools (for more information consider <http://www.epals.com/>).

Step 3

Self evaluation

Think back to the tasks presented in this module and reflect on the questions below:

- Which activities did you try?
- How effective were they?
 - extremely - very - mostly - somewhat - little - not at all
- If you did you have any problems? If so, what and why?
- Will you change the way you teach and introduce culture into the classroom now? Yes? No? If no, why not?

Teachers' self evaluation

	I can do this. How? e.g. using examples from the module	What do I need to improve on? e.g. using role-plays, accessing more authentic materials	Suggestions for further Development
I have a clear understanding of how to introduce culture into lessons.			Produce a simple search on the internet on "introducing culture in the language classroom" and read up on at least two topics. Join the "Internet TESL Journal" for further ideas and reading.
I have raised awareness of ' stereotyping ' and its implication for			Set up cross cultural dialogues with other schools (pen friends).

cross-cultural understanding.			Authentic materials in class – films, songs etc. to challenge learners further on their perceived concepts.
I understand that building cultural awareness is more than just introducing 'facts' into the classroom.			<p>Read chapter 4 of the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters – Context, concepts and theories pages 23 -27.</p> <p>Use the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters with students and facilitator notes.</p>
I have successfully tried out some cultural activities with my students.			<p>Use the facilitators notes and introduce the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters in class.</p> <p>Use the "Britain is Great" series of videos with supporting lesson material from the learnenglish site.</p>
I understand why it is important to implement ' cultural competencies ' into the classroom.			<p>Read - Section 5.3 "learning and teaching intercultural competencies" from the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue.</p> <p>Read Chapter 2 "Concepts and theories" of the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters –</p>

			Context, concepts and theories pages 6 – 18.
My students can draft, edit, re-draft and have produced a final product of writing.			Produce a class Blog or online poster using Glogster. Produce a class poster to display in the school.
I feel confident incorporating the internet into my lessons and designing further material for intercultural competencies.			Experiment with and evaluate one new website on English language teaching every month. Create an account on the "teachingenglish" website to exchange ideas and enter in discussion on interesting topics .

Students' self evaluation

	I can do this	I can't do it yet	Suggestions for further development
I understand to have cross-cultural relationships, people from different countries have different ideas and stereotyping is negative.			Join an international pen friends group such as 'europa epals' at: http://www.europa-pages.com

I understand that learning a language means you must also learn some of its culture .			Register on the "learnenglish Teens" website. Watch and comment on at least 2 stories from the video zone.
I can see and compare differences and similarities in different languages and cultures.			Register on the "learnenglish Teens" facebook page and comment on at least 3 stories.
I can work in groups , edit and change work produced by my classmates and compromise to reach a team agreement.			Keep a diary of all useful expressions learnt for giving opinions, agreeing, disagreeing etc.
I have increased my vocabulary , written , listening and spoken skills researching and working on cultural activities.			Keep a personal vocabulary book list on all new words learnt.
I have increased my computer skills.			Experiment with one new programme/website (computers) or app (tablet/smartphone) every month in the field of language learning.

RESOURCES

Bibliography

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Council of Europe, European Centre for Modern Languages. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEF)*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2001.

Kramsch, C. *Language and Culture*. OUP, Oxford 1993.

Websites

British Council: Articles on culture.

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/articles/culture>

British Council: Culture- the fifth language skill.

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/articles/culture-fifth-language-skill>

British Council: Intercultural Competence.

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/professionals-work-intercultural-competence-2.htm>

British Council: Making culture happen in the English language classroom.

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/articles/making-culture-happen-english-language-classroom>

British Council: UK Culture.

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/uk-culture?page=0%2C1>

Premier Skills English: Player Interviews.

<http://premierskills.britishcouncil.org/en/on-the-pitch/player-interviews>

Project Britain: British Life and Culture.

<http://projectbritain.com/>

Where the hell is Matt? Posts from Italy.

<http://www.wherethehellismatt.com/italy>

White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue - "Living together as equals in dignity".

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/Source/Pub_White_Paper/White%20Paper_final_revised_EN.pdf

SINTESI IN ITALIANO

Da quando siamo diventati globali e digitali, la natura delle aule è drasticamente cambiata. Nonostante la cultura sia ormai percepita come elemento importante in classe e del curriculum c'è molta carenza di informazioni su come approcciare la cultura nell'insegnamento.

Quando discutiamo sull'insegnamento della *consapevolezza culturale* in opposizione alle *informazioni culturali*, dobbiamo evitare di utilizzare la cultura come argomento per la pratica della lettura, della scrittura, dell'ascolto e del parlato. Dobbiamo fornire ai nostri studenti le competenze e la sensibilità culturale per confrontarsi con successo con altre culture, senza pregiudizio, mantenendo al contempo la propria identità.

In questo percorso ci si domanda perché la consapevolezza culturale debba essere vista come una competenza fondamentale nella classe di lingua. Attraverso il confronto e la riflessione sulle esperienze personali, gli insegnanti possono stimolare gli studenti a comprendere più a fondo la propria cultura, per passare quindi alle nuove pratiche d'insegnamento, nella forma di un "WebQuest". Tutto ciò con il fine di aiutare i nostri studenti a rompere gli stereotipi sociali e a costruire la comunicazione interculturale.