EnGLAND CULTUREGUIDE

This unit is published by the International Outreach Program of the David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies at Brigham Young University as part of an effort to foster open cultural exchange within the educational community and to promote increased global understanding by providing meaningful cultural education tools.

Curriculum Development

Rebecca Glathar majored in international studies with an emphasis in European studies. She spent time in England, Germany, and the Netherlands as she grew up and plans to continue to visit Europe.

Editorial Staff

Victoria Blanchard, CultureGuide
publications coordinator
International Outreach

Editorial Assistants

Julie Choules
Lisa Clark
Michelle Duncan
Krista Empey
Jill Fernald
Adrianne Gardner
Amber Marshall
Christy Shepherd
Melinda Van Wagenen
Melanie Wiser

J. Lee Simmons, editor
Kennedy Center Publications

Content Review Committee

Jeff Ringer, director
Cory Leonard, assistant director
David M. Kennedy Center

Ana Loso, program coordinator
International Outreach

Edward A. Geary, professor of English
Brigham Young University

For more information on the International Outreach program at Brigham Young University, contact International Outreach, 273 Herald R. Clark Building, PO Box 24537, Provo, UT 84604-9951, (801) 422-3040, int-outreach@email.byu.edu.

© 2005 International Outreach, David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602. Material contained in this packet may be reproduced for single teacher use in the classroom as needed to present the enclosed lessons; the packet is not to be reproduced and distributed to other teachers. Additional packets may be obtained by contacting International Outreach at (801) 422-3040.

Copyright Note: CultureGuide materials are the original creation of the curriculum developers and editorial staff, with the exception of country flags from Comstock.com, where noted. Included from the public domain is CIA World Factbook 2004 information found in the “Facts About” section and sometimes the country map or flag.
# Table of Contents

**Why Study Cultures?** ................................................. 2

**Traditions**
- Guy Fawkes Day .................................................. 3

**Folklore & Language**
- The Ravens at the Tower of London ......................... 8

**Food**
- Fish and Chips .................................................. 11

**Cross-cultural Contributions**
- The Prime Meridian ............................................. 14

**Reference Material**
- Facts about England ............................................ 17
- History and Holidays .......................................... 18
- Additional Resources .......................................... 20
- Visuals .......................................................... 22
WHY STUDY CULTURES?

For most of us, cultures are misunderstood; they are nebulous, vague, and hidden. Like the famous iceberg analogy, we know that most of what a culture is cannot be seen. But what does that mean? And why, then, should we study cultures if we do not know what we’re studying in the first place?

In the late twentieth century, Brigham Young University did not embrace a new discipline, but rather a new area of study—the study of cultures. Typically, anthropology is the social science that studies cultures. Why should they have all the fun? The study of cultures unites other academic disciplines (as needed), drawing upon literature, political science, sociology, and even the more applied areas of nursing, social work, law, and business. The study of cultures has grown into nothing short of a revolt against disciplines, “a mode of inquiry” that looks at things in new ways.¹

In 1982, the David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies established International Outreach as a formal program to help build bridges of intercultural understanding. Since then, more than 10,000 gratis cultural presentations have been given to local area public schools, taking students to new places using language, multimedia, and imagination. CultureGuides derive from the same expertise that has been honed in classrooms—with the exciting exception that these intercultural learning tools are not geographically bound. Thanks to the Internet, accessible multimedia technology, and our trusty eMACs, a limitless audience can learn about different cultures.

Globalization, the driving paradigm of the post-Cold War world, means that now, more than ever, culture matters. Culture is the invisible context that may keep us from understanding important people, places, and ideas; it exists whether or not we think about it. Intercultural education can help us, not only as an intellectual exercise, but also in very practical ways to combat racism, to expand business, and to communicate effectively.

CultureGuides share the same aim as Edward T. Hall, the eminent cultural scholar, to try to “make culture real.”² Even though our “student guides” are not present in every classroom, we hope that CultureGuides will make classrooms of the mind and cultural laboratories wherever you may reside.

TRADITIONS

GUY FAWKES DAY

The early seventeenth century was a time of religious turmoil in England. Extreme Catholics conspired to revolt against the Protestant-led British monarchy. In November 1605, a man named Guy Fawkes led a plot to blow up the Houses of Parliament and destroy the British monarchy. However, he was found and put to death before the plot was carried out. Today, England’s citizens remember this foiled attempt as Guy Fawkes Day, celebrated annually on 5 November. His death is a warning to any who might attempt to destroy or disrupt the English monarchy. Today, children develop British loyalty by participating in festivities that unite communities and display English patriotism.

Starting Points

1. Describe Guy Fawkes Day for the students. It is an exciting and intriguing celebration marked by bonfires, fireworks, and other patriotic festivities. Though temperatures are cold at this time of year, spirits are high and festivities entice people to join in the celebration. Young people raise money by making straw men that represent Guy Fawkes. These straw men are thrown into bonfires at the celebration’s climax as fireworks light up the night sky around the country.

2. Begin by telling the story of the Gunpowder Plot. This will help the class focus on why the celebration of Guy Fawkes Day occurs annually in England.

3. Emphasize the following points:
   a. The Gunpowder Plot occurred during a time of great religious upheaval.
   b. The conspirators planned to blow up the Houses of Parliament with gunpowder. They were caught and executed.
   c. Guy Fawkes Day is celebrated in remembrance of the plot’s failure and the conspirators’ fates.

Information

Religious and Historical Background

During the reign of King Henry VIII, the English throne separated from the Catholic church and established the Church of England, or the Anglican church. Following Henry VIII’s death, the crown passed through his three children, and the country oscillated between Catholic and Protestant rule. Edward VI was Protestant, Mary was Catholic, and Elizabeth I was Protestant. Because Elizabeth had no heirs, her cousin’s son James, king of Scotland, became the rightful heir to the throne.

Because the rulers of England continually changed religion, the people of England were caught in the middle of an internal religious war. Many people lost their lives
as the crown constantly passed between Catholic and Protestant rulers, who changed what the people were and were not allowed to practice. For example, Mary sent almost three hundred Protestants to a fiery death at the stake and imprisoned even more. Kings Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Queen Elizabeth I confiscated Catholic church property and dissolved monasteries. Many priests went into hiding to avoid execution. People who helped hide a priest were sentenced to death. As the situation worsened, Catholics continued to lose more and more rights. A heavy monthly tax was placed upon those who did not attend Anglican services, and their land was often confiscated. Furthermore, all citizens were required to pledge allegiance to and accept the monarch as the supreme governor of the church. Anyone unwilling to do this was sentenced to death. These cruel measures forced everyone to practice Anglican worship. Anyone who remained loyal to the Catholic church had to practice in secret to escape death.

These religious restrictions explain why groups of Catholics wanted to revolt against the British government. In effort to free themselves from Protestant rule, they beseeched the Spanish royalty. When Protestant Elizabeth I beheaded Catholic Mary, Queen of Scots, the Spanish Armada attempted to rescue the Catholics; however, the Armada was defeated.

When James I became king, he loosened some of the restrictive laws enforced by his forebearers in hopes of establishing a more unified country. He pardoned several religious prisoners and gave people reason to hope for future change. Although life was not easy for the Catholics, many felt that it had become more bearable under King James’ rule. They believed if they cooperated as good citizens, the king would continue his policy of tolerance towards them.

**The Rise of Guy Fawkes**

In 1570, Guido Fawkes, better known as Guy Fawkes, was born in York (see Traditions Visual 1). At age twenty-one, he joined the Spanish militia, and served throughout the Netherlands for twelve years. Because Catholics were free to practice their religion in the Netherlands, Fawkes was able to see how true Catholics should practice. Upon returning to England, he was determined to do anything to gain complete religious freedom for his Catholic friends. He and other Catholic extremists plotted to blow up the Houses of Parliament with gunpowder.

The plot, however, was not the will of the majority, but merely the hope of an extreme, fanatical minority. After being away from England for twelve years, Guy Fawkes was radically determined to fight for the the plight of the Catholics, even though most Catholics had adjusted to King James’ rule and had no wish to rebel against the king. Consequently, his attempt to bring the Catholics more freedom only brought them additional and more severe restrictions. Life became more difficult for Catholics once again.

**The Plot**

The plan to blow up Parliament and kill the king was known as the “Gunpowder Plot.” The Houses of Parliament were to be blown up on the first day of Parliament’s sessions (see Traditions Visual 2), because the conspirators knew that the king, queen, and prince would be in Parliament that day. They hoped that by destroying the
king and lords of Parliament, the resulting confusion would allow the English Catholics to rise up and take over the government.

Several people collaborated on this project for many years (see Traditions Visual 3). Robert Catesby led the group and used his house for many of the meetings. Another gentleman, Thomas Percy, rented storage space beneath the Parliament building, where the rebels hid several barrels of gunpowder under metal bars and wooden sticks. The group of conspirators sought Guy Fawkes’ gunpowder expertise and appointed him to bring the plan to fruition. Fawkes faithfully looked after the gunpowder in the basement and waited patiently for daybreak to light the fuse at the right time.

The plan failed because a concerned conspirator, sent a letter to a member of Parliament, Lord Monteagle, urging him to stay away from Parliament on its first day of session. Lord Monteagle, unsure of the letter’s coded warning, took the letter to London and presented it to the king. The king called for a search of Parliament, and Guy Fawkes was found in the basement storage room, along with the barrels of gunpowder. On Guy Fawkes himself, they found the items necessary to ignite the gunpowder. He was immediately arrested and brought to King James. The king ordered him to be tortured until he revealed the names of his co-conspirators. Some of the conspirators were arrested and hung for treason, but others escaped. Guy Fawkes was hanged, beheaded, dragged through the streets behind a cart, and quartered (literally cut into fourths) on 31 January 1606.

The English first learned about the plot to destroy Parliament on the night of 4 November 1605, and they began celebrating the unsuccessful attempt with bonfires and such on 5 November, before Guy Fawkes was even put to death.

**Guy Fawkes Day**

The people of England commemorate Guy Fawkes Day every 5 November. Children make straw men representing Guy Fawkes. They put a great deal of thought and effort into making the best-looking and most realistic straw man. Then, they carry them around in wagons and say, “Penny for the guy, mister?” The children collect money throughout the day from those who are impressed (or at least feign to be impressed) with their creative work. They typically use the money collected from the straw men to buy fireworks.

Because November is cold and rainy in England, people do not typically like to be out in the park. However, 5 November is an exception, as the festivities make bundling up and facing the unkind weather worthwhile. At dusk, everyone gathers in the large parks and common areas of each town and city to enjoy the celebration. Roasted chestnuts and toffee apples are sold by street vendors, fireworks are available for the young, food and drink are either brought from home or purchased on-site from the vendors, and people light a huge bonfire (one of the most recognizable symbols of this celebration), which grows brighter as the straw men are thrown into it. People also light other smaller fires or use heaters to keep from getting too cold. Fireworks are also a big part of this celebration. In fact, each town competes to see who can create the largest and most impressive fireworks display. Some of these displays even compare to the extravagance of many Fourth of July celebrations in the
United States. Guy Fawkes Day has become a time for people to remember and reflect with gratitude about how the lives of their king and lords were preserved.

Today, for a small number of Catholics, Guy Fawkes Day is not a celebration of patriotism; rather, it is a time of solemn reflection. Although most Catholics have forgotten the religious prejudices and restrictions of former times, there are still some who view Fawkes as a martyr. They equate his death with the death of their dream that England would someday return to a Catholic state. Such Catholics do not enjoy a joyous celebration of English loyalty on Guy Fawkes Day. For most Catholics and British patriots, however, this day is a time when family, friends, and communities can meet together and participate in fun, light-hearted activities. Even though most people know and remember the story of Guy Fawkes and his plot, the celebration does not focus on his punishment and death. For the young, it is a time to have fun; only as adults do the British fully recognize and understand the political and religious significance of the Gunpowder Plot.

**Activities**

1. Divide into small groups and write a letter warning Lord Monteagle about the Gunpowder Plot. It should be vague enough that the person reading it would not discover the plot.

2. Write a second verse to the nursery rhyme recited by youth all over England (see Traditions Visual 4). Use your poem to explain more about the plot or the celebrations that take place now.

3. Research and prepare a short lesson about Guy Fawkes, which you could share with their friends and family. If time permits, present it to the class, individually or in groups.

4. Write an eulogy for Guy Fawkes from his fellow Catholic conspirators and friends.

**Discussion Questions**

1. What other options do you think the group of English Catholics might have had to settle their differences with the English government rather than blowing up the Parliament? (Remember that this was 1605, fifteen years before the Pilgrims set sail for America on the Mayflower.)

2. How do you think a group of English Catholics justified blowing up a building with many innocent people inside, including the king, queen, and young prince? Can you think of any other religious groups that have attempted to violently enforce their religion?

3. Lord Monteagle’s letter was sent by one of the conspirators in order to save his life. In the end, the letter was the means of discovering the plot and ending the lives of the plotters. Should the letter have been sent to Lord Monteagle? Consider the fact that Lord Monteagle was related to at least one of the conspirators. Encourage the class to judge both from the viewpoint of the conspirators as well as the king.
4. How does the celebration of Guy Fawkes Day serve as a reminder of patriotism? What other lessons does it teach?

5. The issue of sovereignty has challenged nations and their people to decide where to draw the line between independence and interdependence with other nations. The time of King James I was no exception as one of his greatest desires was to unite Scotland and England. What concerns did the Scottish and English people have about uniting their countries at that time? Today, one major topic within international relations is whether nations should continue moving toward globalization. As we look at the trend of globalization, are there concerns that were present during King James’ rule that still exist?
FOLKLORE & LANGUAGE

THE RAVENS AT THE TOWER OF LONDON

The Tower of London symbolizes England’s rich heritage. Part of this heritage includes the role of superstition in legends, especially in the legend of the ravens that reside at the Tower of London. For hundreds of years, the English have believed that the kingdom would fall if the ravens ever left the Tower of London. The descendants of the original ravens still remain at the Tower to ensure the safety of the kingdom. Their wings have been clipped to ensure they stay near their home.

Starting Points

1. Talk about some commonly known superstitions with the class (e.g., a black cat crossing your path, a broken mirror, or walking under a ladder).

2. Share with the class a brief history of the Tower of London, including its historical, social, and national significance. This will give students a historical context for the Tower’s superstitious legend.

3. Write the following statements on the board:
   a. The Tower of London is a significant feature in the history of England.
   b. Ravens are a historical and cultural treasure found at the Tower of London.
   c. Superstitions about the infamous ravens have secured them a permanent home.

Information

Norman Conquest

After the king of England, Edward the Confessor, died in January 1066 without an heir to the throne, a debate ensued over whether the Duke William of Normandy or Harold, the son of the Earl of Wessex, should become the next king. While those in England quickly crowned Harold as king, William continued to battle for the throne. With an army of men, he invaded England at Hastings, and Harold and many English soldiers were killed. Hence, William ascended the throne. During his reign, William tried to unite the people of England, but incessant rebellions continued. In attempts to maintain his sovereignty, William built fortresses to prepare for and defend against future attacks.

The Tower of London

The Tower of London was built by William the Conqueror soon after the Norman Conquest. The Tower was constructed near the Thames River, just outside the border of the original city. The Tower stood as both a symbol of defense against outside intruders and a reminder to Londoners that any type of revolt would be imprudent.
The Tower of London was originally just the single White Tower (see Folklore & Language Visual 1). The tower is ninety feet tall, with base walls almost fifteen feet thick. Because it has no entrance on the main level, one would have to enter from the upper floor by climbing one of the outdoor staircases. The tower has three square turrets and one circular turret that housed the first Royal Observatory.

The Tower of London is the oldest castle and prison in Europe. It has served as a royal palace, prison, execution site, museum, and home of the first Royal Observatory, the Royal Mint, and the Crown Jewels. Today, it attracts thousands of tourists and leads them through a historical journey of England’s rich heritage (see Folklore & Language Visual 2). Within the Tower, many were imprisoned, and several kings, queens, and many other historical figures also lost their lives. As recent as World War II, it held the political prisoner Rudolph Hess when he was incarcerated. Although the tower was built with the original intention of suppressing the English, the English citizens have adopted it as a symbol of their own ancestry.

Superstitions of The Tower
Superstition has strong roots in England because two of the main indigenous groups, the Celts and Saxons, were very superstitious people. Additional superstitions were introduced as the Norse Vikings and the Romans invaded England. Although superstitions were primarily observed during the medieval period, superstitions still exist today because they have been preserved through ancient legends, including the legend of the ravens at the Tower of London.

The legend of the ravens originated in the seventeenth century, during the reign of King Charles II. Charles used the circular turret of the White Tower for his observatory. One night while he was stargazing, his view became obscured by a raven’s droppings. Furious, Charles ordered all ravens to be killed. In response to this demand, he was warned that the ravens protected the Tower and if they ever were to leave, the Tower and the kingdom would both fall. Charles, afraid to risk the kingdom, allowed the ravens to stay and moved his observatory equipment to Greenwich, England, where it remains today.

Anyone who visits the Tower of London today can see the ever-present ravens (see Folklore & Language Visual 3). While they are most often seen scavenging the grounds near the kitchens for food or walking freely about the Tower Green, they reside near Wakefield Tower. However, they are uncongenial birds, and yeoman warders (the official attendants or guards at the tower) caution guests to keep their distance from these birds, as they have personally experienced the sharp beak of an unhappy raven.

Today, there are eight ravens officially registered as Tower residents. Each is given a name, a monthly physical, food, and care from the Ravenmaster. The oldest raven, Hardy, has been at the Tower for twenty-five years, which is longer than any prisoner’s stay at the Tower. A graveyard for the ravens is located in the dry moat near the ticket barrier, though few visitors ever notice it.

The English love to share the legend of the ravens with visitors. The legend is reinforced by the fact that the monarchy has not been destroyed since the ravens have been at the Tower, though several attempts have been made. The ravens were taken
from the Tower of London for a short time during World War II. Interestingly, World War II was the closest England came to falling. Once the ravens were returned to the Tower, the English triumphed over the Germans. Nevertheless, each visitor has the freedom to decide whether or not this is a coincidence.

Activities

1. Research a historical event that took place at the Tower of London and write a summary of the event that either uses the perspective of one of the Tower’s ravens or incorporates the ravens into the story.

2. Research American superstitions. Try to find American superstitions that are similar to the superstition of the Tower’s ravens. Do Americans believe anything in our society has a similar protective role?

3. As a class, discuss whether or not superstition still remains in our day. Divide into two opposing groups and debate about whether the ravens should be released from the Tower or not. Consider historical and cultural significance as well as superstitious beliefs.

4. Act out and give a television news report warning viewers about what could happen if the ravens left the tower. Relay the story about the ravens being taken from the Tower in World War II and England’s victory when the ravens were returned. Hold a contest about who gave the best report.

Discussion Questions

1. Like so many others before, are the ravens prisoners of the Tower? Discuss the ethics of clipping the ravens’ wings and keeping them as royal pets.

2. How has superstition affected people in history? Does it still play a role in people’s behavior today? Have you ever received a chain letter and felt a tinge of anxiety about passing the letter on to avoid bad luck? How do chain letters fit in with superstition?

3. As long as they’ve lived at the Tower of London, England has not been overtaken by any outside force. Discuss whether this is coincidence, luck, or a result of strong political and/or military power. Are there any other causes that account for the ravens appearing to fulfil their legendary role?

4. United States soldiers found hope when they saw and sang “The Star-Spangled Banner” during battle. How could the Tower of London’s ravens bring hope to the English people? What else might the ravens do for the English people?
FOOD

FISH AND CHIPS

Certain foods are not only identified by, but are inseparable from their country of origin. This is true of fish and chips, an entrée long associated with England. In fact, one can easily find a place to buy fish and chips anywhere on the island. Fish and chips has not only played an important role in the social aspects of English culture, but it is also a significant economic resource.

Starting Points

1. Ask students what their favorite foods are.

2. Discuss foods that are identified by their cultures. Some ideas might include sushi and Japan, curry and India, croissants and France, pasta and Italy, sauerkraut and Germany, gyros and Greece, egg rolls and China, etc. Emphasize the close relationship between food and culture.

3. Focus the students’ attention during the lesson on the following points:
   a. Culture and food are as inseparable as fish and chips.
   b. Fish and chips is a social, economic, and cultural part of England.
   c. Fish and chips shops vary in style, size, and quality.

Information

Fish and Chips

Fish and chips is an important economic and social part of English culture. Since England is an island, no one is ever more than one hundred miles from the coast, which makes fish such as cod, plaice, halibut, haddock, and salmon readily available almost anywhere. Potatoes are also a staple in English cooking because they are grown locally and are inexpensive. With the high availability and low cost of these two resources, fish and chips has provided a lucrative business opportunity to many shop and restaurant owners. Any visitor to England can easily find a fish and chips shop.

To prepare fish and chips, the fish is first dipped in batter and then deep-fried. The chips are similar to American french fries in taste and texture, but are much larger in size. Chips are usually seasoned with salt and malt vinegar before given to the customer (see Food Visual 1). However, other condiments such as curry sauce and ketchup are available upon request.
Fish and Chips Recipe

You will need:
- 2 lbs fresh whitefish fillets (haddock, flounder, or cod work well)
- 2 C flour
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1 C water
- 2 lbs potatoes, peeled and sliced into thin strips
- malt vinegar
- oil
- salt

Preparation
1. Combine the flour and baking soda together in large bowl.
2. Make a hole in the center of the flour mixture and add the water a few tablespoons at a time while stirring slowly.
3. Continue stirring until smooth; let batter sit for one hour while preparing the fish fillets.
4. With the skins left on, dry each fillet and sprinkle them with a small amount of salt and flour.
5. Heat oil in saucepan or deep fryer.
6. Dip fish in batter and then place in oil.
7. Fry them for five minutes or until they appear golden brown.
8. Place fillets in a microwave or stove to keep warm while making the chips.
9. Dry the potato strips and sprinkle them with salt.
10. Deep-fry potato strips until they are golden brown.
11. Sprinkle them with malt vinegar and serve with the fish.

Yield: 6–7 servings

Fish and Chips Shops
Fish and chips restaurants and shops are centers of high social activity. They are great places for friends and family to meet and visit together. Most good shops have long lines, which allows time for pleasant conversation among customers. Teenagers also enjoy gathering within shops and restaurants as they come and go from activities.

There are many different kinds of fish and chips shops in England, and each varies in quality and style (see Food Visual 2 and 3). At a typical fish and chips restaurant patrons usually order from a menu that offers different types of fish and meat pies. The pie is usually served with side dishes such as peas, pickles, eggs, salads, or hard rolls. Finer restaurants will offer scampi, shrimp, prawns, or calamari. Because such restaurants serve multiple-course meals, these meals take much longer to eat.

Some fish and chips shops, known to the English as chippies, are much like American fast food restaurants. Teenagers might come with a group of friends for a quick bite before or after an activity. It is also a great place for a busy mum or dad to grab a quick family meal for supper. These take-away (take-out) shops are usually only one-room shops and contain very little decor. Along with fish, the shop typically sells various meat pies, sausage rolls, chicken portions, and pasties—pastries filled with meat and vegetables. Each item of food that the shop provides is displayed on the counter.

A large sign behind the counter displays the menu options and corresponding prices (see Food Visual 4). Most shops don’t serve side dishes with a regular order of fish and
chips, but sell them separately. The hot, greasy entrée used to be wrapped in economical and earth-friendly, wax-lined newspaper. However, concerns arose that the ink leaking from the newspaper could cause health problems, so now, fish and chips are wrapped in thick, white, wax-lined paper. Also wrapped up with the fish and chips is usually a small, wooden, two-pronged fork used to eat the chips. It is similar to a wooden ice cream spoon, but two-pronged at the top instead of round. Because the English rarely use their fingers to eat, the chip fork makes eating fish and chips easier and more convenient.

Fish and chips is an inexpensive, fast, and delicious way to enjoy traditional English food. Not only is it common, but it is also a highly treasured part of English culture.

**Activities**

1. As a class, assign everyone to bring one of the ingredients (several can bring the fish) and prepare your own fish and chips meal.

2. Write a story about the origin of fish and chips shops. Try to answer the following questions: How did people think of combining seafood and potatoes? Were there any outside influences? Did anyone try to steal the idea? Why has fish and chips become so popular in England, rather than another country?

3. Imagine you are in England and have eaten fish and chips at a few different shops. Write postcards to their best friends and talk about the experience. Include how fish and chips shops compare to American fast food restaurants.

4. Complete the quiz on fish and chips (see Food Visual 5). Complete it individually or play a game in which the teacher reads each question. The first person to answer correctly wins points or a small prize.

**Discussion Questions**

1. What is the correlation between England’s dietary trends and its immediate surroundings? Think about England’s location and examine how it has affected what they eat on a normal basis.

2. With the ability to transport many different foods from other places, why has seafood remained an important and cherished cuisine in England? How did fish and chips become and remain so popular among the English people as well as among those who visit England?

3. Fast food is popular throughout the world because it is quick and convenient. However, it can be some of the least healthy food to consume. How are current fast food restaurants making their meals more nutritious? What could be done to make fish and chips healthier? Can people eat healthy food that is also both quick and convenient?

4. Why haven’t fast food enterprises from other countries, like Chinese restaurants or English chippies, spread with as much rapidity and influence as American fast food chains? Do you see this as a positive or negative trend? Why?
CROSS-CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS

THE PRIME MERIDIAN

The Prime Meridian, which defines global times and distances, is located in Greenwich, a small town near London. The time at any location is determined by that location’s proximity to Greenwich. The English take great pride in being the “timekeepers” of the world.

Starting Points

1. The following clues will inspire the student’s interest in learning about the Prime Meridian. Read the following clues aloud and have the students guess what the lesson is about.

   a. This line can be seen on a map, but not on the land.
   b. This line connects the North and South Poles.
   c. This line is where east and west meet.
   d. This line is zero degrees longitude.

2. Discuss how cultures, customs, and knowledge are often passed from one country to another. Talk about the many cultural contributions England has made to the world. One such contribution was standardizing maps for the world’s benefit to eliminate inconsistencies in coordinates and times. Greenwich, England was established as the point of the Prime Meridian during a conference to determine universal markings for maps.

3. Discuss the importance of universal measurements. For example, what if we did not have a universal measuring of time—if we had no point in time to establish as the Common Era (0 c.e.)? How would this affect the way we view history? Similarly, what would the world be like with no Prime Meridian?

Information

Meridians

A meridian is a line that runs from the North to the South Pole and determines longitude on a map. Each meridian is equal in length and crosses the equator at right angles, at which point the distance between meridians is greatest. There are an infinite number of meridians; however, maps generally show lines of longitude at ten degree increments. Maps with finer scales bring greater accuracy in pinpointing specific locations.

Before longitudes were universal, mapmakers could choose any geographical point to set as the meridian of zero degrees. As cartography spread, mapmakers in Great Britain, France, and the United States each used their own national observatory to mark the point of zero degrees. Thus, each map was different, and no one could communicate using universal measurements.
England’s Prime Meridian

In the seventeenth century, King Charles II chose Greenwich, a city on the Thames River near London, as the sight for the national observatory. Even so, England had four different mapmakers who each placed the meridian in different places. The first mapmaker who attempted to place an accurate meridian line was Flamsteed in 1675. One hundred years later, Edmund Halley followed him. James Bradley used his equipment at the Old Royal Observatory to mark the eighteenth-century meridian (see Cross-cultural Contributions Visual 1 and 2). In 1851, George Airy placed his newer equipment in a room next to Bradley’s original equipment, which shifted the Prime Meridian a few yards.

However, outside of England, each mapmaker still established his own Prime Meridian at various spots. As a result, maps were confusing, inefficient, and caused cartographic discrepancies in latitude and longitude coordinates.

In 1884, the president of the United States, Chester A Arthur, requested that a conference be held to discuss standardizing the placement of meridians. In October of that year, forty-one delegates from twenty-five different countries attended the International Meridian Conference. These delegates represented Austria-Hungary, Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Costa Rica, France, Germany, Great Britain, Guatemala, Hawaii (which wasn’t a part of the United States until 1893), Italy, Japan, Liberia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Paraguay, Russia, the Dominican Republic (San Domingo), El Salvador, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United States, and Venezuela. Several important decisions were made at the conference. A universal day was adopted, nautical and astronomical days were standardized, and Airy’s placement of the Prime Meridian at Greenwich became the site of zero degrees longitude for all standard maps (see Cross-cultural Contributions Visual 3). All longitudes would now run 180 degrees east and west from this point.

The establishment of a standard Prime Meridian greatly impacted time zones throughout the world. The International Date Line (IDL), which determines the date and time for all countries of the world, runs 180 degrees west of the Prime Meridian near the middle of the Pacific Ocean. The middle of the ocean is a good location for it because there is no one to argue about the precise time. If the IDL were in a highly populated area, it would be harder to identify the correct date, time, and location of certain areas of the country.

While the meridian and time zone lines were established at the same time, they were determined quite differently. The time zone lines were determined by country borders, islands, and geographic landmarks, but the meridian lines were drafted strictly from mathematical calculations. Standardizing time zones and meridian lines not only benefited England, but the entire world.

The English are proud to hold the world’s timekeeping line. Many towns and villages along the meridian’s path and also many signs throughout eastern England mark the exact point where the meridian runs (see Cross-cultural Contributions Visual 4). The Prime Meridian is an indispensable part of the English culture.
Activities

1. Divide the class into four or five groups. Each group represents a country attending the International Meridian Conference (the names of attending countries appear in the Information section). Postulate reasons why that country should be chosen to mark the world’s Prime Meridian.

2. Complete the Prime Meridian word search (see Cross-cultural Contributions Visual 5).

3. Give students copies of world maps. Call out the names of major countries’ capital cities and have a race to see who can find and call out the correct latitude and longitude coordinates for that city.

Discussion Questions

1. If you were assigned the task of making a map, how would you go about doing it? How would you get the necessary information?

2. Why was the Prime Meridian established in Europe? Discuss how the time period of the late nineteenth century influenced its position. Why was it not placed in the eastern hemisphere? Was it placed in England primarily so that the 180 meridian would lie over the Pacific Ocean? (Had it begun in the Eastern Hemisphere, the IDL would have run through the Atlantic.) What other factors were involved in the decision?

3. What is the significance of universal measurements? How do measures of latitude and longitude benefit sailors? How do they affect us today?

4. Towns and businesses along the Prime Meridian proudly display signs that identify themselves as zero longitude. Why are the English proud that the Prime Meridian runs through Greenwich? Why do they take pride in an imaginary line?
**Facts About England**

**Official Name:** England  
**Capital:** London  
**Government Type:** constitutional monarchy  
**Area:** 130,357 sq km  
**Land Boundaries:** Scotland and Wales  
**Climate:** temperate; prevailing south-west winds over the North Atlantic current, more than one-half of the days are overcast  
**Lowest Point:** Fenland 4 m  
**Highest Point:** Ben Nevis 1,343 m  
**Natural Resources:** coal, petroleum, natural gas, iron ore, lead, zinc, gold, tin, limestone, salt, clay, chalk, gypsum, potash, silica sand, slate, arable land  
**Population:** 49,800,000 (2004 est.)  
**Ethnic Groups:** English 81.5%, Scottish 9.6%, Irish 2.4%, Welsh 1.9%, Ulster 1.8%, West Indian, Indian, Pakistani, and other 2.8%  
**Religions:** Anglican and Roman Catholic 40 million, Muslim 1.5 million, Presbyterian 800,000, Methodist 760,000, Sikh 500,000, Hindu 500,000, Jewish 350,000  
**Languages:** English, Welsh, Scottish form of Gaelic  
**GDP Per Capita:** $27,700 (2003 est.)  
**GDP Composition By Sector:** agriculture: 0.9%; industry: 26.5%; services: 72.6% (2003)  
**Labor Force:** 29.6 million (2003)  
**Unemployment Rate:** 5% (2003 est.)

**Industries:** machine tools, electric power equipment, automation equipment, railroad equipment, shipbuilding, aircraft, motor vehicles and parts, electronics and communications equipment, metals, chemicals, coal, petroleum, paper and paper products, food processing, textiles, clothing, and other consumer goods

**Agricultural Products:** cereals, oilseed, potatoes, vegetables, cattle, sheep, poultry, fish

**Exports:** $304.5 billion (f.o.b., 2003) manufactured goods, fuels, chemicals; food, beverages, tobacco

**Trade Partners:** EU (Germany, France, Netherlands), United States  
**Currency:** Euro  
**Exchange Rate:** 1.3036 Euros = $1 U.S. (January 2005)
HISTORY AND HOLIDAYS

TIME LINE

55 B.C.E.  Roman invasion of the British Isles
600–700 C.E.  Invasions by the Anglos, Saxons, and Jutes
1066  Norman conquest of the British Isles
1282  England conquers Wales—the prince of England becomes the prince of Wales
1337–1453  The Hundred Years’ War between France and England brings about both countries’ national identities
1348–1350  Black Plague in England
1381  Peasants’ revolt in England—thousands of peasants rise up and demand legal recourse for the injustices of inherited servitude
1455–1485  The War of the Roses—an English war that decimates the strong nobility and sets the stage for a strong monarchy
1500–1599  The English Reformation—King Henry VIII separates England from the Catholic Church in Rome
1588  Defeat of the Spanish Armada—this battle marked the shift in power from Spain to England
1605  Gunpowder Plot to kill King James in the houses of Parliament by Guy Fawkes
1642–1649  English civil war
1664–1666  Black Plague in England
1666  The Great Fire of London destroys many buildings
1689  English Bill of Rights is designed to control the power of kings and queens and to make them subject to laws passed by Parliament
1689  Toleration Act, which promotes religious toleration
1694  Triennial Act, which prevents the King from dissolving Parliament and institutes general elections to be held every three years
1707  Act of Union—England and Scotland agree to permanently unite as Great Britain
1801  The legislative union of Great Britain and Ireland adopt the name The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland
1921  Anglo–Irish treaty formalizes a partition of Ireland. Ireland becomes an independent free state with the exception of six counties
1940  The Battle of Britain during World War II helps in the fight against Germany
1982  The Falkland Islands war with Argentina
1997  The death of Diana, Princess of Wales
1999  Regional assemblies with varying degrees of power open in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Holiday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Jan</td>
<td>New Year’s Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Feb</td>
<td>Valentine’s Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb/Mar</td>
<td>(3 days before Lent) Shrove Tuesday and Pancake Day (Shrove is a cheerful celebration that celebrates the end of winter and the coming of spring)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>(4th Sunday of Lent) Mothering Sunday—celebration of the role of Motherhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar/Apr</td>
<td>Easter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Apr</td>
<td>April Fool’s Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 May</td>
<td>May Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun</td>
<td>Celebration of the Birthday of the Queen (second Saturday)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Nov</td>
<td>Guy Fawkes Day or Bonfire Night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Dec</td>
<td>Christmas Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Dec</td>
<td>Boxing Day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

**BRITISH EMBASSY TO THE UNITED STATES**
845 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10022
Phone: (212) 745-0277, Fax: (212) 745-0359
Web site: http://www.britainusa.com/

**BRITISH DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM**
Web site: http://www.visitbritain.com

**BOOKS**

**FILM**

**INTERNET SITES**
British Tourist Authority:
http://www.visitbritain.com

CIA World Factbook:

Guy Fawkes and the Conspirators:

Guy Fawkes and the Houses of Parliament:
http://www.go.to/guyfawkes

Guy Fawkes Day:
http://www.guy-fawkes.com
Historical Royal Palaces:
http://www.hrp.org.uk/webcode/home.asp
Monarchs of England:
http://www.royal.gov.uk/index.htm
Murray Field Fish and Chips:
http://www.murrayfield.net/chipper/
Royal Observatory at Greenwich:
http://www.rog.nmm.ac.uk/
Tower of London:
http://www.tower-of-london.com/ravens/legend.html
Traditions Visual 1: Guy Fawkes
Traditions Visual 3: Conspirators

Christopher Wright, John Wright, Thomas Percy, Guido Fawkes, Robert Catesby, Thomas Winter, Bates
Remember, remember the fifth of November

Gunpowder, treason, and plot;

I see no reason why gunpowder treason

Should ever be forgot!

Name: ______________________________
Food Visual 1: Fish and Chips
This typical fish and chips shop in the town of Beer offers eat-in or take-away meals.
This shop is located in a small, old building, and offers only take-away food.
This menu gives an estimate of how much fish and chips cost in pounds in November 2001.
Fish and Chips Quiz

1. When preparing fish and chips, how is the fish cooked?
   a) smoked  c) baked  
   b) grilled  d) deep-fried

2. Fish and chips shops are great places for people to __________________________.
   a) eat until they drop  c) socialize  
   b) look for jobs  d) get shelter from the rain

3. What type of fish do the English use for fish and chips?
   a) salmon  c) haddock  
   b) cod  d) all of the above

4. What do the English call fish and chips shops that are like American fast food restaurants?
   a) quickies  c) fishes  
   b) chippies  d) fish n’ go

5. Take-away shops are ____________________________.
   a) one-room shops  c) splendidly decorated  
   b) two-room shops  d) fine restaurants

6. Besides fish, what other entree is offered at a typical fish and chips restaurant?
   a) spaghetti  c) meat pies  
   b) sandwiches  d) hamburgers

7. What are pasties?
   a) pastries, but the English often pronounce it without the r  
   b) similar to pastries, but filled with meat and vegetables  
   c) two pieces of fish that are pasted together with mayonnaise and other condiments  
   d) the name for the side dishes often served with fish and chips

8. Why are potatoes a staple food in England?
   a) they are grown locally  c) neither a or b  
   b) they are inexpensive  d) both a and b

9. What did they formerly wrap fish and chips in for take-away?
   a) newspaper  c) thick, white, wax-lined paper  
   b) saran paper  d) nothing; wrapping is new

10. What might the English use to flavor their chips?
    a) ketchup  c) curry sauce  
    b) malt vinegar  d) all of the above
Name: ________________________________

Fish and Chips Quiz

1. When preparing fish and chips, how is the fish cooked?
   a) smoked  
   b) grilled  
   c) baked  
   d) deep-fried

2. Fish and chips shops are great places for people to _____________________________.
   a) eat until they drop  
   b) look for jobs  
   c) socialize  
   d) get shelter from the rain

3. What type of fish do the English use for fish and chips?
   a) salmon  
   b) cod  
   c) haddock  
   d) all of the above

4. What do the English call fish and chips shops that are like American fast food restaurants?
   a) quickies  
   b) chippies  
   c) fishies  
   d) fish n’ go

5. Take-away shops are _____________________________.
   a) one-room shops  
   b) two-room shops  
   c) splendidly decorated  
   d) fine restaurants

6. Besides fish, what other entree is offered at a typical fish and chips restaurant?
   a) spaghetti  
   b) sandwiches  
   c) meat pies  
   d) hamburgers

7. What are pasties?
   a) pastries, but the English often pronounce it without the r
   b) similar to pastries, but filled with meat and vegetables
   c) two pieces of fish that are pasted together with mayonnaise and other condiments
   d) the name for the side dishes often served with fish and chips

8. Why are potatoes a staple food in England?
   a) they are grown locally  
   b) they are inexpensive  
   c) neither a or b  
   d) both a and b

9. What did they formerly wrap fish and chips in for take-away?
   a) newspaper  
   b) saran paper  
   c) thick, white, wax-lined paper  
   d) nothing; wrapping is new

10. What might the English use to flavor their chips?
    a) ketchup  
    b) malt vinegar  
    c) curry sauce  
    d) all of the above
Cross-cultural Contributions Visual 4: Map of the Prime Meridian Line
WHERE'S THE PRIME MERIDIAN?

CARTOGRAPHY
GLOBAL TIMES
NORTH POLE
EQUATOR
INTERNATIONAL DATE LINE
PRIME MERIDIAN
FLAMSTEED
IMAGINARY LINE
ROYAL OBSERVATORY
GEORGE AIRY
LATITUDE
SOUTH POLE
GREAT BRITAIN
LONGITUDE
TIMEKEEPERS
GREENWICH
MAPMAKERS
ZERO DEGREES
WHERE’S THE PRIME MERIDIAN?

CARTOGRAPHY  GLOBAL TIMES  NORTH POLE
EQUATOR  INTERNATIONAL DATE LINE  PRIME MERIDIAN
FLAMSTEED  IMAGINARY LINE  ROYAL OBSERVATORY
GEORGE AIRY  LATITUDE  SOUTH POLE
GREAT BRITAIN  LONGITUDE  TIMEKEEPERS
GREENWICH  MAPMAKERS  ZERO DEGREES
The flag of England is white with the red cross of Saint George, representing the patron saint of England.