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Begler, Elsie. Global Cultures: The First Steps Toward Understanding Social Education. September 1998, 62(5) pg. 272-275.

In Beglers Article a discussion on how educators should go about teaching culture occurs. The article starts out by giving a definition of what is meant by culture and the different aspects of culture. The Author sets up the guidelines for which she will interpret and use culture.

The definitions of culture are presented very clearly so as the reader can fully understand where the author is coming from in the rest of the article. The author spends significant time discussing the World Culture Model, which could be a very useful tool to a teacher that is developing a unit on culture or just incorporating aspects of culture into the classroom. The model that is presented can be particularly useful when comparing cultures because one of the hardest aspects of comparing different cultures is the fact that there are no common grounds to judge the different cultures. The model breaks down culture into easy to look at portions, which makes it easier for both student and teacher to study. The end of the article is dedicated to giving a lesson plan and examples of how to use the model and implement culture into the classroom. The example given is very well displayed and gives some great ideas that teachers can use in everyday lessons or as ideas for their own lessons. In my opinion Begler presents a very interesting case about the study of culture.

She says that it is hard to understand other cultures when our own is misunderstood. I find this fact to be very true, from my own experiences in life as well as our class discussions. For instance when the case where the

Navajo students wouldnt take the test and I was presented with the question of how I would deal with this situation. This at first confused me but after thinking about the situation, I realized that I couldnt understand why this would occur from the point of view of my own culture. I dont know why it is so ingrained in our culture to try to be #1 so how can I understand the Navajo point of view, I cant. Beglers point as I see it is that if people as a culture learn to look at others cultures and just try to understand them it will be much easier to accept differences in the cultures. The World Culture Model presented in this article could be a very valuable tool to any teacher, no matter what content area they teach in. The model as I see it is an effective visual tool that can be used to not just study culture but actually look at it and gain a visual understanding of the culture that is being studied.

As a future Social Studies teacher I see this as a tool that can be used to guide virtually every unit that I teach. I say that it could be used for every unit because then as a teacher I would have a common guideline that the students would be able to relate new information to old, aiding in the retention of such information. Another benefit of this model it also caters to visual learners and gives another method to broadly teach to different learning styles. The example of how to use the model was very interesting to me and I would have never thought of this idea. The example went into how to use the model when visiting a culture fair that only has to do with food. The questioning that Begler presents with just food alone enters into some great ideas that any class could use to study any culture.

I never realized the amount that could be learned about a specific culture just by looking at how that culture views food. I found this particularly

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interesting. Going back to the authors discussion of culture itself I found myself looking at culture the way that she says most individuals look at culture, As Big culture and little culture. Big culture refers to high culture such as fine arts and such, while little Culture refers to the political, social and economic factors in the culture. This separation isnt necessary and really shouldnt be there when actually taking an in-depth look at a culture. I agree with Begler that this is an unnecessary division and shouldnt be there for obvious reasons, such as a culture involves all aspects both the little and the big culture. I think that it is important for teachers to realize this point before any attempt is made to engage students in the project of learning about culture. As a whole I would have to say that this was a very interesting article that really sparked my interest in the culture aspect of my particular content area.

I always assumed that culture would be part of most units but no I can see where with the right questions and the right modeling a culture can drive virtually any unit. Again I would like to reiterate the importance of making culture an important part of every students education. With so many cultures existing and changing in the USA alone it is hard to believe that the citizens will be able to peacefully coexist with out a basic understanding of culture differences. That what Beglers method, as well as the general teaching of culture does, they open up individuals to be more receptive of others, making the individuals stronger within their own culture as well as amongst other cultures.