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Hands-On Social Studies, Grade 2
An Inquiry Approach

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Unit 2A

Changing Family and Community Traditions
Investigating Countries of Origin

The purpose of this lesson is to have students gather data about their families’ countries of origin. With their classmates, they will use a graph to consolidate and display the information.

**Guided Inquiry Questions:**
- How can I use a graph to display information about my family’s countries of origin?
- What is a tally chart, and how can it help me count and display data?
- How do I create and read graphs?

**Learning Goals:**
- We are learning to create simple graphs to display data, and then we are learning to analyze the data.
- We are learning about our families’ countries of origin.

**Concepts of Social Studies Thinking:**
- Continuity and Change
- Interrelationships
- Significance

**Materials**
- markers
- graph chart paper
- wall map of Ontario
- wall map of Canada
- wall map of the world
- index cards
- pushpins or adhesive tape
- rulers
- pencil crayons
- document camera (optional)
- Letter to Family (A.2.1)
- Activity Sheet: Investigating My Family’s Countries of Origin (A.2.2)
- books such as *The Kids Book of Canadian Immigration* by Deborah Hodge

---

**Activating Prior Knowledge**

Review the previous lesson by having students share the countries of origin of their last names. Record this data on chart paper, and create a tally chart that shows the number of students with last names from various countries. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Origin of Last Name</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>#1 #1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As each country is identified, have students work together to locate the country on the world map.

**Assessment for Learning**

Observe students as they discuss the origins of their last names. Focus on their abilities to identify origins and locate countries on the world map. Provide descriptive feedback throughout this process.

**Activity: Part One**

Provide each student with an index card. Have students record their first names, birth dates, and places of birth on the index card.

Divide the class into two equal groups, and ask students to form two concentric circles. Have students in each circle face each other, hold their index cards toward their partners, and introduce themselves. For example:

- My name is Ilya. My birthday is April 2. I was born in Nazareth, Israel.

Have students move around the circles (the two circles moving in opposite directions), and introduce themselves to several classmates.

Following this activity, as a class, compile a list of the various places where students were born. Use maps of Ontario, Canada, and the world to
identify these locations, and attach the students' index cards to the maps, as appropriate.

Activity: Part Two
Explain to students that they will be collecting more detailed information about their family backgrounds in order to find out about their families’ origins.

Use the world map to share with students your own family origins. Talk about the countries from which your own family originated, and have students locate these countries on the world map.

Provide each student with a copy of the Letter to Family (A.2.1) and a copy of Activity Sheet: Investigating My Family’s Countries of Origin (A.2.2). Ask students to read the letter together with their parents or guardians, and then also complete the accompanying activity sheet together. In the first column of the activity sheet, have students record the name of the family member. In the second column, have them record that person’s relationship to them (e.g., mother, father, aunt, grandfather, first cousin). In the third column, have them record that person’s country of origin. Model this activity by using your own family as an example.

NOTE: Always consider the individual circumstances of students when assigning this task. Children in foster care, adopted children, those in blended families, and children with other extenuating circumstances should be given options should they need them for proceeding with the activity and deciding whom to include in their research.

Activity Sheet
Directions to students:
Work with your family to record information about your family’s origins (A.2.2).

Activity: Part Three
Once students have completed their research, come together as a class. Create another tally chart, this time including data on the origins of each member of each student’s family.

NOTE: To keep the numbers manageable, count each country only once for each student – do not count each family member separately. For example, one student may have four family members of Syrian origin, but that would represent only one tally point for the country of Syria on the tally sheet for that student.

Ask students the following questions about the data on the chart:
- What does this chart tell us?
- Which country has the largest number of people?
- Which country has the smallest number?
- What is the total count for each country shown on the tally chart?

Inform students that the information on the chart will be used to create a bar graph. Ask:
- What is a graph?
- What is a bar graph?
- What kinds of information do graphs show?
- How do we use graphs?

Discuss students’ prior knowledge of graphs, and seek out examples of graphs used in the classroom and in daily life.

Using a document camera, other available technology, or graph chart paper, draw the x and y axes for the bar graph. Ask:
- What information should go along the bottom of the graph? (country)

Identify this part of the graph as the x-axis, and record on this axis the names of the countries that are represented in the data. Ask:
What do you think should be on the y-axis of the graph? (number of students who have origins from a particular country)

Number the y-axis, using a scale from 0 to the largest number of tally marks. Complete the first few bars of the graph as a class. After you have done the first few bars, ask individual students to come up to mark the graph for a particular country of origin.

Now, have students work with partners to describe the information on the graph in various ways. Answers may include such types of statements as:

- More students in our class have Chinese backgrounds than other backgrounds.
- There is only one student in our class whose family comes from Italy.

Have student pairs share their statements with the class, and record these on chart paper.

**Assessment for Learning**

Observe students as they participate in the tally chart and graphing activities. Focus on their abilities to gather information using a tally chart; display the data on a bar graph; and analyze, interpret, and draw conclusions from the information presented. Use the Anecdotal Record sheet on page 18 to record results.

**Consolidate and Debrief**

As a class, determine how the information on the graph is different from, or the same as, the information presented on the tally chart about the origins of students’ surnames.

Explore the reasons for the differences or similarities in the sets of data. For example:

- A student’s surname may reflect the country of origin of only one parent.

A student may identify many cultures in his or her background, which may not be represented in the surname. For example, Robert Lewicki has a Ukrainian last name, but he also has English and Métis in his background.

Review the graph and, as a class, identify the success criteria for constructing a bar graph. For example, a bar graph should have:

- accurate title
- labelled axes
- labels for each bar
- calibrations on the y-axis
- space between two adjacent bars

Co-create an anchor chart to display in the classroom and to refer to during subsequent graphing activities.

**Assessment as Learning**

Have students share with their partners what they learned from doing this tally chart and graphing activity.

**Extending the Learning**

- Add new and important vocabulary from the lesson to the social studies word wall, along with related visuals and examples.
- Have students use their personal glossaries to record their activities, ideas, conceptual understandings, learning goals, and ongoing questions.
- Add to the class annotated map as new locations and related ideas are explored.
Letter to Family

Dear Parents/Guardians:

We have started a new social studies unit called “Changing Family and Community Traditions.” We need your help to develop and encourage a greater understanding for, and an appreciation of, a variety of cultures.

Over the next week, we will be looking at the different countries of origin of families of students in our class. We need some background information about countries of origin, and your son/daughter should use the accompanying activity sheet to record information about people in your family. A family member may include:

- parents/guardians
- brothers and/or sisters
- grandparents
- extended family members
- other significant people in the family

Instructions for completing the activity sheet:

- In the first column, record the name of the family member (e.g., Sue Kwan).
- In the second column, record the relationship to the family member (e.g., mother).
- In the third column, record the country of origin of the family member (e.g., China).

Please note that if all immediate family members are from Canada, your child may wish to include other relatives (e.g., great-great grandfather, great aunt) who came from a country other than Canada.

If you are of a First Nations background, identify the nation or community within Canada that you are from.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this activity, please contact me at the school.

Thank you in advance,
# Investigating My Family’s Countries of Origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Country or Place of Origin</th>
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