



## Lesson 3 - Pre-Visit “Hey Getcha...Sushi?” The Cultural Geography of Baseball

Objective: Students will be able to:

- Review the concept of culture and aspects of cultural geography.
- Use reasoning and research to identify influences on a culture.
- Identify customs and traditions for several MLB cities.

Time Required: 1 - 2 class periods

Advance Preparation:

- Select a variety of books and other print sources that have information about U.S. cities and about baseball (or request such sources from a school librarian).
- Schedule a session for your class in your school library.

Materials Needed:

- A photo or some other item related to a baseball stadium near your home town
- Internet access for student research
- A variety of books and other sources (see above)
- Note paper and pencils for research
- Plain white paper
- Markers or colored pencils
- Scissors
- Tape or glue

Vocabulary:

**Culture** - The shared beliefs, social practices, and material traits within a group of people

**Cultural Geography** - The study of cultural aspects of various places and spaces

**Region** - A part of the earth's surface (land or sea) of considerable and usually indefinite extent



Applicable Common Core State Standards:

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.6** Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.7** Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.8** Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.9, W.7.9, W.8.9** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.6** Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.7** Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.8** Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.6** Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.7** Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.8** Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.



Geography: Baseball Coast to Coast– Level 2

Additional Relevant National Learning Standards:

(Based on Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning)

**Geography. Standard 2.** Knows the location of places, geographic features, and patterns of the environment

**Geography. Standard 4.** Understands the physical and human characteristics of place

**Geography. Standard 5.** Understands the concept of regions

**Geography. Standard 6.** Understands that culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions

**Geography. Standard 10.** Understands the nature and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics



## Lesson

1. Most people are familiar with the "location" part of geography and think about geography as the study of maps. But geography also means the study of the cultural features of the people who inhabit Earth. In this lesson, we will explore the cultural features of different Major League teams and ball parks across the country.
2. Review the definitions of **culture** and **cultural geography**.
3. Have students give you some examples of cultural elements. Record student suggestions on the board or on a piece of chart paper. Possible answers include:
  - Language
  - Religion
  - Food
  - Clothing
  - Art
  - Music
  - Rituals and Customs
4. Ask students, "What are some of the sights and sounds you would see and hear at any baseball stadium in the United States?"
5. As students make suggestions, ask them to identify which categories of culture their suggestions fall under. For example, the "seventh inning stretch" is a ritual.
6. Show a photograph or associated artifact (i.e. a jersey, a hat, etc.) from a baseball stadium close to where you live (or one with which the students will be familiar).
7. Ask students if they have ever attended a game at this stadium. Ask, "What are some sights and sounds that are unique to this stadium which you would not see at any other ballpark in the country?"
8. Point out that baseball teams often reflect the culture of the **region** in which they are located. Every geographic region of the United States is distinctive. A team's name, colors, and the architectural features of its ballpark often reflect the cultural geography of the region the team calls home.



## Activity

1. Introduce the activity by explaining that students will be looking more closely at the cultural geography of baseball in America.
2. Divide the class into four small groups, and ask each group to pretend that they are going to attend a baseball game in one of the following cities:
  - Phoenix, Arizona
  - Boston, Massachusetts
  - San Diego, California
  - New York City, New York
3. Begin a discussion about how the cultural aspects of each city might be seen at a ballpark. Will there be signs in languages other than English? Will there be unique foods sold? Will there be ballpark traditions that are distinctive to that city?
4. Give each group the photographs that pertain to baseball in their assigned city, and a Cultural Geography worksheet.
5. On their worksheets, students will answer the following questions:
  - What do you see?
  - What aspects of the city's culture do you recognize?
  - Is this different from your culture? If so, how?
6. Come back together as a class. Review the photographs one city at a time, allowing each group to share their observations.
7. Now divide students into six small groups. Assign each group one of the following cities:
  - Arlington, Texas
  - Cincinnati, Ohio
  - Denver, Colorado
  - Miami, Florida
  - Seattle, Washington
  - Toronto, Ontario



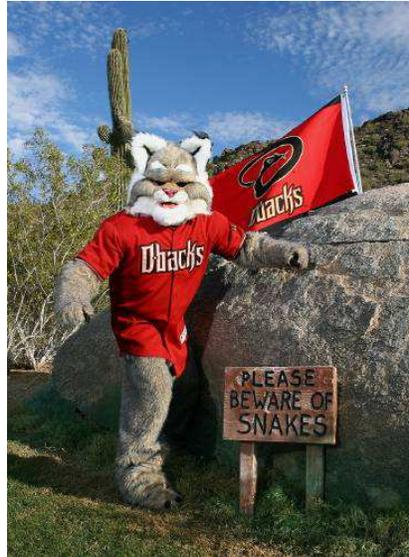
8. Go to the school library during your scheduled time slot. Explain that each group is responsible for researching their assigned city's culture, the local baseball team, and the local baseball stadium. Groups would do well to divide the research work between group members.
9. Tell students that each group must produce a list of sources referenced for this project, properly cited.
10. By the end of the class period, each group should have compiled a list of at least five different cultural aspects of their city that their assigned team incorporates into their ballpark experience. This can include the origin of their team name, mascot, unique foods, and more. (i.e.: “The Mariners sell sushi at Safeco Field because Seattle is known for its fresh seafood and has a large Japanese population.”)

**Conclusion:**

To conclude this lesson and check for understanding, groups should use the cultural information they collected to design a marketing brochure for the baseball team in their assigned city. The brochure should capture the sights, sounds, and colors of the baseball experience. The publication should motivate prospective tourists to visit the ballpark.



## Phoenix, Arizona



<sup>1</sup> [http://images.pictureshunt.com/pics/a/arizona\\_diamondbacks\\_mascot-9265.jpg](http://images.pictureshunt.com/pics/a/arizona_diamondbacks_mascot-9265.jpg)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.youthnoise.com/uservideo/new/5193.jpg>



## Boston, Massachusetts



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<sup>3</sup> [http://images.footballfanatics.com/productImages/\\_245000/FF\\_245668\\_xl.jpg](http://images.footballfanatics.com/productImages/_245000/FF_245668_xl.jpg)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.delish.com/cm/delish/images/aO/boston-red-sox-fenway-frank-xl.jpg>



## New York City, New York



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<sup>5</sup> [http://4.bp.blogspot.com/\\_lgxYKVOgMHk/S92aMVX7SxI/AAAAAAAAeI4/SArS\\_GY-CZc/s1600/image001.jpg](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_lgxYKVOgMHk/S92aMVX7SxI/AAAAAAAAeI4/SArS_GY-CZc/s1600/image001.jpg)

<sup>6</sup> [http://assets.nydailynews.com/img/2008/04/21/alg\\_home-run-apple.jpg](http://assets.nydailynews.com/img/2008/04/21/alg_home-run-apple.jpg)



## San Diego, California



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<sup>7</sup> <http://blog.sportscape.tv/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/Logos-Padres.jpg>

<sup>8</sup> <http://images.sneakernews.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/vans-vault-old-skool-san-diego-padres-1.jpg>



## The Cultural Geography of Baseball Worksheet

### Group Names

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1. What do you see?

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2. What aspects of culture do you recognize?

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3. Is this different from your culture? If so, how?

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