

Cultural Plunge

An Extra Credit Opportunity for Advanced World History

Cultural Plunge is an out-of-class assignment designed to expand students' horizons with a series of community-based activities (not to mention the fact that it will earn you extra credit). Over the course of the school year you will be given four opportunities to earn bonus points by visiting or participating in cultural activities you would not normally encounter in your day-to-day life. Experiencing what other cultures or sub-cultures have to offer will help you to expand your horizons, cause you to become more aware of what your community has to offer, and hopefully spark new interests. Southern California boasts some of the country's best museums, theaters, ethnic restaurants, and so much more! Nearly every culture in the world is represented here.

Your parent's role in this project should be kept to a minimum. You should make all contact arrangements for your cultural activity, as this is part of the learning experience. However, your parents may give help when necessary and appropriate (driving, for example). There are many different aspects of culture for you to explore but only four will be allowed for extra credit points during the school year (one per quarter). Each event has a specific set of questions and procedures that must be followed to earn full credit for the activity. You may form groups to do an activity, but because the follow-up questions deal with individual experiences and reflections, each group member must answer them individually (one year a group created a video of their Cultural Plunge and answered their questions "interview style" -- the sky is the limit). Along with a written report of your experience, you will also give a short presentation to your classmates describing your "Plunge."

Please read this entire packet. All Cultural Plunge assignments must be turned in no later than one week before the grading period ends. Some of the activities can easily be turned into family activities, providing a great opportunity to share some memorable experiences. However you complete your Cultural Plunge activities, I hope you have some experiences that deepen your understanding of the exciting community around you.

Project Specifics

The purpose of this activity is to introduce you to the various cultures and cultural activities your community has to offer that you wouldn't normally experience in your day-to-day life.

- Each quarter you can select one item from the list.
- You cannot repeat any of the same activities for credit, but if you choose it for sheer enjoyment, that's great.
- You may join in with other students to participate in the activity but each of you must complete and turn in a separate reflection. If you work in a group, the oral presentation to the class can be done together.
- **Each Cultural Plunge is worth a maximum of 50 points.**
- Please contact Mr. McGuffee if you have any questions. (909) 580-3647 or john_mcguffee@cjusd.net

Links To Help You Get Started

1. <http://www.lahacal.org/housemuseum.html>
2. www.getty.edu
3. <http://www.wisenthal.com/>
4. <http://www.lacma.org/>
5. <http://www.sdnhm.org/>
6. <http://aal.ucsd.edu/musla.html>
7. <http://artscenecal.com/Maps.html>
- 8.
- 9.

****You can also identify potential "Plunge" sites by observing the brown highway signs found throughout Southern California.***

Potential Cultural Plunge Activities

1. **Concert:** Attend a musical concert performed by a symphony or orchestra. Middle school or high school band concerts do not count for this activity.
2. **Sport:** View a live sporting event that you would not normally be attracted to. You cannot simply watch the event on television. Exclude baseball, softball, basketball, soccer, football, and volleyball from your choices.
3. **Cultural Foods:** Participate by eating at a restaurant from a culture different from your own. This cannot take place at a fast food restaurant. *Italian, Mexican, or "American" food are not accepted because they are very commonplace. Try some Tai, Middle Eastern, Peruvian, or Indian food.*
4. **Art Museum:** Check the provided links for area museums. I highly recommend the Huntington Library in Pasadena.
5. **Ecological Area:** Check the provided links for area sites. Again, the Huntington library has tremendous gardens to visit.
6. **Religious:** Attend a religious service or event that is not a part of your or your family's religious affiliation. For example, you may consider visiting a Muslim mosque, Jewish Temple, Hindu Temple, Buddhist Monastery, etc.
7. **Political:** Attend a political rally or speech.
8. **College Experience:** Arrange for a guided tour of a college or university. Contact the school's admissions office to schedule a tour.
9. **Career Interview:** Set up and conduct an interview with an individual in a career you are interested in or who has an unusual job. You must ask at least 5 open-ended questions. Include a copy of the questions when turning in your assignment.
10. **Historical Site:** Visit and tour an identified historical site. Turn in a brochure or pamphlet.
11. **Drama/Theater:** Attend a play or other theater production. Bring back a ticket stub or program.
12. **Foreign Film:** Go to a movie theater and watch a foreign film. The film must be in a language you do not speak. You cannot simply rent the movie and watch it at home. Please turn in your ticket stub as proof.

13. **Ethnic Neighborhood:** Visit a designated ethnic neighborhood, such as Chinatown, Little Tokyo, etc. Take in the sights, sounds, smells, food, etc. You are encouraged to photograph your experience.
14. **City Council or School Board Meeting:** Attend a City Council or School Board meeting and bring back the printed agenda.
15. **Family Gathering:** Attend a family gathering from a friend from a different ethnic group than your own.
16. **Other:** If there is something you are interested in that you think is in the spirit of this assignment, check with Mr. McGuffee for approval.

Experience Reflection Questions

Spend time reflecting on your experience. **Each student is required to answer all of the questions below individually.** Either write/type out the questions and your answers OR include all of your answers in an "essay" format (in which case, you won't write the questions) OR create a PowerPoint/Google Slides or Prezi presentation that addresses these questions.

1. Write the number, title, location, and date of the activity you chose. For example, #12 Foreign Film, *La Vita et Bella*, Mann's Chinese Theater in Hollywood, October 24, 2012.
2. Explain why you selected this activity.
3. Describe the overall physical setting or environment of the place the activity took place.
4. What were your perceptions or thoughts going into the activity (What did you expect?)
5. Describe your experience....What did you do?
6. What were your thoughts and feelings about the activity after you completed it?
7. What did you learn about the culture or area you visited? What did the experience teach you?
8. Would you do this type of activity again? Why or why not?
9. Provide a picture, menu, program, or any document/artifact/physical evidence that would authenticate your participation in this activity.
- 10.

Oral Presentation

Give a 3-5 minute presentation about your Cultural Plunge experience. Talk about any interesting things you saw, did, tasted, learned, etc. You may want to create a poster with pictures and artifacts from your Plunge.

****Coordinate with Mr. McGuffee for a time to present your Cultural Plunge Experience.***