

*The State Fair of*  
**TEXAS**  
*Curriculum*

**LIVESTOCK & AGRICULTURE**  
**GRADE 6 SOCIAL STUDIES**

HOLY COWS!  
DEFINING CULTURES



# TEACHER

## LIVESTOCK & AGRICULTURE



## Holy Cows! Defining Cultures



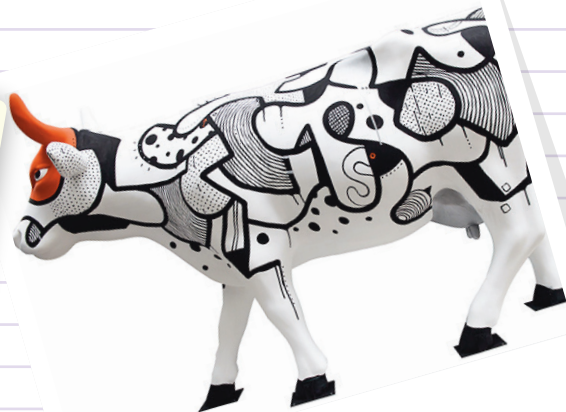
### In this lesson students will:

- ★ Develop a working definition of the word “culture.”
- ★ Explain the relationships among religious ideas, philosophical ideas, and culture.
- ★ Compare and contrast cultural and religious systems from around the world to the United States and local systems.

Did you know that in some cultures and religions around the world, cows are considered to be sacred animals?

### Standards

- ★ Social Studies TEKS: 6.15(A), 6.15(E), 6.19(A), 6.21(B)
- ★ ELAR TEKS: 6.2(A), 6.9
- ★ Art TEKS: 6.1(A), 6.2(A), 6.3(B)



“Mambo” by Pamela:  
Cow Parade Transhumance France 2015

## Before You Go

Ask the students to define the idiom, “**sacred cow.**”

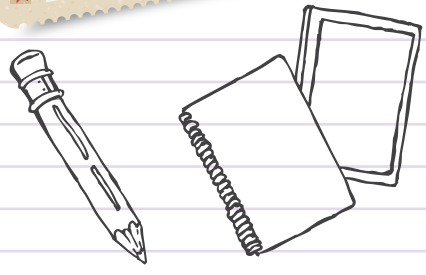
- ★ Explain that in some parts of the world, especially in Nepal and some states in India, the slaughter of cattle is prohibited, and their meat may be considered taboo. Cattle are considered sacred in world religions such as Hinduism, Jainism, and others.
- ★ Watch a short video clip from a PBS special about how animals are treated in other countries on Earth, and think about how various cultures adopt their religious, philosophical, and cultural identities.
  - \* Take notes about how cows are treated in the PBS video.
  - \* While you are at the Fair, you will compare and contrast how the “Ag”(riculture) culture treats the animals they raise.

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### Plan Your Route .

- ★ From the Texas Star Ferris Wheel, go around toward the back of the Cotton Bowl Stadium.
- ★ Find Cattle Barn #1 and #2.
- ★ Stop in and observe at the Livestock Judging Pavilion.

### Optional Materials to Bring

- \* Recording Device
- \* Smart Phone or Tablet
- \* Pencil & Notepad

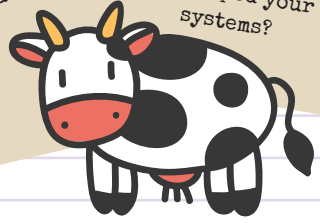


### While You're There

The goal of your visit is to see if the rituals of the animal caretakers at the State Fair are similar to those of the cultures you studied in class, like those in India and Nepal.

#### IN THE CATTLE BARNS

- While you are in the cattle barns, observe and take notes about what you see.
- Who is tending to the animals?
- How often are they fed?
- What types of rituals are performed related to cleanliness and habitat?



#### INTERVIEW AN EXHIBITOR

- If possible, ask an exhibitor some of the following questions, and record their answers on a smart phone or a notepad:
- ★ Why did you decide to get involved in the Ag program at your school?
- ★ How has the program shaped your belief systems?

- ★ What are the "cultural norms" found in an Ag community?
- ★ Which rules are spoken and which rules are inferred?
- ★ Describe the routines of caring for a show animal.
- ★ What challenges and rewards come from this experience?
- ★ What happens to your animal when the show ends?
- ★ What is your opinion about the way animals are treated in the United States as compared to other countries in the world?
- At the conclusion of the interview, thank the participant, and continue exploring the barns. Snap photographs of any artifacts that represent Ag culture.

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**LIVESTOCK JUDGING PAVILION**

- Stop here and watch as students parade their animals for the judges.
- How is this competition similar or different to the rituals displayed in the PBS video?

**ART CONNECTION**

- Pay attention to all different types of cows that you see, as well as the sights and sounds that surround you.
- What images are repeated?
- Are there things at the Fair that you don't see everyday? What are they?

### After the Fair

Culture is a difficult thing to define, and sometimes we struggle to understand the differences between our own cultural identity and those adopted by others.

When you return to class following your State Fair visit, you will:

- \* Create a photo essay or video montage capturing the culture differences you witnessed.
- \* Bring to life the hidden rules of culture using pictures, images, sounds, and words.
- \* You may use any media platform you choose.





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## Arts Connection: Cow Parade!

As we have seen through these cultural discussions, cows are viewed and used very differently in other cultures. The cow is a universally beloved animal for a myriad of reasons. There is even a huge art event called “The Cow Parade” that celebrates the beauty of these animals! The public art show began in 1999, and has been displayed across the world from Italy and Japan to our very own home state of Texas.



### In this lesson, students will:

- ★ View images of modern art from a global celebration of cows.
- ★ Use information gathered from the State Fair to create their own depiction of a cow which relates back to a central theme and conveys meaning.
- ★ Collaborate to create a visual display for the group artwork.

### Before You Go

Prior to visiting the Texas State Fair, visit this link to learn all about the cows that are painted for the Cow Parade:

- \* <http://www.cowparade.com/>
- \* Show the students the galleries of the hundreds of cows that have been painted and exhibited at the show.
- \* Talk about the different colors, shapes, and subject matter that have been painted on the cows.

### After the Fair

Time to have your own Cow Parade! This can be done either 3D or 2D. If your school has a kiln, sculpting the cows would be great. Invite each student to create a cow for your class Cow Parade. The theme is “The State Fair”. Tell the students to think about all of the things they experienced at the Fair. Tell them that they are creating the cow for an audience of people who have never been to the Fair.

- \* What would you include on your cow?
- \* What are some images that would give people an idea of what to expect at the Fair?
- \* What colors could you use that would remind people of the State Fair?
- \* Should your artwork convey a message?
- \* When you are done, display your Cow Parade outside the classroom and invite the other classes to come and see them!



“PAROLES EN VERS DE JACQUES PRÉVERT DANS UN PRÉ VERT” by Yves-Paul Marthelot  
Cow Parade Transhumance France 2015

