

Activity #1

Me and My Family: Building a Personal and Family Profile/Poster (Introduction and Cultural Background)

TEACHERS' CORNER

This activity is ideal to do at the beginning of the year. Like many other good instructors, you may already be doing an activity like this at the beginning of the year as a part of the social studies or language arts class, as a way of getting to know students and helping them get to know each other in order to create a stronger sense of classroom community.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THIS ACTIVITY BE DONE BY THE TEACHER AS WELL AS THE STUDENTS. *It is just as important for students to get to know their teacher as a total person as it is for the teacher to get to know students! Ideally, teachers should complete the activity before teaching it, so their profile/poster can serve as a model for students. Teachers can then exchange their profile with the Sister School teacher.*

This is an exercise that can raise many sensitive issues, but that has the capacity to help students achieve important insights into their Sister School's student community and its culture. Teachers need to be very careful that any information gathered and disseminated is treated with respect and dignity.

NOTE: If you are exchanging information via a website, do not post full names, home addresses, phone numbers, or other personal student contact information! Student confidentiality and safety are vital. If posting student photos, use code names, initials, or some other identification information that will enable students receiving the information to respond to individual students without enabling anyone else online to gain access to student identification information.

Instructional Goals:

- Students will develop their intrapersonal and interpersonal skills by using a set of reflective questions to learn more about themselves and their families.
- Students will develop linguistic and visual skills by using both words and pictures to create a profile of themselves and their families based on their answers to these questions.
- Students will develop their cultural awareness skills by finding themes of similarity within their classroom, then comparing and contrasting these themes with those of students in their sister school, thus seeing the diversity within a given culture as well as between cultures.
- Students will develop their technological skills by sharing their profiles via internet with their Sister School.

Alaska Content Standards addressed in Activity #1:

English/Language Arts

A. A student should be able to speak and write well for a variety of purposes and audiences.

7) Communicate ideas using varied tools of electronic technology

C. A student should be able to identify and select from multiple strategies in order to complete projects independently and cooperatively.

1) Make choices about a project after examining a range of possibilities

E. A student should understand and respect the perspectives of others in order to communicate effectively.

1) Use information, both oral and written, and literature of many types and cultures to understand self and others.

Skills for a Healthy Life

C. A student should understand how well-being is affected by relationships with others.

3) Evaluate how similarities and differences among individuals contribute to relationships

6) Assess the effects of culture, heritage, and traditions on well-being

Arts

A. A student should be able to create and perform in the arts.

6) Integrate two or more art forms to create a work of art [writing, photos, and drawing]

Technology

A. A student should be able to operate technology-based tools.

2) Use technological tools for learning, communications, and productivity

D. A student should be able to use technology to express ideas and exchange information.

2) Use communications technology to exchange ideas and information

Materials Needed for Activity #1:

- Access to digital cameras, computers, printers, and the internet
- Poster board and markers for students who choose to make a poster-style profile
- Copies of the question list for each student
- Additional paper for bulletin board comic strip.

Prerequisite Student Skills:

- Basic language arts skills expected of students at this grade level
- Skills in using digital cameras and/or scanning photos and drawings, so they can be sent to the Sister School via email.

Activities for Research Ambassadors:

RA's may choose to take some of the profiles with them, especially those which have aspects which were not easy to send via email. However, since this is a vital introductory activity, it is ideal to at least send a portion of each student's profile to the Sister School, so the student-pairing activity can be done. It is hoped that the paired students will communicate via email before, during, and after the RA trip. Partnered students may wish to send small gifts or additional pictures to their partner students with the RA.

Teachers are to email the completed assignment to your Sister School. If it is not possible to email the photos, you may send the photos separately via snail mail or fax.

PLEASE FAX YOUR COMPLETED LESSON ASSESSMENT TO YOUR SISTER SCHOOL COORDINATOR. SEE FOLLOWING PAGE.

Student Activity #1

Me and My Family: Building a Personal and Family Profile/Poster **(Introduction and Cultural Background)**

A profile is something that tells who you are. In this activity, a series of questions will help you create a profile of you and your family for people who have never met you. Since “a picture is worth 1000 words,” you may choose to use photos or drawings as well as words to answer some of the questions. An ideal format might be an illustrated essay, a mini-book about me, words with pictures added to bring the writing to life. Be sure to type your answers and take digital pictures, or scan photos or drawings, so you can send your profile to your Sister School.

Step One: (Sending your Profiles to your Sister School). Find or take a photo of yourself. Ideally, it should have been taken in the past year. This picture will be the core of your profile. If you choose to make your profile in poster form, your picture will be in the center, with the photos and sentences answering the other questions grouped around your picture. If you decide to write an illustrated essay or make a PowerPoint presentation, your picture will be the cover page.

Step Two: “All about Me” Answer the questions on the **Me and My Family** list. Be sure to number each answer, including questions you choose to answer with labeled pictures, drawings, or a sentence and a picture, so everyone knows what question it answers. For example, question 1 will be attached to the picture you took in Step One. Of course there are questions, like #2, that can only be answered with words! Note that the first set of questions is all about you, and the second are all about your family. Feel free to include other information and/or photos that will help someone from another town understand more about your family and what you are like.

Step Three: Share your profile with your classmates and find out if there are patterns or similarities to any of the answers. Discuss the patterns. What does it mean when members of a community share the same answers? Is it more advantageous to a community when the answers are similar or dissimilar? Email your profile and photo(s) to your teacher. You can also work together to post them to the website and/or email them to your Sister School.

Step Four: (Receiving profiles from your Sister School). When you receive the profiles from your Sister School students, notice the similarities and dissimilarities with the profile patterns of students from your Sister School. Examine each of the questions and the answers your Sister School students sent you, and compare with your own.

Step Five: On your poster board area, post the profiles of the teacher and students from your sister school with their profile narratives. Based on the profiles match your students with one or two of your sister school students who have things in common.

Step Six (Comic Strip Fun!): A Day in the Life. Based upon what you have learned from the variety of student profiles you have just read, work together as a class or group to create a fictional cartoon comic strip of someone from your Sister School. It should have at least three frames that illustrate your character’s morning, day and evening activities. Send your *Days in the Life Comic Strip* to your Sister School. The receiving school should posts the comic strip on the school bulletin board. After the RAs return from their travel discuss how accurate your guesses or assumptions were as illustrated in your comic strip.

Me and My Family

Questions to Uses in Creating a Personal and Family Profile

Use pictures, drawings, and/or words to answer these questions about you and your family. Present your answers on a poster, an illustrated essay, a PowerPoint presentation, or in any other form you choose. Be sure to let your teacher approve the profile form that you plan to use.

Note: If you plan to post your profile to a website, please use only initials or a code name, and do not include your address, phone number, or other personal contact information.

1. First and last name.
2. How was your name chosen? Is that the same system for choosing names for all members of your family?
3. City or town in which you were born.
4. City/town in which you now live.
5. Was there any special party or celebration for you when you were born? And are there special parties or celebrations on your birthdays?
6. What are (or were) your favorite toys?
7. Do you help to support your family financially? Do you earn spending money for yourself?
8. What chores do you regularly do around the house or yard?
9. What is one scary thing you have experienced?
10. What is your favorite song?
11. How do you spend your free time during the school year? During the summer?
12. What do you hope that you will be doing in five years, in twenty years?
13. If you were stranded on the moon, what five things would you want with you?
14. Which three places would you go in the world if you could travel anywhere?
15. Are you related to anyone in the classroom? To whom and how related?
16. Who else is in your family?
17. Do you have any pets? If so, do they live in the house or outside?
18. Do you share a room or have your own room? If you share, with whom?
19. What activities do you and your siblings do together?
20. Do you have any relatives living in your community? Who are they?
21. Are you in email contact with any relatives? With whom?
22. Do your grandparents live with you? If so, for how long?
23. How many generations back can you trace?
24. Where were your grandparents born and raised?
25. What were their professions?
26. What activities do you do together with adult family members in the summer, in the winter?
27. What do you do in the evenings?
28. What language(s) do you speak and do your parents and other family members speak?
29. How are disagreements settled in your home?
30. Name several things that you think your family values or believe are really important in life.