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Cultural Crossroads: Hawaii and Beyond

The feature article in this issue provides an overview of the state of Hawaii. This lesson plan complements that article, highlighting the ethnic and cultural diversity of Hawaii but, at the same time, helping students examine diversity and uniqueness in their own communities.

The activities are independent of each other, so you can select the ones that are most appropriate for your students. Each activity includes a time estimate, a goals statement, necessary background information, and step-by-step procedures. You will find several suggestions for conveying the background information to your students, but you will have to decide which is the best for your students and setting. The estimated time given in each activity is for the basic version. Choosing any of the optional steps will require more time and, in some cases, additional lessons.

Activity 1: Population crossroads—A listening and speaking activity (50–60 minutes)

Goals: To listen for both general and specific information; to learn common expressions for describing populations figures; to practice reading large numbers; to describe and compare information about population and ethnic diversity in Hawaii and in your city or country.

1. Copy Table 1 on the board.

Table 1

1	African American	20,923
2	Asian	474,935
3	Hispanic and Latino	87,769
4	Mixed	252,576
5	Native American	1,275
6	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders	86,430
7	White	278,933
8	Total	1,208,537

2. Ask students these questions:
   - What do you think these names mean?
   - What do you think these numbers show?

3. Give students about a minute to suggest some possibilities. Then write in this title above the table: *Population of Hawaii in 2003*.
4. (If possible) Point out (or ask a volunteer to point out) the location of Hawaii on a world map. Ask students if they know anything about Hawaii. You might point out that it is the only island state in the United States, that it has a tropical climate, and that it is probably most famous as a tourist destination. It also has a very diverse population.
5. Ask students to look at the information in the table and answer these questions as you read them orally:
    - What is the largest population group in Hawaii?
    - What is the second largest?
    - What is the third largest?
    - What is the smallest?
6. Tell students that they are going to listen as you read some details about the table. Tell them that when you pause, they should try to complete your sentences using the information from the table. Make clear that there are multiple possible ways to complete the sentences.

    Example: You say:*In 2003, the number of Native Americans in Hawaii was …*
    Students say: *1,275*

    Read some or all of the following statements once or twice as appropriate for the level of your students.

    - The total population of Hawaii in 2003 was…
    - Asians make up the largest group. There were…
    - That same year, there were 20, 923…
    - Hispanic and Latino residents numbered…
    - Another group, almost the same size as the Hispanics and Latinos, was…
    - The white population was…
    - Finally, 252,576 people had two or more ethnic or racial backgrounds. This is probably the group called…
7. [Optional] Write on the board some key phrases from the list above and let students work in pairs to try to restate the facts from the table. It is not necessary to use the exact words of the original sentences. Key phrases might include: *the total population, make up, numbered, almost the same as, two or more ethnic backgrounds*.
8. Also write and explain the two words *majority* and *minority*.
9. Tell students that now you will give some information about the population of the United States as a whole. They should listen for the answers to these two questions, which you may want to write on the board as well:
    - How is the population of Hawaii different from the rest of the United States?
    - How will the population of the United States change in the future?

10. Then, tell, read, summarize, or paraphrase the "Family Backgrounds" passage in a manner appropriate for the level and setting of your students. Repeat it if necessary.

Family Backgrounds

Today most Americans can still trace their family backgrounds to Europe. That is, a majority of Americans have European ethnicity. Native American, African, Asian, and Hispanic Americans are considered minorities. However, the minority population is growing faster than the present-day majority. Census-takers estimate that by 2050, the United States will become a "minority-majority" country. This means that the majority of residents will no longer have European ethnicity. Hawaii and three other states are already minority-majority states. The majority in these states is ethnically and racially different from the country's majority.

Hawaii is the only state that has always been a minority-majority state. In fact, today the state's population is 75 percent minority. The largest group is Asians—Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, and others—who make up over half of the population. Their ancestors came to Hawaii to work on sugar cane plantations over 100 years ago. Today, a majority of marriages in Hawaii are between couples with different ethnic or racial backgrounds. Thus, most children born in Hawaii have a multiethnic or multiracial background. The most famous example may be the new President of the United States, Barack Obama.

11. Ask students whether they heard the answers to the two questions above. Review or assist as necessary. Answers may be expressed in many ways, but the main ideas are that:
    - Unlike the rest of the United States, the population of Hawaii is mostly minority.
    - By 2050, most of the U.S. population will be minority.
12. Ask students to look at the Population of Hawaii table again and think about the population in your (choose one) city, region, or country. How would a similar table look for your city or country? Give them a few minutes to write down their guesses.
13. Draw a table with the actual data on the board, or challenge students to find the answers before your next class. Be sure that everyone is using the same point of reference—for example, ethnic groups or speakers of certain languages.
14. When they have a completed population chart, give students a chance to work in pairs to make observations similar to those in Step 6 above. Remind them of the useful expressions that they used in Step 7.

15. Finally, help students review and make some comparisons about the ethnic diversity in their city or country compared to Hawaii. Use questions like these to guide the conversation:

    - What is the largest ethnic group in our country? In Hawaii?
    - What is the smallest ethnic group in our country? In Hawaii?
    - The population in Hawaii is very diverse (many different peoples). Is our population diverse, too?
    - Hawaii has many people with mixed ethnicity. How about in our country?

Activity 2: The Ambassador of Aloha—A small group discussion (30–50 minutes)

Goal: To practice stating reasons and giving opinions using *because*; to explore the concept of goodwill ambassador.

1. Teach your students the word *ambassador*, emphasizing the usual (diplomatic) context in which it is used. Ask whether they know, by name, any of their country's ambassadors or perhaps their ambassador to the United Nations.
2. Introduce the idea of *goodwill* or *celebrity ambassadors*—people who, because of their fame and popularity, can draw attention to worldwide problems, concerns, or projects. For example, movie star Angelina Jolie is a goodwill ambassador for the United Nations High Commission on Refugees, and soccer player David Beckham is a goodwill ambassador for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).
3. Tell, read, summarize, or paraphrase the "Aloha" passage in a manner appropriate for the level and setting of your students:

Aloha

In the Hawaiian language, *aloha* is both a greeting and parting word. It also carries the meaning of love, cherish, and care for. The people of Hawaii try to promote a feeling of *aloha* among themselves and extend their *aloha* to the millions of visitors who visit the state every year.

In the early 1900s, Duke Kahanamoku became an Olympic champion swimmer and introduced the Hawaiian sport of surfing to the rest of the world. Despite his personal achievements and celebrity status, people remember him most for his open, loving, warm sense of hospitality, his *aloha*, for others. The mayor of Honolulu gave him the honorary title Ambassador of Aloha. Since then, other people have been called Ambassadors of Aloha, but Kahanamoku was the first.

4. Tell students to think about someone who should be named as a special ambassador for a good cause. It could be anyone—from a classmate to a popular person on the local or world level. They must think of a title in the form: Ambassador for/of _____. Give examples such as Ambassador of Respect, Ambassador of Sportsmanship, or Ambassador of Humor. Encourage students to think of their own categories of ambassador. They can also use the title Ambassador of Aloha if they like it.
5. While they are thinking, write the following on the board:
   I nominate _____ for the title Ambassador of _____ because _____.
6. Divide the class into groups of three or four.
7. Tell them to share their nominations with other members of their group.
8. Then, they should try to reach consensus about the best nomination from their group.
9. Give groups a bit more time to practice how they will present their nomination to the class. (Note: if you have an especially large class, you may wish to have students draw and/or write their nominations and post them around the room for others to read rather than presenting them orally.)
10. [Optional] To give this activity greater authenticity, have your students revise their nominations and send them to the people who were nominated. Perhaps one or more of them will write back.

Activity 3: Symbols—A place-based activity (50–60 minutes)

Goals: To practice stating opinions and giving reasons using *because*.

1. Tell, read, summarize, or paraphrase the "State Symbols" passage in a manner appropriate for the level and setting of your students.

> **State Symbols**
>
> In the United States, each state chooses symbols such as a state flower, state tree, and so forth. For example, the state flower of Hawaii is a yellow hibiscus, and the state tree is the candlenut tree. Hawaii also has a state fish with a very long name. Symbols like these become representations of a special place. However, every place is special in its own way. Wherever you live, there are things that could be symbols for your city or country. These symbols could be a particular food, game, song, building, or, if you use your imagination, almost anything.

2. Ask students to identify symbols that represent their city, region, or country. You can write them on the board.
3. Divide students into groups of three or four.
4. Tell students that the city council has asked them to serve on a committee to choose some new symbols for their city (or country). The city will use these symbols in its new tourism advertising campaign. Brainstorm possible categories of new symbols.

5. Give groups some time to think of their symbols. If there are three people in the group, they should choose three symbols, if there are four people, four symbols, and so forth. Students may choose familiar symbols, but you can also encourage them to think of unusual or humorous symbols like a pesky insect.
6. While students are thinking and discussing ideas, write these sentences on the board:
    - *One of our symbols is the _____ because _____.*
    - *Our second symbol is the _____. We chose it because _____.*
    - *We also considered the_____, but we think this is a better choice because ___.*
    - *We have three reasons for choosing _____. First, _____.*
7. When students are finished with their decision-making, give each group a sheet of paper on which to draw their symbols.
8. Then, have members of the group decide who will be responsible for explaining each symbol. They should work together to plan and practice, using the example sentences from the board as a guide. However, each group member should have primary responsibility for one symbol.
9. Now put two groups together. First, have one group act as the city council and listen to the other group's proposals. Then, have the groups switch roles.
10. Finally, have each council choose one winning symbol from the other group's proposals. These example sentences may be helpful:
    - *Using _____ is an interesting idea, but we think _____ is better because _____.*
    - *Your choice of _____ is excellent because _____.*
11. If time permits, each city council could report their top choice to the class.
12. [Optional] Have each student write a short description and proposal for his or her symbol. Hang the finished symbols and stories on the bulletin board for display.

Activity 4: Tour guide—A role play (120 minutes)

Goals: To discuss the role of tourism in the local economy; to practice listening and speaking skills, use common expressions related to tourism, and (if relevant) to review vocabulary and ideas from the previous activities in the context of a role play.

1. Explain that tourism is the number one industry in Hawaii, and that it is a growing industry in many other countries as well.
2. [Optional] If possible or appropriate, discuss briefly the role of tourism in your country. Use these questions to begin a class discussion:
    - How important is tourism in our country? Why?
    - What are the most popular tourist destinations in our country or region? Have you visited these places? What did you think about them?
    - Do you have family members who work in the tourism industry? If so, what are their jobs? How do they feel about those jobs?
3. Call four students to the board. They will write the ideas from the class. Each writer will list one category of tourist attractions in your country, for example:

- places of natural beauty,
- sites of cultural or historic importance,
- places for recreation or fun, and
- famous man-made structures (temples, mosques, bridges, buildings, etc.).

Add or change the categories as needed. For example, the list could include places where performing groups (dance, music, etc.) or famous arts and crafts (e.g., baskets, wood carvings) can be seen.

4. Ask the class to call out tourist sites. Assist the writers as necessary with assigning categories to the sites. Some sites will qualify for two lists. It is okay to list them in two places. Encourage the class to list several sites for each category.
5. Ask students to choose the category that they are most interested in, and form groups of three to four students who have common interests. It is okay to have more than one group working on the same category.
6. Tell students that they work for a tour company that offers English-speaking tours for foreign visitors. Each group is a team of tour guides specializing in the category that they have chosen—historical sites, sites of natural beauty, performing arts venues, and so forth. Tell students they are going to lead a tour in English of tourist sites in their category.
7. Ask students to choose their tour destination sites from the list the class created on the board. Suggest that each group limit themselves to three to five sites.
8. Give groups time to plan their tours and practice what they will say. Assist students with vocabulary and common expressions as needed. You may wish to provide some of the following helpful expressions:
   - *Welcome, ladies and gentlemen.*
   - *Please follow me.*
   - *Please watch your step.*
   - *Do you have any questions?*
   - *We will stop for lunch at _____.*
   - *Please do not take pictures here because _____.*
   - *Our next destination is _____.*
   - *It is famous/popular/important because _____.*
   - *It was built in/by/with/to/for _____.*
9. Have each group write their tour sites on the board and then "take their classmates" on their tour. (Note: If your class is very large, you may wish to simply have one group take another group on tour, rather than trying to have everyone speak to the whole class.)
10. [Optional] Have students write a script for a bus tour of the city or for a tour guide who is explaining the facts about a famous building, for example. Or have students write a descriptive paragraph about a tourist site of their choice; they can imagine that the paragraph would be included in a tourist brochure.

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