

WEDDING TRADITIONS IN DIFFERENT CULTURES

Goal:

- To get familiar with traditions performed at weddings of different cultures to prevent the culture shock or faux-pas

Before the class:

- Reading – send students reading about faux paux at weddings of different cultures and material about the most common problems in multicultural marriages
- Familiarize yourself with the presentation, make notes for yourself-what you really want to mention about the specific wedding customs, but be ready to answer random questions. This means do not study just facts you find interesting, go through the whole wedding ceremony.
- Prepare enough copies of worksheet below.

In the class (45 minutes):

1. Discussion – whole class discusses possible problems that might occur in multicultural families – in fields like family life, religion, parenting, partner's personality (use the slide of the presentation with topics so students do not have to remember what they should talk about) – 5 minutes
2. Presentation – with each culture there are questions first to let the students guess the right answer and then you tell them something about the wedding customs of the culture
 - a) China – choose which one of the customs is usually not practiced in China (c) – 5 minutes

- b) Jews - choose which one of the customs is usually not practiced by Jews (d) - 5 minutes
- c) Australia - choose which of the customs is of Australian origin (a), if you have the possibility, bring the gifts that are usually given to bride and groom in Australia, explain (symbols) and let students think of something they would give the newly-weds and what would be the meaning - 10 minutes
- d) Egypt - choose which of the customs is of Egyptian origin (b) - 5 minutes
- e) Bali - where is Bali? (b) - 5 minutes
- f) Hmong - what is Hmong? (b) - 5 minutes
- g) Worksheets - you will need to give one paper with the maps to each student (group) and cut out the names of the countries from the second paper, every group will be given small papers with one of every name of the country. Students are to match the custom with the name of the country, maps are there as a hint. The correct answers are in this order: China, Mauritania, Scotland, Korea, India, Ireland - 10 minutes

Extra:

- If you have too much time you can still add discussions about personal experience of your students, their opinions about presented weddings or even ask them to create such a presentation about one culture as homework. If you on the other hand do not have enough time, it is very easily possible to

separate this lesson into 2 or 3 classes, letting students discuss their opinions about each culture.

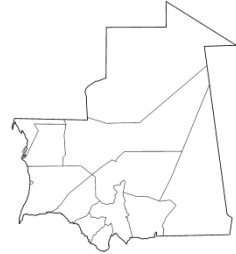
shooting the bride

Grooms shoot their future brides with a bow and arrow — albeit minus the arrowheads — three times. The groom then breaks the arrows to ensure the couple stay in love forever.



fat farms

Girls aged between five and 15 are sent to "fat farms" before their wedding to pile on the pounds. If a bride had stomach rolls, stretch marks and overlapping thighs, it signalled her husband was wealthy enough to keep her satisfied.



blackening of the bride

Brides-to-be are taken by surprise by their friends ahead of the big day, and pelted with all sorts of rubbish such as curdled milk, dead fish, spoiled food, tar and feathers. She is then tied to a tree and after taken for a night of drinking. The belief is that if she can withstand this kind of treatment, she can handle anything that comes her way in her marriage.



beating the groom's feet

The tradition dictates that the groom has his feet beaten with fish or a cane before his first night as a married man — to test his true strength and character.



marrying a tree

Women born as Mangliks (an astrological combination when Mars and Saturn are both under the 7th house), are apparently "cursed" and thought to be likely to cause their husband an early death. In order to counter this, they must first be married to a tree and the tree cut down to break the curse.



feet on the ground

The bride's feet must stay on the floor at all times when she and the groom are dancing. This is due to the belief that if they don't, evil fairies will come and sweep her away.



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