Cultural Box Guidelines

While the Cultural Boxes are in your care, please...

USE CULTURAL SENSITIVITY – Before delving into the contents of our Cultural Boxes, please have your students create their own classroom cultural boxes. Ask each student to bring in one artifact that represents their culture (i.e., an artifact that speaks to who they are, what they value and what they believe). Then have each student share their artifact, i.e., name their item, who it belongs to, how old it is, why the artifact is special and how their artifact represents their culture.

Upon sharing their artifact, each student should then display all their artifacts on one table. Have each student take out a piece of paper and answer the following questions: 1) Is there an item on the table that you feel does not reflect your culture? Why? 2) Is there an artifact that you think is missing from the table? What would it be and why? Once the students take their time to fully complete these two questions, have them share out their responses. During the process of this discussion have them also answer these questions 1) Do you think one’s entire culture -from one country or from one region of a country- can be represented with one box of artifacts? Why or why not? 2) Now do you think you can get a small insight into one’s culture through a box of artifacts? Why or why not?

Through this discussion, students should recognize the diversity within their culture and at times see items on ‘their’ table that may not reflect who they are. This is a valuable lesson and should be used as they begin the exploration of other cultural boxes, because as they can see from this exercise, culture is complex. It does not fit neatly into a defined box. And most importantly, students should be careful of using these boxes to stereotype groups of people—rather, students should use these boxes to celebrate the commonalities and similarities between groups of people.

INVITE GUEST SPEAKERS – Our boxes are meant to be a catalyst for further exploration, which should include the opportunity to actually meet people from diverse backgrounds and hear their stories. Simply call “The Consortium”, (919) 681-3982 and we can help you make arrangements for a guest speaker.

HANDLE WITH CARE – Many people have lovingly contributed to the evolution of our Culture Boxes. We ask that you share in our appreciation of their time by teaching your students to handle the enclosed materials respectfully. Have your students take turns being a curator for your display, giving them responsibility for these treasures from around the world. Adult supervision is required with elementary age children!

REPACK THE CULTURE BOXES AS YOU FOUND THEM

1. Return each item to its proper BOX NUMBER and PLASTIC BAG.
   - Make sure each item correlates to the inventory list that is found at the beginning of your binder.
   - If by any chance something is missing, broken or lost, please contact us.
   - And finally, please share with us, your experience with the box. We would love to know how you used the items in the box and how your student’s responded to these items.

Thank you for saving us hours of extra work!!!