

EdRugby Online Educational Resource

LESSON: International flags

LEVEL

Upper primary
Lower secondary

THEME: Rugby diversity

DESCRIPTION:

Students investigate flags used by a range of countries. They analyse and research the meaning behind the colours and symbols used.

OUTCOMES

This lesson contributes to the achievement of the following unit outcomes:

English

- Identifies simple symbolic meanings and stereotypes in texts and discusses their purpose and meaning.

Studies of Society and Environment

- Describes how cultural groups, their belief systems and social organisation contribute to the identity of a society.

The Arts

- Explores and uses several art elements and uses specific skills and techniques appropriate to the medium.
- Discusses visual art works from several cultures.
- Identifies distinguishing features of visual art works that locate them in a particular time, place or culture.
- Shows an understanding of the ways visual art works are made within particular cultural and historical contexts.

SUGGESTED TIME:

50 minutes

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Australian flag
- world flag chart (if available)
- a colour example of each flag featured (see summary table for details)
- class copies of student handout (at the end of this lesson plan)
- coloured paper, coloured pencils, paint, crayons, art supplies, scissors, paste etc

PART 1 LOCAL FLAGS

a. Introduce the lesson by explaining that flags are a way that people can show their cultural or social identity. Brainstorm with the class to find out why people use flags. Typical responses are outlined below.

Flags can be used to show other people:

- what country a person is from
- what sporting team they support
- the pop group they are fanatical about
- the political movement they follow
- other...

b. Show the class the Australian flag. Ask the class to describe the colour, shapes and symbols they can see on the Australian flag. For example, the Southern Cross. Rule up a summary table (similar to the one shown below) on a white board or overhead projector. Work with the whole class to collect a list of responses and add them to the 'Description' column of the table.

c. Work with the class to find out the meaning of symbols used.

Some suggested questions include:

- What do the stars mean?
- What is this red and white cross in the corner? What does it represent?

Use student responses to continue constructing the class summary table.

d. Repeat this process for the second example, the Aboriginal flag.

Name	Description	Meaning	Flag
Australia	blue background Southern Cross star constellation Union Jack (British flag) in top left corner the 'Star of Federation' in the bottom left corner	The Union Jack shows colonisation by Britain. The Star of Federation is a seven pointed star, one point for each of the six states and one more point for Australia's territories. The Southern Cross is a constellation that can be seen from all of Australia's states and territories.	

Aboriginal	black strip red strip yellow circle	The black half represents the Aboriginal people, the red represents the Earth and the yellow circle represents the Sun.	
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PART 2 FLAG RESEARCH

- Distribute copies of the student handout and have students record the information from the whiteboard or overhead projector.
- Explain that each flag in the table represents a country that participated in the Rugby World Cup 2003. If you have colour versions of each flag show these to the class.
- Assign one or several flags for each group to research in detail. Students should describe the colour, shapes and symbols in the description column, then research the meaning behind each flag.

Some suggested methods include:

- Provide source material such as selected text books and encyclopaedias.
 - Organise Internet access for students. Some useful urls are listed below:
Flags Online www.flagsonline.net/world.html
World Flag Database www.flags.net/
 - Book library time for students to do their research.
- Have students complete their findings for homework, to be followed up in the next lesson.

PART 3 REFLECTION

Reflect on the significance that flags have in our society and the ways that flags represent tradition and heritage. Explore the range and diversity of the countries that participated in the Rugby World Cup 2003, bringing in examples from the students. Reflect on the value of cultural diversity and the contributions made by people from a range of cultural backgrounds living in Australia.

PART 4 EXTENSION

- Construct flags from coloured paper, take photos of actual flags, use cloth and other materials to stitch flags to fly around the school.
- Investigate and discuss additional aspects of flags such as the importance of the flag bearer in sporting events such as the Olympics.
- Find out more about flag scandals such as Dawn Fraser stealing a flag at the Tokyo Olympics.
- Collate students' flags into a display folder, website or other multimedia format.
- Find out more about the controversy surrounding flags, such as the boxing kangaroo, skull and crossbones, swastika and traditional Japanese 'sunburst' flags.
- Display a class summary of all flags and descriptions. Add them to your Rugby wall.
- Students can begin to design their own flag.
- Organise an international day where students dress in traditional garments from other countries. Use the library or the Internet to find some international foods and other things you could prepare for the day.
- Use the Internet to add countries and flags to your summary.
- Find out the team emblems of the teams that played at the Rugby World Cup 2003.
- Have students search through their family tree. Conduct interviews with family members to find out more about their own heritage and origins.
- Find examples of diversity of expression such as national costumes and other examples in the creative arts. Research the origins of materials, colours and styles used for flags and garments in various parts of the world.
- Explore the languages used in different countries. Invite some guest speakers to share some insights into their culture and language.
- Arrange to have an international guest speaker visit the school. Do some research and develop some interview questions with the class related to the person's cultural heritage.
- Use the Internet to find out more about different traditions that have provided the foundations of our society. Investigate the diversity of Australia and the cultures that have contributed to it.
- Conduct an oral history. Ask various family members about their experiences growing up, their cultural heritage and other significant elements.
- Investigate semaphore and how flags are used in communication.
- Explore www.johnwilliamson.com.au. Do you agree with the opinions about the Australian flag?



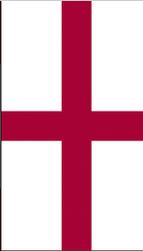
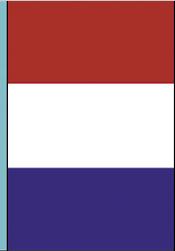
Explore www.rugby.com.au/edrugby (select 'ONLINE RESOURCE') for a student interactive activity related to this lesson.

STUDENT HANDOUT LOCAL FLAGS

Country	Description	Meaning	Flag
Australia			
Aboriginal			

RUGBY DIVERSITY

STUDENT HANDOUT COUNTRY FLAGS

Country	Description	Meaning	Flag
<i>Argentina</i>			
<i>Australia</i>			
<i>Canada</i>			
<i>England</i>			
<i>Fiji</i>			
<i>France</i>			
<i>Georgia</i>			

Country flags of the teams that competed at the Rugby World Cup 2003.

RUGBY DIVERSITY

STUDENT HANDOUT COUNTRY FLAGS

Country	Description	Meaning	Flag
<i>Ireland</i>			
<i>Italy</i>			
<i>Japan</i>			
<i>Namibia</i>			
<i>New Zealand</i>			
<i>Romania</i>			

Country flags of the teams that competed at the Rugby World Cup 2003.

RUGBY DIVERSITY

STUDENT HANDOUT COUNTRY FLAGS

Country	Description	Meaning	Flag
<i>Samoa</i>			
<i>Scotland</i>			
<i>South Africa</i>			
<i>Tonga</i>			
<i>Uruguay</i>			
<i>USA</i>			
<i>Wales</i>			

Country flags of the teams that competed at the Rugby World Cup 2003.