

## Young Audiences of Massachusetts Educational Materials

### About the Performance

Voci Angelica Trio presents an interactive educational program, “Passages”, for elementary and middle school children. Students learn about geography, the early history of human emigration, and the diverse cultures, languages and music of six continents. Voci Angelica performs its own arrangements of world folk music re-imagined for two voices, cello and percussion. Audiences become part of the experience: answering questions in a quiz-show format, creating body percussion to rhythmically infectious songs, and learning ancient dances.

**Instruments:** Cello, Djembe, Claves, Cuatro, Maracas, Shell Shaker, Tambourine Stick, Finger Cymbals, Doumbek

### LEARNING GOALS:

1. to reinforce geography studies through music
2. to show the history of early human migration
3. to promote cultural understanding through the music and languages of every continent inhabited by humans

### PRE-ACTIVITY SUMMARY: 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>

**CURRICULUM LINKS:** Geography, Social Studies, History, Science, Performing Arts

**LEARNING GOAL:** understand causes of migration and struggles that early humans faced

**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:** map of the world, computer for each child or projector attached to computer

**TIME:** 60 minutes

**STEP 1: Brainstorm** reasons for migration, both personal and general stories (ask if they have moved and why that happened, or if they come from a family immigrated recently), use the chart below to aid discussion

Causes of Migrations		
Causes of Migrations	Generic Examples of Causes of Migrations	Generic Global Effects of Migrations
<b>Environmental Changes</b>	Shift in climate, depletion of natural resources, drought, earthquake	Redistribution of world's population, blending of cultures
<b>Economic Pressures</b>	Increasing population, famine, unemployment	Shifts in population
<b>Political and Religious Persecution</b>	Slave trade, war, ethnic cleansing, repression	Dislocation and oppression of peoples, spread of ideas and religions
<b>Technological Development</b>	Tools, agriculture, iron smelting, communications and transportation networks	Development of civilizations and empires

**STEP 2: Visit** the following interactive map:  
<http://www.bradshawfoundation.com/journey/>

**STEP 3: Divide** into groups and assign a different time period on the map to each one. Have each group come up with a 5 minute kit to dramatize what happened to humans during this period.

**STEP 4: Perform** skits for the class.

### **POST-ACTIVITY SUMMARY: What is Culture?**

**CURRICULUM LINKS:** Social Science, English Language Arts

**LEARNING GOAL:** Students will understand the concept of culture. Students will learn about the cultures represented in the classroom. Students will make connections with their own cultures and cultures unfamiliar to them.

**MATERIALS/PREPARATION:** two sheets of poster paper, pencils, paper or blue book for each student, map, pins for the map, books and magazines with photos of homes around the world (or printed from the web), bulletin board

**TIME:** depends on number of activities

**TIPS FOR THE TEACHER:** Teachers can choose to do one or all activities, depending on how much time there is. Use the following link as a resource:  
<http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/Haffenreffer/documents/CultureConnectteacherpacketfinal.pdf>

#### **Activity 1 – Class Discussion: What is culture?**

**Step 1:** Initiate a class discussion about culture (What is culture? What are beliefs? What are values?) and ask your students to think of examples of each.

**Step 2:** From your discussion come up with a class definition of culture and write this on a large piece of paper and hang it in your classroom.

#### **Activity 2 – What are our Cultures?**

**Step 1:** Ask students to identify the different cultures to which they belong by asking their parents, grandparents, and/or guardians. Are there any cultural aspects of their ethnicity that are still practiced by their families. Try to have students think in broad categories like food, religion, wedding customs, etc.

**Step 2:** Have students list these on a piece of paper or in a blue book. Compile these into a class list on a large piece of paper. Pin country locations on a map to show all the different cultures represented in your classroom.

**Step 3:** Have students write an essay about their family's backgrounds and give presentations to the class.

### **Activity 3 – Homes Around the World**

Every human needs shelter, but our physical environment influences our culture, including the types of homes we construct and what we use to make them.

**Step 1: Search** for pictures of homes around the world in books and magazines or on the web. Ask the students to create a classroom collage of different homes on a bulletin board.

**Step 2: Consider** the following questions: Why are some homes made out of certain materials? Talk about the influences of the environment on culture and home construction. For example, why might a home in the mountains of Switzerland or Germany have a steeply pitched roof? (Snow) Why are so many homes in New England built using wood? What do all of our homes have in common? How are they different? Why?

### **Activity Four: Celebrations in Our Families and Around the World**

**Step 1:** As a class, discuss the different ways your students' families celebrate special days. What does each family do? How often do they celebrate or get together? What kinds of activities are done during this holiday? Have students bring in photographs or draw pictures of their family celebrations.

**Step 2:** Students can work individually or in teams to research one holiday that is celebrated in another culture. Have them write and illustrate a book about that holiday, addressing the following questions: What is the holiday? When is it? Is it the same time each year? How do people in that culture celebrate the holiday? What activities do they do? Do they eat special foods? Listen to special music? Play games?

### **ABOUT THE PERFORMERS:**

Re-imagining the boundaries of traditional folk music, Voci Angelica Trio's riveting arrangements of global songs from every continent leave audiences mesmerized.

Shimmering vocal harmonies intertwine with lush cello lines and vibrant percussion to create a musical fusion that transcends cultural divisions.

What started as a side project building on its members' diverse ethnic backgrounds has become a musical mission. More than just a performance group, Voci Angelica Trio is a humanitarian force promoting social justice and cultural understanding. "We believe that one of the best ways to pursue peace is to sing one another's songs," says trio member Jodi Hitzhusen. Meena Malik adds, "We see ourselves as musical ambassadors, using our performances to raise public awareness of diverse cultures and the issues they face."

The name "Voci Angelica" is Latin for "voices of angels." Latin is a root language from which many others grew, just as the Trio believes that every culture is rooted in

common desires. Aristides Rivas concludes, “Music goes beyond language, religion, and politics. It connects us to our humanity.”