

8.14 Center: Cultural Scene Investigation (CSI)

Student Objective

Students will brainstorm and write a list of things within their community that they see, feel, and hear in order to share personal perspectives of their communities.

Overview

Many students identify themselves with their environment and surrounding community. Even though the communities are often very close to one another, the cultural perception may be viewed differently by others both in and outside of the community. Being observant of their surroundings and to various cultural details is key in fostering understanding and the feeling of community in the classroom.

Materials/Set-Up

- Chart paper, set up with three columns (We see..., We hear..., We feel...)
- Markers, colored pencils, or colored pens
- Tape, stapler, or tacks

We see...	We hear...	We feel...

Instructional Steps

- Display the pre-made three-column chart paper along with the following instructions:
 - In the appropriate column, write what you see, hear, and feel as you walk through your community.
 - Using the information that you have listed for your community, create a “Where I’m From” poem. (See the Where I’m From activity on page 147 and “Where I’m From” Poem Examples on page 149 for a refresher, and provide directions on what to include in the poem.)
- After all students have completed their poems, have them share their poems in small groups.
- Link the poems together by commonalities when possible and create a group “quilt” by securing the poems onto a wall with tape, a stapler, or tacks.

Extension

- To increase rigor, assign the activities in this center for homework, but have students create a journal of the things that they see over a specified period of time. Have them share these findings with a classmate to compare and contrast their communities. Possible questions for reflection include: “If you were to encourage others to move to your community, what would be your ‘selling points’?” and “If you wanted to make improvements to your community, what would they be, and how would you describe them in a letter to your mayor?” Have students analyze their community with a partner. “What perceptions are the same? Which are different? Why do you think this is?”
- To increase scaffolding, for students in elementary grade levels or English language learners, create a visual next to each column: eyes next to see, ears next to hear, and a heart next to feel. Students can also illustrate what they see within their communities.
- To integrate technology, have students include their findings on an educational blog for classmates to learn about their surrounding communities and upload actual pictures taken by themselves and their peers.