



SILVER MERIT

AMERICAN CULTURES

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Version 06/2010

American Cultures Merit



1. Explain appropriate Christian attitudes toward people of different cultures and ethnicities. Support your answers with Scripture references.

Verify that the boy's explanation includes love, respect, and acceptance of who people are and where they are at in their spiritual journey. Scripture references will vary. Possible examples are 1 John 3:17 (love); Acts 15:9 (respect); and John 4:5–30 (acceptance).

2. Read about one culture in the United States. After completing your study, write a summary of what you studied. Include the following:
 - a. Identify the group, their history, when they came to the United States, and some of the reasons why they came.
 - b. List some social and religious customs of the group.
 - c. Tell some of this group's strengths, including their importance and contribution to the United States. Include any famous individuals and their contributions.

Answers will vary. Verify that the boy has included the required topics.

3. Consider the issues of culture and ethnicity in a biblical context by answering the following questions:

- a. What did Jesus do when He faced ethnic and cultural issues? Provide two examples from Scripture.

Answers may vary but could include the woman at the well (John 4:5–30), the healing of the centurion's servant (Luke 7:1–10), and the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37).

- b. What did Paul write in his letters regarding our Christlike response to ethnic or cultural conflicts?

Answers will vary but could include:

Philemon 16–18: Paul pleads with Philemon, a slave owner, to accept Onesimus, his runaway slave, as a Christian brother.

1 Corinthians 11:14–16: In talking about head coverings and length of hair, Paul explained that believers should look and behave in ways that are honorable within their own culture. In many cultures long hair on men is considered appropriate and masculine. In Corinth, it was thought to be a sign of male prostitution in the pagan temples. And women with short hair were labeled prostitutes. Paul was saying that in the Corinthian culture, Christian women should keep their hair long. If short hair on women was a sign of prostitution, then a Christian woman with short hair would find it even more difficult to be a believable witness for Jesus Christ. Paul's message to the believers in the church at Corinth was that they be conscious of how their actions appear in the culture in which they live. Paul didn't say that Christians should adopt all the practices of their culture, but that they should avoid behavior and appearances that were not considered honorable so they would not harm their Christian testimony.

- c. List three other Scripture references addressing culture and race.

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Answers will vary. Possible answers include Acts 2:5–12; Acts 11:1–18; 1 Corinthians 8. Verify that the boy's answers relate to culture or race.

4. Do ONE of the following:
- Give a presentation in one of your school classes (e.g., history or English) on cultures. Include the following:
 - Show how understanding people and their cultural diversities can help us relate to people of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
 - Explain the saying “Seek to understand rather than to be understood.”
 - Give examples on how people from different groups have gotten along together.
 - Lead a discussion on what can be done to help various groups understand one another better.
 - Give a presentation as described above to your Rangers group.
 - Discuss with your Royal Rangers group what is being done in the United States by Christian organizations to bridge gaps and lessen misunderstandings between cultures and ethnicities.
 - Share with your Rangers group the contributions made to the United States by three different people, each with a different cultural or ethnic background. Choose individuals not described in Requirement 2.

Verify by looking over the boy's notes covering the outline.

5. Write an essay about U.S. cultural concerns. Answer the following in your essay:
- List some cultural issues or concerns in the United States. Are there any government or private organizations in place to assist with these issues or concerns?
 - Does your community have any ethnic or cultural issues to address? If so, what are they? Are there any government or private organizations in place to assist with these issues or concerns?

Verify by reading the boy's essay.

6. Do TWO of the following:
- Go to a festival, celebration, or other event of an ethnic group different from your own. Write a report about what you observed and learned from this experience.
 - Go to a church that has a predominately different ethnic group than your own. Write your observations and what you learned from this experience.
 - Interview a person of a different ethnic group than your own about his or her heritage and traditions. Write a brief description of your interview.
 - Learn a song, dance, poem, or story that is traditional to a culture other than your own. Recite or demonstrate this to a Rangers group in your church. Include a copy of the song, poem, or story in your workbook. Include what you learned from this new experience.

Verify that the boy has completed two of the choices. His reports should describe his experiences as well as what he learned from the new cultures.

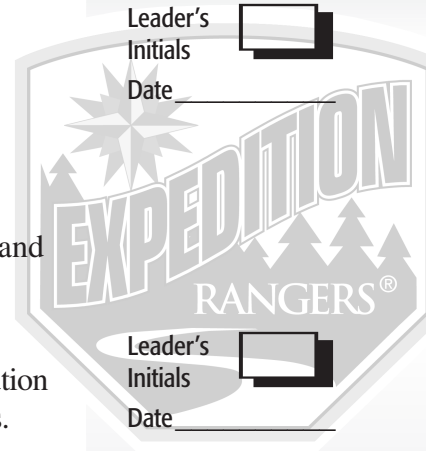


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 - b. What did Paul write in his letters regarding our Christlike response to ethnic or cultural conflicts?
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