

CRAFTS AND CULTURE AROUND THE WORLD

Information About the Instructor

Instructor Name: Dawn Frasier

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Instructor Bio: I was a homeschool mom - all grown-ups now. As a volunteer in those days, I led American Girls and Geography Clubs, taught Shakespeare, Research Writing, Tolkien, U.S. Constitution, Poetry and other classes, and edited several college applications and personal essays for homeschoolers. As a college instructor, I taught Ethics, Composition, Literature, Constitution & Society, and other courses. I have worn a couple of other hats professionally, including high school pastor and newspaper reporter in CA and here in Michigan. I'm also pretty 'crafty' in a number of areas and love to share these interests with kids.

Information About the Course

Description:

This is an introductory course for children, designed to expose them to the variety of cultures and land forms in our varied world, through fun, hands-on activities. We begin in the fall with Mexico, our neighbor, playing with a bit of Spanish (through song) & Mexican dance, working on crafty projects, like Mexican paper flowers, and - as with all the areas we explore - reading stories about children who live there and working on additions to our growing scrapbook/binders (flags, maps, pictures...). Japan follows (origami, watercolor painting, counting to 10 in speech and writing, etc.), then "Habitats of the World." Animals are the focus in various land groups, including tropical and northern forests, desert and sea. Australia is next: 'dot art' reminiscent of Aboriginal cave paintings, rain sticks and fun paper bag puppets are among the activities; Africa follows, as a continent of varied land forms and cultures - demonstrated through group map work and music-making (drum beats) and crafts ranging from Masai necklaces (paper-plate style) to fabric Abayomi dolls. We end with a quick intro to the varied physical geography of the U.S.

When young students come to class remembering where these countries and continents are located on the map, when they answer "No, we shouldn't put kangaroos on the map of Africa," when they recognize and use new vocabulary ("habitats," "coral reef"...), when they show other signs that they recognize that the earth's peoples have both similarities and differences, I believe they've made significant first steps in (what is, hopefully) a lifetime interest in the rich variety of cultures, creatures and land forms in our world.

Weekly breakdown:

1. Mexico: Varied activities, including map work, the introduction of a Spanish song (numbers and colors) and weaving (a craft shared by many cultures) of placemats.
2. Mexico: Varied activities, including the addition of the Mexican flag to our scrapbook binder.
3. Mexico: Varied activities, including crafting of Mexican paper flowers.

4. Japan: Varied activities, including map work and watercolor painting of Mount Fuji and cherry blossoms.
5. Japan: Varied activities, including origami ships for the Sea of Japan. and Japanese food tasting.
6. Japan: Varied activities, including Japanese flag and decorations for "Children's Day," a Japanese holiday.
7. Habitats: Varied activities centered around our scrapbook/binders, including "Desert" habitat page with sand painted background, cacti and rattlesnakes formed from clay, and other additions to habitat.
8. Habitats: Varied activities, including the design of tropical forest pages complete with animal stickers.
9. Australia: Varied activities, including koala and platypus paper bag puppets and the "Kookaburra" song.
10. Australia: Varied activities, including "Over in Australia" song and crafting rain sticks and binder additions (Australia map, Indian Ocean, Pacific Ocean).
11. Australia: Varied activities, including kangaroo cups, wombat and koala masks.
12. Africa: Varied activities, including paper Masai necklaces and beginning the Africa section of our scrapbook binders: animals in various African habitats.
13. Africa: Varied activities, including crafting Abayomi dolls.
14. Africa: Varied activities, including group work on large, 3-D map.
15. Regions of the U.S.: Varied activities, including intro to traditional American crafts and map work. (What states have you visited?)
16. Regions of the U.S.: Varied activities, including American habitat activities.
17. Regions of the U.S.: Varied activities, including regional puzzle activities.