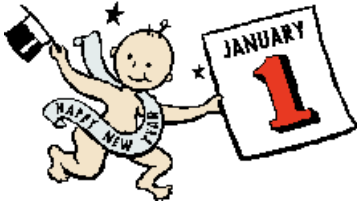


January Multicultural Connections

January heralds the beginning of a new calendar year and a time for New Year's resolutions. On the top of the list, decide to make multicultural connections one of the priorities for 2012. Listed below are several national themes and celebrations observed in January that provide opportunities for teachers and students to begin



January 1, 2013 - New Year's Day

New Year's Day is celebrated on January 1st in the Gregorian calendar. It is a time of renewal and many people resolve to break bad habits and begin good ones. These resolutions require people to examine their lives over the last twelve months and plan for the coming year.

The earliest documented New Year celebration occurred in Mesopotamia around 2000 B.C.E. The celebrations typically occurred in the middle of winter in an attempt to ensure the return of spring. Ancient Romans exchanged gifts of sacred tree branches, and, later on, gold covered coins imprinted with the face of Janus. Janus had two faces: one looked forward and one looked backward.

In the United States, some of the early colonists fired guns into the air and frequented the local taverns. Others attended church or open houses. The current celebration includes parades such as the Tournament of Roses parade and college football bowl games

January 6, 2013 - Three Kings Day

Celebrated twelve days after Christmas, Three Kings Day is often viewed as the last day of the Christmas season (the end of the 12 days of Christmas) and comes with its own traditions, rituals and symbols. Carolers are going from house to house and in many homes the Christmas tree is taken down and in some areas is burnt in a big bonfire.



January 21, 2013: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day



In 1983, the 98th Congress passed Public Law 98-144 to honor the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. This was first celebrated as a Federal legal holiday on January 20, 1986 and has been observed on the third Monday of January since that time. Congress' intention was that the holiday "serve as a time for Americans to reflect on the principles of racial equality and nonviolent social change espoused by Martin Luther King, Jr." (36 USC, Section 169j).

King was born on January 15, 1929 and gained national prominence during the Montgomery Bus Boycott. King's name became virtually synonymous with the civil rights movement of the late 1950's and early 1960's. He was at the center of almost every major demonstration and was arrested many times. In April 1963, he composed Letter from the Birmingham Jail. Later that year, King delivered his most famous speech when he told participants in the March on Washington "I have a dream."

During the next few years, King and the movement realized many successes including the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the ruling of the poll tax as unconstitutional, and the desegregation of schools that had ignored the decision reached in Brown v. Board of Education. In 1967, King began to focus some of his energy on the war in Vietnam, a move that many believed to be a betrayal of the civil rights cause.

In early April 1968, he traveled to Memphis, Tennessee to march in support of local sanitation workers. On the evening of April 3, he delivered his prophetic "I've Been to the Mountaintop" speech.

Dr. King was assassinated the next morning while he stood on the balcony of his room at the Lorraine Motel. King is buried at what is now the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site in his hometown of Atlanta, Georgia. The site includes the Ebenezer Baptist Church where he was a co-pastor with his father.

For additional information and activities:

www.suelebeau.com/blackhistory.htm#king

www.holidays.net/mlk/

www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson046.shtml

www.teachology.com/teachers/lesson_plans/holidays/mlk/

http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=326

<http://webtech.kennesaw.edu/jcheek3/mlk.htm>



January: Caribbean Heritage Month

During Caribbean-American Heritage Month, we celebrate the great contributions of Caribbean Americans to the fabric of our Nation, and we pay tribute to the common culture and bonds of friendship that unite the United States and the Caribbean countries.

Our Nation has thrived as a country of immigrants, and we are more vibrant and hopeful because of the talent, faith, and values of Caribbean Americans. For centuries, Caribbean Americans have enriched our society and added to the strength of America.

Over five million Americans proudly share their Caribbean heritage. They have been leaders in government, sports, entertainment, the arts, and many other fields.

For more information:

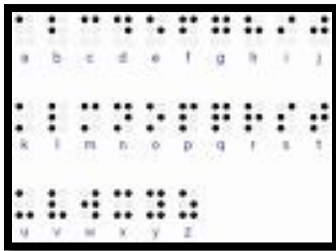
http://www.smithsonianglobalsound.org/cultural_heritage_06.aspxhttp://www.lessonplan.com/search/Geography/Regional_Resources/Caribbean

January: Florida Jewish History Month

The Jewish Museum of Florida initiated the 2003 legislation that designated this month to honor the indelible imprint of Floridian Jews on our State's history. Florida's greatest asset is its people. Diverse cultures have enriched the State since early times. Jews have actively participated in shaping the destiny of Florida since they were first allowed to settle in 1763. Florida Jewish History Month is a time to learn how Jews have been involved in enriching the lives and dreams of all Floridians.

For more information:

<http://www.jewishmuseum.com/fjhmfactsheet.html>



January: National Braille Literacy Month

This theme provides an opportunity to focus on men and women such as Helen Keller, Ann Sullivan and Louis Braille who overcame obstacles to become role models and champions of human rights for the handicapped.

A Girl Named Helen Keller by Margo Lundell was sent to all elementary schools. Check out our website for the reading guide and activities for the book.

www.broward.k12.fl.us/esol/Eng/Multicultural/index.html

For more information:

http://www.educationworld.com/a_tsl/archives/00-1/lesson0013.shtml

<http://teacherlink.ed.usu.edu/tlresources/units/Byrnes-famous/keller.html>

National Soup Month

Take an opportunity to learn how some cultural practices related to food and beverages are universal. These themes provide a perfect opportunity to practice FCAT preparation skills such as comparing and contrasting using graphic organizers.

For more information:

<http://www.soupsong.com/icustom.html>

