



## Celebrating Cultural Diversity

Grade Level: High School (Year 3 or 4, easily adaptable for Year 1 and 2)

Subject: English Language / Social Studies

Duration: 2 lessons

This lesson plan is designed to engage students in meaningful discussions about identity, diversity, and tolerance, using the provided video as a catalyst for deeper understanding and reflection. It aims to prepare students for an international project by fostering an open-minded and inclusive perspective, while also developing their listening comprehension skills.

### Objectives:

- 📖 Enhance students' understanding of cultural diversity and tolerance.
- 📖 Encourage students to reflect on their own identities and question stereotypes.
- 📖 Prepare students for participation in an international project by fostering an open-minded approach to diversity.
- 📖 Develop listening comprehension skills through gap-fill and true/false exercises.

### Materials:

- 📖 Video: Momondo - [The DNA Journey](#)
- 📖 Whiteboard/Markers
- 📖 Handouts with key discussion questions, gap-fill exercise, and true/false exercise
- 📖 Computers/Tablets with internet access (optional)

**Lesson Plan:****Introduction (10 minutes):**

**Hook:** Write the saying on the board: "An open world begins with an open mind."



Ask students what they think this means and how it relates to cultural diversity. (Write their ideas briefly on the board)

**Objective Overview:** Explain that today's lesson will explore the idea of identity and diversity through the lens of DNA and personal heritage, using a video as a starting point for discussion and exercises.

**Video Viewing (10 minutes):**

- ✚ Show the video: [The DNA Journey](#)
- ✚ Encourage students to take notes on key points and any emotions or thoughts that arise during the video.

**True/False Exercise:** After watching the video, students will answer true or false to statements based on the video content.

**True/False Statements:**








1. Jay's DNA test confirmed that he was 100% English. (False)
2. Jay discovered that he had relatives in multiple countries. (True)
3. Jay's journey made him feel less connected to other people. (False)

👉 Extra gap-fill activity can be used here (See: Optional, Task 2). Students can listen to the video again.

**Discussion** (20 minutes):

Group Activity: Divide the class into small groups and distribute the handout with discussion questions.

Questions for Discussion:

-  What were Jay's initial beliefs about his identity before taking the DNA test?
-  How did Jay's understanding of himself change after learning about his DNA results?
-  What surprised you the most about Jay's DNA results?
-  How can DNA testing challenge our perceptions of race, ethnicity, and nationality?
-  In what ways can understanding our genetic heritage help reduce prejudice and promote tolerance?
-  What does the saying "An open world begins with an open mind" mean to you in the context of this video?
-  How can we apply the lessons from Jay's journey to our own lives and our interactions with others?

**Class Discussion:** Reconvene as a whole class and have each group share their thoughts on one of the discussion questions.

*Suggested answers:*

*What were Jay's initial beliefs about his identity before taking the DNA test?*

*Jay initially believed that he was purely English. He had a strong sense of his national identity and assumed his ancestry was entirely from England.*

*How did Jay's understanding of himself change after learning about his DNA results?*

*After learning about his DNA results, Jay's understanding of himself broadened significantly. He discovered that his ancestry was far more diverse than he had thought, with genetic ties to multiple countries. This revelation expanded his sense of identity beyond just being English.*

*What surprised you the most about Jay's DNA results?*

*What surprised many viewers, including Jay, was the extent of his diverse heritage. The fact that he had connections to various parts of the world, including regions he had never considered, was unexpected and eye-opening.*

*How can DNA testing challenge our perceptions of race, ethnicity, and nationality?*

*DNA testing can challenge our perceptions of race, ethnicity, and nationality by revealing the complex and intertwined nature of our genetic heritage. It shows that people are often more connected to diverse populations than they realize, breaking down the simplistic notions of racial and ethnic purity and highlighting the shared humanity across different groups.*

*In what ways can understanding our genetic heritage help reduce prejudice and promote tolerance?*

*Understanding our genetic heritage can reduce prejudice and promote tolerance by highlighting the commonalities we share with people from different backgrounds. It can foster a sense of global*

*connection and empathy, as individuals realize that their own heritage is a mosaic of various cultures and ethnicities. This awareness can help break down stereotypes and encourage more inclusive attitudes.*

*What does the saying "An open world begins with an open mind" mean to you in the context of this video?*

*In the context of this video, the saying "An open world begins with an open mind" emphasizes the importance of being receptive to new information and perspectives. It suggests that by being open-minded about our own identities and the identities of others, we can create a more inclusive and understanding world. The video illustrates that embracing the complexity of our heritage can lead to greater acceptance and appreciation of cultural diversity.*

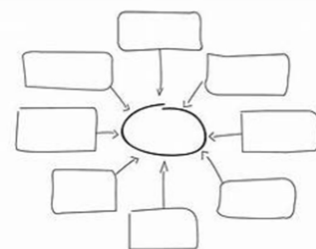
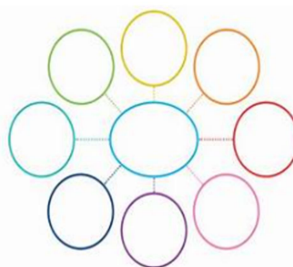
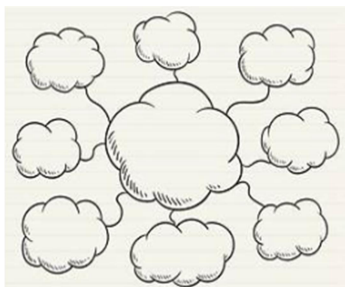
*How can we apply the lessons from Jay's journey to our own lives and our interactions with others?*

*We can apply the lessons from Jay's journey by being more open to learning about our own backgrounds and those of others. This involves questioning assumptions, seeking out diverse perspectives, and recognizing the interconnectedness of humanity. In our interactions with others, we can strive to be more empathetic, reduce prejudices, and celebrate the diverse contributions that different cultures bring to our global community.*

#### **Interactive Activity** (15 minutes):

**Reflective Writing:** Ask students (individuals or teams) to write an essay/a paragraph or journal entry on the topic: "Would you dare to question who you really are? How can understanding your own heritage and the heritage of others help create a more open world?"

- ✚ Create a Padlet, display the responses to the class using a projector, to make it more dynamic.
- OR
- ✚ Create a Mind map (in teams) – each student fills a cloud/bubble. You can create a paper poster to display in class or use [Canva](https://www.canva.com/).



Sharing: If time allows, invite a few students to share their reflections with the class.

*Suggested answer: Understanding your own heritage and the heritage of others can help create a more open world by fostering empathy, reducing prejudice, and promoting cultural exchange. When we learn about our own ancestry, we gain a deeper appreciation for our unique background and the diverse influences that shape who we are. This self-awareness encourages respect and pride in our heritage. Similarly, learning about the heritage of others broadens our perspective and helps us recognize the rich variety of human experiences. It highlights the interconnectedness of different*

*cultures and reveals shared histories and values. This mutual understanding breaks down stereotypes and dispels myths that often lead to discrimination and conflict. By appreciating the complexities of various cultural backgrounds, we become more inclusive and open-minded. This openness leads to more meaningful interactions, stronger communities, and a global society that values and celebrates diversity. Ultimately, understanding heritage—our own and others'—creates a foundation for a more empathetic, tolerant, and united world.*




### **Conclusion and Reflection (5 minutes):**

Summarize the key points from the discussion and the reflective writing, emphasizing the importance of open-mindedness in understanding cultural diversity.



**Exit Ticket:** Have students write a brief response to the question: "How can embracing diversity and understanding our shared humanity help us in an international project?"

*Suggested answers: Embracing diversity and understanding our shared humanity are crucial for the success of international projects, as they foster an environment of collaboration and innovation. By valuing diverse perspectives, team members can contribute unique ideas and solutions, leading to more creative and effective problem-solving. Cultural sensitivity and mutual respect enhance communication and reduce misunderstandings, ensuring that all voices are heard and integrated into the project. Understanding shared human experiences also builds empathy and trust among team members, creating a cohesive and supportive work environment. Additionally, leveraging diverse insights into global markets can refine strategies and enhance the project's relevance and impact. Ultimately, embracing diversity and recognizing our common humanity not only enriches the project but also strengthens professional relationships and promotes long-term, successful international collaboration.*

### **Assessment:**

-  Participation in group and class discussions.
-  Quality of responses on the discussion handout.
-  Reflective writing assignment.

### **Extension Activities:**

-  International Project Preparation: Have students research different countries and cultures they might encounter in the international project, focusing on customs, traditions, and common stereotypes.
-  Cultural Exchange: Set up a cultural exchange with a class from another country, where students can share their heritage and learn about others.

### **Optional**

### **Listening Exercises (10 minutes):**

1. **Gap-Fill Exercise:** Play the video again and have students fill in the blanks in the provided transcript. Example gaps might include key words and phrases that highlight Jay's journey and discoveries.

- 🚩 Jay believed he was purely \_\_\_\_\_.
- 🚩 The DNA test revealed that Jay had ancestry from \_\_\_\_\_ different countries.
- 🚩 Jay felt \_\_\_\_\_ when he discovered his diverse heritage.

*Correct Answers: English, multiple, surprised*

OR

## 2. Gap-fill:

1. The speaker expresses patriotism towards \_\_\_\_\_ (1) and \_\_\_\_\_ (2)
2. They mention attending a \_\_\_\_\_ (3) and wearing traditional \_\_\_\_\_ (4)
3. Express dislike towards \_\_\_\_\_ (5), \_\_\_\_\_ (6), \_\_\_\_\_ (7),  
and \_\_\_\_\_ (8)
4. Feel intrigued about taking a journey based on \_\_\_\_\_ (9)
5. Spit in a tube for DNA testing to uncover \_\_\_\_\_ (10)
6. Surprised by results revealing diverse heritage including \_\_\_\_\_ (11),  
\_\_\_\_\_ (12), \_\_\_\_\_ (13), and more
7. Reflect on the importance of knowing one's heritage to combat extremism and promote  
\_\_\_\_\_ (14)

*Correct Answers:*

- 1. Bangladesh; 2. Icelandic heritage; 3. Kurdish wedding; 4. Kurdish clothing; 5. Germans; 6. Indians;  
7. Pakistanis; 8. Turkish government; 9. DNA; 10. ancestry ; 11. British; 12. German; 13. Irish; 14. unity*

## 3. True/False Exercise: After watching the video, students will answer true or false to statements based on the video content.

- 🚩 Jay's DNA test confirmed that he was 100% English.
- 🚩 Jay discovered that he had relatives in multiple countries.
- 🚩 Jay's journey made him feel less connected to other people.

**Correct: F,T,F**

## 4. Extended version: True or false?

1. The DNA test results showed that Jay had no genetic ties to Africa.
2. Jay felt a strong connection to his newfound heritage after learning about his diverse ancestry.
3. The DNA test challenged Jay's previous notions about his cultural identity.
4. Jay's experience with the DNA test made him more open to other cultures.

5. Jay's DNA results indicated that he had some relatives from Asia.
6. Jay decided to travel to some of the countries where his ancestors were from after receiving his DNA results.
7. Jay's journey highlights the idea that we are all more connected than we might think.

**Correct: F, T, T, T, F, T, T**

**Extra pictures for discussion:**

