

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
SECONDARY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME

GRADE SEVEN (7)
WEEK 12 LESSON TWO (2)

SOCIAL STUDIES

Topic: A Glimpse of Our History.

Sub-Topic: Cultural Heritage

Objectives:

- Identify contributions made by our ancestors
- Identify the positive and negative effects of cultural diversity

Concept: We must live harmoniously with other groups and show respect for the different aspects of their culture.

Content:

The Contributions Of The Chinese To Our Cultural Heritage

The Chinese made a great contribution to the economy of Guyana through the establishment of shops, supermarkets, laundries, etc. Their fried rice, chowmein, and lowmein complement the Guyanese diet. Chinese are very skilful in using chopsticks to eat their meals. Guyanese women fashionably wear the Chinese gowns with high collars and long slits in the skirts.

Many Chinese have become Christians and have adopted a western lifestyle. In 1920 the Chinese Association was established to protect Chinese rights. The association housed a sports room and dormitories for visitors. Their members were pureblooded descendants of that ethnic group. The Chinese Association aimed to foster unity among all Chinese. To provide a regular meeting place for them and to assist and protect their interest at all times. Chinese are sports-loving people. Their sports include lawn tennis, cricket, hockey, karate and other outdoor and indoor games.

Chinese in Guyana are well known for their outstanding performances in a variety of fields. Mr Arthur Chung O.E. was the titular president of Guyana from 1970 –1980. Ray Luck is regarded as Guyana’s gifted international concert pianist. In 1972 a Chinese Embassy in Guyana was established and diplomatic relations with the People’s Republic of China is cordial.

Contributions Of The East Indians To Our Cultural Heritage

From their arrival as immigrants until the present time, the East Indians have made a great contribution to the economic development of Guyana. In agriculture, they were responsible for

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the development of the rice industry. Cash crop production is also another area of their economic operations. The fishing and shrimping industry attracted many workers. From their cattle rearing, they were able to derive an income from selling meat as well as milk. Attempts were also made at pasteurising the milk. In the social development of Guyana, the East Indians have made great inroads.

Gorgeous saris worn by their women display the traditional East Indian dress. The construction of several ornate temples and mosques bears witness to their vibrant religious practices. East Indians have done well in the field of sports, e.g. cricket. Many of our national holidays are traditional East Indian festivals, e.g –Eid ul-Azah, Phagwah, Youman-Nabi and Diwali. East Indian foods have become Guyanese dishes. e.g. roti and curry.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

We have seen that culture consists of the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of a group of people. This culture is kept alive by continuous practice. The Guyanese culture is a diverse blend of all the practices of our ethnic groups and the diversity of cultural influences can have positive as well as negative effects on all Guyanese.

Some Positive Effects Of A Culturally Diverse Society

- The fabric of our society can become enriched because of the diversity of cultural influences.
- Novel ideas can be developed from a blend of different aspects of our culture.
- Variety can stimulate interest and improve quality.

Some Negative Effects Of A Culturally Diverse Society

- Cultural diversity can breed suspicion and prejudice.
- It can create competition for supremacy among the various ethnic groups
- Racism can be kept alive once differences are emphasised and promoted.

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Culture is determined by the choices we make. We can change those behaviours that are unacceptable for the well-being of society. With a behaviour change will come a corresponding change of culture. As Guyanese, we ought to promote by practising, those aspects of the various cultures that unite the ethnic groups. If we fail to examine our cultures closely and replace the divisive aspects with integration instead of isolation, we will continue to be plagued by the negative effects of cultural diversity.

Activity

1. Create a scrapbook with the different contributions our ancestors made.

Homework

1. Create a cartoon sketch depicting the importance of cultural diversity in our society.

Reference

1. <https://study.com/academy/lesson/the-school-community-definition-members.html>
2. Ministry of Education Social Studies teacher's guide level 7 pages 45 to 47
3. Ministry of Education Curriculum guide page 6
4. New Horizon in Social Studies book 7 pages 98 to 99