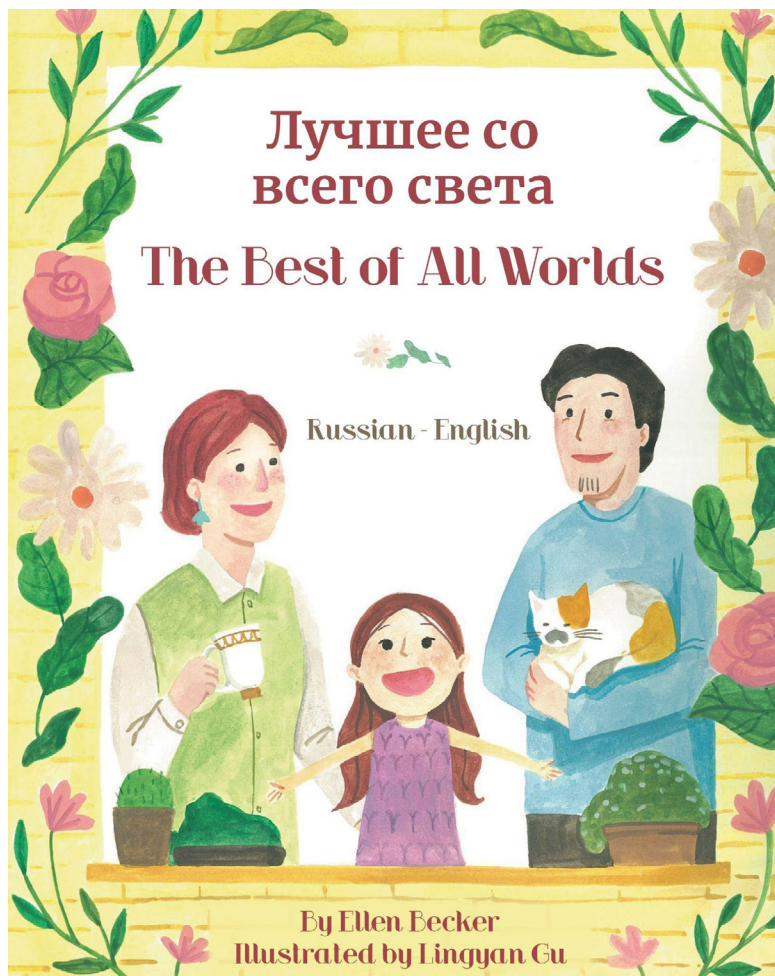


Living in Harmony Series

Theme: Cultural Awareness and Appreciation/ Multicultural Identity/ Cultural Traditions and Celebrations



Goal: To provide children with opportunities to explore the themes of multiculturalism, identity, and the importance of celebrating diversity.

Book Used in Lesson: *The Best of All Worlds*

Written by Ellen Becker. Illustrated by Lingyan Gu. Available in many bilingual editions. For a complete list of languages, visit www.LanguageLizard.com.

Lesson Snapshot:

- Children **predict** what they think the story will be about.
- Children **explore key vocabulary** from the story.
- Children listen to a **reading of the story** *The Best of All Worlds*.
- Children respond to the text by answering **literal, inferential, and evaluative questions**.
- Children **retell the story** of *The Best of All Worlds* using words, sentences, illustrations, or still images.
- Children **devise questions** to ask the main character in the story.
- Children engage in **hot seating** drama activity.

Background Information for Facilitator

Important Considerations Prior to Reading

The Best of All Worlds follows a young girl named Katie, who is unsure about how to celebrate Multicultural Day at her school. Katie lives in the United States. Her mother is Irish, and her father is Vietnamese, so she has distinct cultural backgrounds that she wants to share with her classmates. Katie explores various American, Irish, and Vietnamese traditions by speaking to her parents and grandparents, and learning about the rich customs and celebrations in each culture. She realizes that she doesn't have to choose one culture over the other and can also incorporate each part of her identity.

Before reading this story to your students, it is important to consider the diverse backgrounds and experiences of the listeners. The modern classroom is becoming increasingly diverse, with students coming from a range of multicultural backgrounds. With this in mind, it is important to embrace and celebrate the diversity in your classroom in order to help children build a deeper understanding of themselves and others. It is also vital that the facilitator is sensitive to the wide-ranging experiences of the children. Some students may come from experiences of displacement, conflict, or trauma. The importance of fostering a safe and supportive environment where students can express themselves and feel valued while also being sensitive to their unique challenges is paramount.

Sources:

Drexel University School of Education (n.d.). The Importance of Diversity & Multicultural Awareness in Education. <https://drexel.edu/soe/resources/student-teaching/advice/importance-of-cultural-diversity-in-classroom/>

Huckleberry (2023). *Embracing the World: Introducing Cultural Diversity to Your Kids*. <https://huckleberrycare.com/blog/embracing-the-world-introducing-cultural-diversity-to-your-kids>.

Portobello Institute (2023 May 16). *How to Integrate Cultural Diversity in the Early Years Classroom*. <https://blog.portobelloinstitute.com/how-to-integrate-cultural-diversity-in-the-early-years-classroom>

Lesson Plan: *The Best of All Worlds*



Grade Level: K-2 (Note: The activities in this lesson plan can be tailored to suit the needs of the specific group that is being taught at the discretion of the facilitator.)

Time Frame: 2 x (45 minute - 1 hour) sessions.

Objectives:

Knowledge:

- Learn about Irish and Vietnamese traditions such as Irish dancing, hurling, St. Patrick's Day, dumplings, Tết, and cò tướng.
- Learn that people can belong to more than one culture and that celebrating multiple heritages can be a unique and enriching experience.
- Recognize that there are many ways to celebrate identity and heritage.

Skills:

- Make predictions based on observations of illustrations.
- Listen to the story of *The Best of All Worlds*.
- Use language to explain and describe.
- Use language to ask questions.
- Devise questions to ask the main character about her culture, family, and celebrating her culture.

Attitudes:

- Develop an appreciation for the variety of other cultures and traditions.
- Develop curiosity and open-mindedness towards other cultures and ways of life.
- Enjoy listening to the story being read in English and in the other language of the dual language book, if possible.
- Appreciate different languages and scripts from around the world.

Essential Questions:

- How do Katie's Irish and Vietnamese backgrounds make her unique?
- Why is it important for Katie to celebrate all parts of her heritage?
- How does celebrating different cultures help us understand each other better?

Materials and Resources

- *The Best of All Worlds* by Ellen Becker.
- Flashcards with pictures of key vocabulary words.
- Art materials for making a poster: poster paper, markers, coloring pencils, crayons, glue sticks, scissors, etc.

Linkage and Integration Across Subject Areas:

Language Arts: Vocabulary development, reading fluency, use of language to explain and describe.

Drama: Character Hot Seating to enable pupils to engage with the main character and explore her thoughts, feelings, and motivations.

Vocabulary to be Developed in Lesson:

Key Vocabulary	Story-Specific Vocabulary
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Culture• Multicultural• Relatives• Vietnam• Ireland• America• Costume• Celebrates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dumplings• Sáo• Folktales• Cờ tướng• Hurling• Tết• St. Patrick's Day• Fourth of July



Katie se divierte cocinando con su abuela. —¿Dónde aprendiste a hacer estas deliciosas empanadillas? —pregunta Katie.
—En Vietnam, donde nació —dice su abuela.
«A lo mejor soy vietnamita», piensa Katie.

Katie has fun cooking with her grandma. “Where did you learn to make these delicious dumplings?” Katie asks.
“In Vietnam, where I was born,” her grandma says.
“Maybe I am Vietnamese,” Katie thinks.

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Procedure:

Introduction:

1. Begin the lesson by presenting the cover of the book *The Best of All Worlds*.
2. Ask children to predict what they think the story could be about. Ask children to search carefully for visual clues. Support the children in describing the characters, colors, objects that stand out, etc.

Vocabulary Development:

3. Using the list of words tabulated above or any additional words, elicit known vocabulary (key vocabulary/story specific vocabulary) from the children. This activity can be supported by the use of flashcards and/or pictures.
4. Present new vocabulary (key vocabulary/story specific vocabulary) to the children. Using flashcards and/or pictures, invite the children to say/read each word. Ask the children if they know the meaning of the words and encourage them to provide an explanation of the word if possible. The facilitator may need to elaborate or provide additional explanations of some words and say the word in a sentence to provide a use of the word in context for the children. The facilitator may ask the children to create

their own sentence containing the word, encouraging the children to make a personal connection with the word. If there are bilingual children in the group, it may be possible to ask them to say the word in their language(s).

Reading:

5. Read the book *The Best of All Worlds* with the children. The facilitator may choose to read the book aloud to the children, engage in choral reading (facilitator and children read the story together in unison), or see-saw reading (facilitator reads one sentence, children read the following sentence and continue alternating reading after each sentence). It is important to read with appropriate tone, pace, inflection, and expression to engage the children as much as possible. If there are children who speak the language of the dual language book, here would be a nice opportunity to ask them to read/translate a section of the story if they would like.
6. Throughout the story, explicitly draw children's attention to the illustrations to promote comprehension of the text.
7. Encourage children to make connections (orally, using mime, in writing). Connections may be *Text to Self* (Connections from *The Best of All Worlds* to child's own life or experiences), *Text to Text* (Connections from *The Best of All Worlds* to another book/story), or *Text to Wider World* (Connections from *The Best of All Worlds* to real world events such as historical events, current events, etc.).

Discussion to Encourage Reflection and Response:

8. Facilitate discussion with the group of children using literal, inferential, and evaluative questions. The facilitator may wish to select questions from the following list:

Literal Questions:

(Readers use information directly from the text to answer this type of question.)

- What special event will be celebrated at Katie's school?
- Where is Katie's mother/father from?
- What is the name of the Vietnamese flute?
- What Irish sport does Katie watch on television?

Inferential Questions:

(Reader must use the information in the text to deduce the answer.)

- Why is Katie curious about her culture?
- What forms Katie's cultural identity?

- Why is it important that Katie celebrates Vietnamese, Irish, and American festivals?

Evaluative Questions:

(Reader uses his/her own knowledge to explore answers to this type of question.)

- How do you think it would feel for Katie to celebrate both Irish and Vietnamese cultures at school?
- How do you think celebrating Multicultural Day will help Katie's friends to understand her heritage better?
- Why is it important to share and learn about different cultures?

Word Identification/Fluency Development:

9. **Revisit the Story and Identify Key Vocabulary Words:** Display key vocabulary words from the story. Re-read a section from the story and ask the children to raise their hands when they hear or see one of the key vocabulary words.
10. The facilitator may wish to play vocabulary word games to help reinforce the vocabulary words. Some games include:
 - i. Vocabulary: This involves sticking a vocabulary word on a player's back so that they can't see the word, but all other players can see it. Players take turns trying to guess the word on their back by asking yes or no questions.
 - ii. Hot Potato Vocabulary: Children sit in a circle and pass a small ball ('hot potato'). Similar to pass the parcel, music is played and when the music stops, the child holding the ball must give a synonym, antonym, or definition of the word called out by the facilitator. Another option is to ask the children to put the word in a sentence.
 - iii. Word Bingo: Children have a grid with various vocabulary words. The facilitator calls out the definition or description of the word, and the players mark the word on their cards.
 - iv. Word Match: In pairs, one child selects a card (from a set of cards with the vocabulary words written on them) and reads the word. Their partner finds the word on a word mat and covers it with a counter. When all the words have been found, the children swap roles and repeat.



11. **Retell the Story:**

Present key words from the story in order as they appear in the story (ask the children to sequence the events in the story for more of a challenge). Using the words that are listed in order, children retell the story in small groups or pairs. The facilitator may ask the children to retell the story orally or in writing. Alternatively, the facilitator may present sentences with key words for this activity to provide the children with additional support. If sentences are used for this activity, children could create a storyboard that illustrates the main events of the book using illustrations, mime, or still images. Children can also describe Katie's feelings (and how they change) throughout the story.

Independent Work/Group Work Activity:

12. **Drama: Character Hot Seating**

- Inform the students that they will carry out a “hot seating” activity where one student will take on the role of Katie, the protagonist, while the other pupils will ask her questions. The student in the “hot seat” must answer the questions as if they were the main character, thinking about her experiences, feelings, and perspective.
- The facilitator may choose a student to play the main character, or the facilitator may take on the role if they would like to guide the discussion themselves.
- Some questions may include:
 - i. How do you feel about celebrating Multicultural Day at school?
 - ii. Are you nervous or excited about sharing both your Irish and Vietnamese culture?
 - iii. How do you think your classmates will feel when they see the Irish and Vietnamese traditions you share?
- After the activity, the facilitator may wish to discuss what the students learned from the “hot seating” (e.g., What did you learn about Katie's experience of having two cultures? How do you think it would feel to celebrate both Irish and Vietnamese cultures at school? Why is it important to share and learn about different cultures?).

Conclusion:

At this point, the facilitator may want to revisit the essential questions to determine whether the children have understood the main ideas of the lesson:

- How do Katie's Irish and Vietnamese backgrounds make her unique?
- Why is it important for Katie to celebrate all parts of her heritage?
- How does celebrating different cultures help us understand each other better?

As a concluding activity, invite the children to discuss these questions with the whole group, in smaller groups, in pairs, or as a written reflection. An activity such as 'Two Stars and a Wish' may be a nice conclusion to the lesson. In pairs, children tell their partner two things they learned and one thing they would like to learn about the importance of celebrating different cultures.

Assessment:

Facilitator Observation: Children's engagement and interaction with the lesson, engagement in discussions, and engagement with facilitator designed tasks.

Facilitator Questioning: Higher and lower order questioning (i.e., literal, inferential, and evaluative questions).

Facilitator Designed Tasks: Making predictions, vocabulary games, reading fluency activities, character hot seating drama activity.

Self-Assessment: Two Stars and a Wish.

Accommodations/Differentiation:

Differential Modes of Representation: Pictures, flashcards, etc.

Differential Questioning: Use of higher and lower order questioning (i.e., literal, inferential, and evaluative questions).

Differential Product/Response: Written responses, oral responses, drama responses.

In a classroom setting, it may be helpful for the English language learners (ELLs) to take the dual language book home either before or after the lesson. The children may read the book at home in the language they speak at home. This will increase the child's confidence when talking about the book in school. If possible, ask the child's parent/guardian

to read and record the book in the language they speak at home. The recording could then be played in the classroom, enabling children to hear other languages spoken by their peers at home.



Extension Activities:

Irish and Vietnamese Traditions – Venn Diagram (Social Studies)

Ask the children to compare and contrast Irish and Vietnamese traditions. Use different symbols from both Irish and Vietnamese cultures (e.g., shamrocks, Irish dancing shoes, dragons, lotus flowers, dumplings) to identify similarities and differences between the two cultures.

Family Heritage Show and Tell (English – Oral Language)

Provide children with the opportunity to bring in a picture/something special from their family's culture (e.g., food, clothing, festivals, or a tradition). They can then share with the class why it is meaningful to them. Encourage students to speak to parents/guardians/grandparents as part of the research/preparation process.

Create a Picture Book (English - Writing)

Older pupils could write their own book to convey their cultural background. Students could create a hardcopy picture book or use a website such as 'Book Creator' to devise a multimodal digital book. Topics could include traditional food, games, festivals, and traditions. Encourage students to speak to parents/guardians/grandparents as part of the research/preparation process. Each student could present their book to their peers.

Cultural Collage (Visual Arts)

Students could create a collage (on paper or digitally) that represents their cultural background. Pupils could include symbols, pictures, photographs, words, or objects that are meaningful to them and their families. Encourage students to speak to parents/guardians/grandparents as part of the research/preparation process.

Irish Traditional Music and Dance (Music/Social Studies)

Provide students with the opportunity to learn about Irish traditional music and dance. Students could learn about traditional Irish musical instruments (e.g., fiddle, bodhrán, uilleann pipes, tin whistle, harp). Students could listen to and clap the different rhythms to traditional Irish tunes (e.g., reel, jog, hornpipe, slow air).

Plan a Multicultural Day or Multicultural Parade at School (Social Studies)

If possible, organize a Multicultural Day or Multicultural Parade to provide the students an opportunity to celebrate the diversity of cultures in the classroom. Ask students to dress up in costumes they created or wear clothing that represents their culture. Encourage students to involve their parents/guardians/grandparents in the preparation process. Students can parade around the classroom or school and share what they learned about their culture. Students can explain what they learned about their peers' cultures by identifying similarities and differences. There may be opportunities to invite family members to attend and/or participate.



Vocabulary Flashcards for *The Best of All Worlds*

culture	multicultural	relatives
Vietnam	Ireland	America
costume	celebrates	dumplings
sáo	folktales	cờ tướng
Tết	St. Patrick's Day	Fourth of July