Lesson 3
Cultural Identity

Lesson Focus Question
How does cultural diversity impact political identity?

Introduction
In this lesson students will examine how, as the nations of Europe evolved from independent states to a union of states (with the states retaining their individual sovereignty), challenges related to cultural and linguistic differences and the development of a sense of common identity have also been addressed. Students examine the concept of multiple political loyalties and how they are promoted through symbols, language, and education.

What’s the Big Idea?
☑️ The European Union and the United States are similar in that both political institutions serve a population that is culturally diverse. However, European and U.S. views on diversity have different goals. For example, the United States' motto “out of many, one” highlights the need for the array of immigrants from around the world to integrate. The European Union’s motto, “unity in diversity,” accepts national cultural differences while striving for the unity of Europe. Both institutions celebrate diversity in different ways and through different means.

☑️ Citizens of EU countries can travel, live, and work anywhere in the EU.
☑️ In daily life, the EU encourages and funds programs to bring citizens closer together, particularly in the fields of education and culture.

☑️ A feeling of belonging to the European Union will develop only gradually, through its tangible achievements and successes.

NCSS Themes Addressed
I – Culture
III – People, Places, and Environments
IV – Individual Development and Identity
V – Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
VI – Power, Authority, and Governance
IX – Global Connections
X – Civic Ideals and Practices

Knowledge
The student will know
- citizens can hold multiple political loyalties simultaneously.
- geography plays a role in cultural understanding.
- political symbols serve to unify people.

Core Skills
The student will be able to
1. compare similarities and differences.
2. construct tables.
3. use map scales to determine distance.
4. draw conclusions and make
Materials Needed

- Worksheet 1, *Political Symbols*
- Worksheet 2, *EU Program for Lifelong Learning*
- Worksheet 3, *Map of the Continental United States*
- Worksheet 4, *Map of Europe*
- Computer lab with Internet connectivity
- PowerPoint for Lesson 3

Time Needed to Complete this Lesson
One 55 minute class period

Procedures

**Activity 1 – Developing a European Identity**

1. Explain to students that, as students, they belong to many different groups at once. Ask students to list organizations of which they are members (e.g., their school soccer team, the Beta Club, their local church/synagogue/mosque, the scouts). Being a member of one group does not diminish their membership in another. For example, a person can be loyal simultaneously to their high school football team, the Panthers, as well as to the University of Georgia Bulldogs and the Buffalo Bills. They are not mutually exclusive.

The same is true of political memberships. As citizens of their town, county/parish, state, and nation, students hold multiple political loyalties. Being a good Atlantan, for example, makes one no less of a good Georgian or a good citizen of the United States. Since the beginning of our nation, people have chosen to move to the United States in search of political, economic, and religious freedom. Originally this political socialization into U.S. society was referred to as the “melting pot”; today we talk about the socialization as a “salad bowl”. The immigrants do not relinquish their culture by “blending in” to U.S. society; they are like ingredients in a tossed salad…part of the whole, but maintaining their individuality.

2. Europe is the ancestral home to millions of citizens of the United States who immigrated. Historically, France has been home to the French, Germany has been home to the Germans, and Italy home to the Italians, and so forth. People’s loyalties were to their city, their region and their nation. Today, these diverse peoples are also learning to develop a political loyalty to Europe as a whole. In an effort to help this process and to assist with the transition, the European Union adopted symbols for a unified Europe. Ask students to brainstorm a list of the types of symbols that could be used to develop a sense of loyalty to a political entity (e.g., flag, national anthem, motto, national holiday, pictures of people and...
buildings on a national currency, speaking a common language). Introduce students to some of the symbols recently created to foster a European loyalty by having them complete the *Political Symbols* Worksheet, explaining the symbolism of each. The supporting website will provide students an opportunity to listen to a recording of the European anthem. Without words, in the universal language of music, this anthem expresses the ideals of freedom, peace and solidarity for which Europe stands.

Note to teacher: explain that the EU symbols (flag, anthem, motto) are a sensitive issue for some governments and the Lisbon Treaty does not contain an Article on them. In preparing the Reform Treaty, later known as the *Treaty of Lisbon*, the Member States decided to remove references to the EU symbols in an attempt to move away from the constitutional concept and because some Member States thought the flag would be too "federalist". However, 16 EU Member States decided to annex to the Lisbon Treaty a declaration reaffirming that

> ... the flag with a circle of 12 golden stars on a blue background, the anthem based on the “Ode to Joy” from the Ninth Symphony by Ludwig van Beethoven, the motto “United in Diversity”, the euro as the currency of the European Union and Europe Day on 9 May will for them continue as symbols to express the sense of community of the people in the European Union and their allegiance to it.

In Washington DC the Member States embassies fly the EU flag alongside their national flags. EU institutions fly the 27 country and EU flags together at their headquarters.

**Activity 2 – Cultural Diversity**

3. Ask students to hypothesize as to why the development of a common EU identity is a challenge for Europe. To help students grasp this concept, distribute copies of the *Map of the Continental United States* Worksheet to half the class and copies of the *Map of Europe* Worksheet to half the class. Ask students to use the scale of miles on the map to draw two circles on their map. The first circle should extend 500 miles from St. Louis (or 500 miles from Prague). The second circle should extend 1,000 miles from the same city.

4. Ask students to make a list of observations about the cultural diversity found within each pair of circles. For example, what challenges are posed by traveling 500 miles east of Prague as compared to traveling 500 miles east of St. Louis? Students should conclude that there is far more cultural diversity within a 500 mile radius from Prague than there is from St. Louis. Because of the proximity of diverse cultures in Europe, contrasted with the relative ethnic homogeneity within the United States, cultural differences are more pronounced. One obvious reaction within Europe is the requirement that students learn two or three languages, beginning in about the 6th grade, in addition to learning their own...
language.

Unlike the United States, which is a nation formed by immigrants, Europe is a collection of nations that speak different languages and are ruled by different types of democratic governments, some of which use different currencies. Europeans have many centuries of ancestral, cultural, and historical ties to their homeland.

5. Speaking a foreign language is useful for many purposes — studying abroad, travel, business contacts, and international friendship — and it opens up all sorts of job opportunities. That is why the European Union encourages citizens to learn other languages in addition to their mother tongue. A clear majority of Europeans (56%) say they can hold a conversation in one foreign language. Of these, some can speak two or even three foreign languages. However, 44% of Europeans know no language other than their mother tongue. Hyperlink: Percentage of people who can hold a conversation in a language other than their mother tongue (2005)

The languages most commonly used by non-native speakers are English, French, and German. Hyperlink: Percentage of pupils in upper secondary level general education who are learning English, French, or German as a foreign language (2006)

Increasing numbers of young people are following educational courses in European countries other than their home country. Erasmus is an important EU-funded program which enables university-level students and teachers to spend a year in another EU country. More than a million students have taken part in it since it began in 1987. This scheme has now gone global with the launch, in 2004, of Erasmus Mundus. Separately from Erasmus, nearly half a million students are studying at any one time in another EU country. The figures are set out in the table. Hyperlink: Students from one EU country studying in another, by host country (in thousands), EU-27 (2005)

Handout 1, EU Programs for Lifelong Learning, describes different education programs run by the EU, and one in partnership with the U.S., to facilitate cross-cultural understanding. Conclude this lesson by asking students to discuss the question “What challenges face people from one country traveling to another country to study, even within the borders of the EU?”

Web Support:

EU Focus on Emerging European Identity

EU Insight-Intercultural Dialogue
EU Insight on Academic Mobility

Summary/Review – To review the key points of this lesson, show students the PowerPoint presentation.

Assessment

1. What is the motto of the European Union that describes the philosophy of multiculturalism?
   A. “out of many, one”
   B. “celebration of cooperation”
   C. “unity in diversity” *
   D. “one for all, all for one”

2. What is the most widely spoken language in the European Union?
   A. English *
   B. French
   C. German
   D. Russian

3. What is the Erasmus program?
   A. elementary education program
   B. university student international study program *
   C. high school course in unified European History
   D. technology application for the college Smart Board
Political Symbols

Directions: Political and cultural symbols usually serve as a unifying force on a group of people. Sometimes, symbols (or a lack of symbols) can have a negative effect. Complete the table below using information at that [webpage](#) and explain how this symbol has a positive or negative (or both) effect on people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect on Citizens (positive and/or negative)</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>European Union</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flag Symbolism</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Flags have a positive effect on building a national identity. The flag is usually displayed at public buildings, civic events, sporting events, etc., building a common identity.</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>The flag of the United States consists of thirteen red and white stripes, each representing one of the 13 colonies/states and a field of blue that contains 50 stars representing each of the current 50 states in the Union.</td>
<td>The national anthem, usually played in the connection with the flag, stirs patriotic emotions and has a positive effect on the creation of a common identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>European Union</td>
<td>The European flag is the symbol not only of the European Union but also of Europe's unity and identity in a wider sense. The circle of gold stars represents solidarity and harmony between the peoples of Europe. The number of stars is not related to the number of Member States. There are twelve stars because the number of twelve is traditionally the symbol of perfection, completeness and unity. The flag therefore remains unchanged regardless of EU enlargements.</td>
<td>The Star-Spangled Banner is the national anthem of the United States. The words are Francis Scott Key's description of a War of 1812 Battle in Baltimore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The flag was originated by the Council of Europe and was later adopted by mutual agreement for use by the EU institutions in 1986.</td>
<td>Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Ode to Joy, for the final movement of this symphony, Beethoven set to music the &quot;Ode to Joy&quot; written in 1785 by Friedrich von Schiller.</td>
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**Political Symbols**

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<td>Celebration of a national holiday in recognition of the “birthday” of the nation has a positive effect and is an annual reminder of continuity of the nation and builds a sense of common identity.</td>
<td>The Declaration of Independence of the 13 British colonies was signed on July 4, 1776 and is celebrated as the beginning of the United States of America as an independent nation.</td>
<td>“E pluribus unum” (Latin for “out of many, one”) refers to the United States as a nation of immigrants from across the globe living together as a single nation.</td>
<td>US currency features national leaders on the front and prominent federal buildings and monuments on the reverse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not as well known as other national symbols, the national motto captures in words rather than a symbol the central idea of the composition of the nation. Culturally it has a positive effect on developing a common identity.</td>
<td>“United in diversity” is the motto of the EU. Europeans are united in working together for peace and prosperity, and that the many different cultures, traditions, and languages in Europe are a positive asset for the continent.</td>
<td>The Euro bank notes have color images of windows and doorways on the front symbolizing openness and transparency; the reverse has images of bridges symbolizing connectedness. None of the windows, doorways or bridges actually exists in Europe, but they are symbolic of the types of architecture found across the continent.</td>
<td>As of Jan. 1, 2010, 17 out of 27 Member States will be using Euro currency.</td>
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<td>European Union</td>
<td>There are 23 different official languages spoken in the European Union (Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, Gaelic, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovene, Spanish, Swedish) note: German is the most widely spoken mother tongue - over 19% of the EU population; English is the most widely spoken language - about 49% of the EU population is conversant with it (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>English 82.1%, Spanish 10.7%, Indo-European 3.8%, Asian and Pacific island 2.7%, other 0.7% (2000 census) note: Hawaiian is an official language in the state of Hawaii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Note:</strong></td>
<td>Speaking a common language contributes to the sense of commonality and is positive. In the case of the EU, this can be an obstacle. As a collection of culturally different nations, there is not one official language, but 23. However, the most common language is English and people study it in schools.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<th>Passport</th>
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<td>European Union</td>
<td>The EU does not issue passports. Passports are issued by member states. However, an EU Member State passport or national ID card allows citizens to travel without a visa among the 27 member countries. As the EU’s internal borders dissolve, controls at the external frontiers are being strengthened. In the Schengen Area (now includes 25 nations and continues to enlarge) EU residents and visitors are free to travel without passport checks, although individuals can be asked to prove their identity. The current Schengen members include non-EU countries Iceland and Norway, and all but five of the EU countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>A US passport is not needed to travel within the 50 U.S. states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Note:</strong></td>
<td>A passport is also a political symbol that promotes a common political entity. For all 27 EU Member States, there is a single European Union passport, just as with the 50 states in the U.S.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## EU Programs for Lifelong Learning*

*estimated participation, 2007–2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area Concerned</th>
<th>Name of EU Program</th>
<th>Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>School education</strong></td>
<td><strong>Comenius</strong></td>
<td>5% of schoolchildren in the European Union are participating in joint educational activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Higher education</strong></td>
<td><strong>Erasmus</strong></td>
<td>The original Erasmus program offers scholarships for European university students to study abroad in a European country other than their own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Erasmus Mundus</strong></td>
<td>The Erasmus Mundus program promotes the mobility of students and academics between European and non-European institutions, including the U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocational training</strong></td>
<td><strong>Leonardo da Vinci</strong></td>
<td>Every year 80,000 people will be able to undertake traineeships in companies and training centers in another European country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EU – US cooperation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Atlantis</strong></td>
<td>Provides 4-5 year grants for institutions that develop projects that promote mutual understanding, cooperation and quality in higher education and training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To encourage cross-cultural experiences with young people, university students have opportunities to study in other nations as a benefit of being European. This will continue to have a positive impact on developing a common European culture as more and more people not only travel across the continent, but live and learn in the different countries/cultures.

**Challenge Question:** *What challenges face people traveling from one country to another in order to study, even within the EU member nations?*
Map of the Continental United States

Directions: Use the scale of miles to draw two circles – one 500 mile radius from St. Louis, and a second with a 1,000 mile radius from St. Louis. Describe the cultural variations within each circle.
Map of Europe

Directions: Use the scale of miles to draw two circles – one 500 mile radius from Prague, Czech Republic, and a second with a 1,000 mile radius from Prague. Describe the cultural variations within each circle.