

Lesson Plan for “Voices of the Past” by Brenda Kay Ledford

published in the online anthology [Nobody’s Home: Modern Southern Folklore](#)

CCSS Standard(s): CCS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA R.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; W. 2, 3, 4, 5 ([ELA Anchor](#)) or alternately: CCS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.RH.11-12.1, 3, 6 ([Social Studies](#))

Objective(s): To consider one’s own culture objectively; to describe one’s own culture and surroundings for others who may have no connection to or experience with them

Essential Question(s): If someone knew nothing about my culture and how we live, what would I tell them?

Preparation for Teacher (Strategy and Purpose): Prepare instructional materials for a unit on [descriptive writing](#). Read “Voices of the Past” as an example of a descriptive essay about Ledford’s own culture in the Appalachian Mountains.

Preparation of Students (Strategy and Purpose): Because writing is primarily a form of communication and because reading involves receiving information, descriptive informational texts are prevalent and highly useful. The teacher should give direct instruction to students about descriptive writing.

In-class activities (recommended): Using the essay by Ledford, the teacher should ask students to consider features of their own culture that a newcomer might not know anything about. Students should begin by brainstorming and making lists, then plan and employ a process to write their essays independently rather than sharing their own examples, ideas, and experiences.

Lesson Follow-up (Recommendations): Students can bring in their finished descriptive essays and break into small-group discussions about each student’s choices for what to include or exclude.

Technology: SmartBoard, Elmo, other device for sharing the texts

Tiered Instruction/Intervention/Differentiation: Accommodations per needs, IEPs, or 504s

Assessment: Students will write descriptive texts about their own culture, explaining key features and cultural elements.

Homework: See assessment suggestion above.

Comments: Where it might be tempting to employ the writing process, which would include peer review, but in this case, it would be better to leave out that component, as students could be tempted to interject their own opinions about the writer’s content and choices.