

STORIES: HOW DID YOUR TRADITION COME TO BE?

SUGGESTED GRADE RANGE: K-12TH

Where did your family's traditions come from? Why are they important? How did they begin? Interview family members to learn about the history or stories behind traditions practiced in your family.

MATERIALS

- Pencil and paper
- StoryCorps App (optional) <https://storycorps.org/participate/storycorps-app/>

VOCABULARY

Tradition: a way of thinking, behaving, or doing something that has been used by the people in a particular group, family, society, etc., for a long time.

DIRECTIONS

Prewriting Activity

Think about a holiday tradition you participate in with your family that you want to learn more about. Write and/or draw a picture describing this tradition. Share your writing or drawing with a friend or with a small group.

Interview Question Brainstorm:

Brainstorm a list of interview questions to ask your family members. Choose four to six in-depth questions to ask a family member about the tradition you're investigating. Some good questions to ask family members are:

- What does this tradition mean to you?
 - Why is it important?
 - How long has this tradition been practiced in our family?
 - How has this tradition changed over time?
 - What do you remember about this tradition from when you were young?

Record Interviews:

Write your family members' responses down on an interview sheet or record an audio file or video file using a device at home.

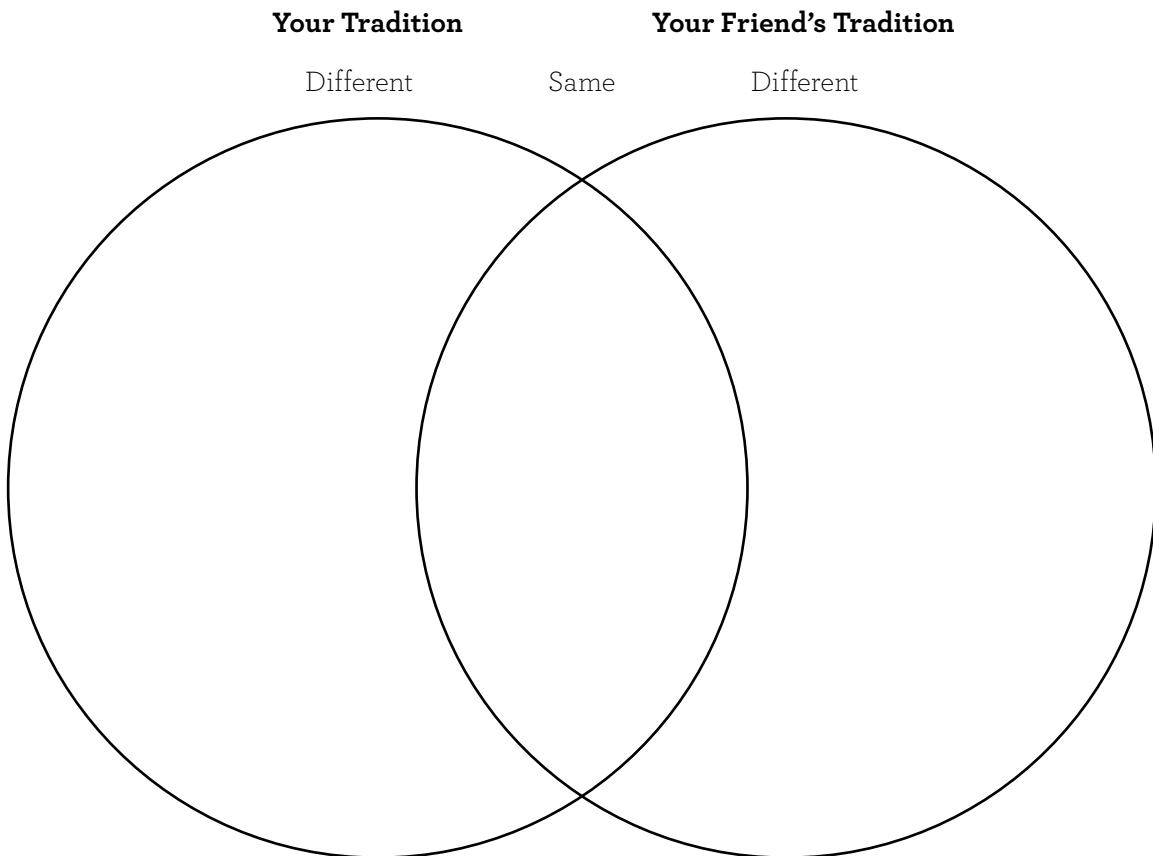


You can use the StoryCorps App to record your conversation with a family member and have it stored at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

<https://storycorps.org/participate/storycorps-app/>

Share Interviews:

Share what you learned about your tradition with a friend or classmate. How are the traditions they celebrate at home the same or different?



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Traditional Object Show and Tell (Social Studies, K-12)

Choose an object of significance in your home to share with a friend or a small group. Describe the object, its significance, and its history with your family. Ask other friends to share objects from their families too! How are they the same or different?

Explore Oral Histories (Social Studies, 6-12)

StoryCorps is a national oral history archive that preserves stories submitted by Americans. Why is it important to record oral histories? What can voices from the past tell us about our communities?

Do you have an oral history archive or museum in your area? Find an oral history archive or museum near you to explore voices from your community, or [search the StoryCorps archive by state](#) to hear voices from close to home.

Definition from Learner's Dictionary: <https://learnersdictionary.com/definition/ritual>



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