

## H-6: Multicultural Week things to avoid

### Things to Avoid

- Avoid concentrating on the exotic and curious, rather than the everyday. Avoid focusing on 'costumes' rather than clothes.
- Avoid using generalist terms of reference e.g. 'African dancer; 'African drummer'—what is the equivalent-European dancer; European drummer? Avoid implying Africa is a country rather than a continent-there are 54 diverse countries in Africa. The continent of Africa is so big it could contain the whole of Europe, USA and China within its land mass.
- Avoid presenting other cultures, especially the so called 'third world' as homogenous-there are vast geographical, political and economic differences within and between countries.
- Avoid a 'them' and 'us' approach e.g. 'they do this' while 'we do this'; or portraying people over there ('them') as existing to provide 'us' tea, coffee, sugar, cocoa, bananas etc. rather than in their own right.
- Avoid implying that technology (e.g. computer games and automated industries) are what makes a country 'developed' –implying that 'they' just have to catch up with us and 'they' will be developed.
- Avoid emphasising poverty. There are rich and poor in all countries.
- Avoid focusing on disasters-implying that 'we' are the ones who will rescue 'them'. Avoid presenting poverty as inevitable as opposed to discussing the fundamental causes –international economics and politics. (Poor countries are poor often because of their current unequal relationships with rich countries).

Adapted from World Studies 8 - 13 Oliver & Boyd

A Culture week can be a 'way in', but it is important to use it as a way of moving on to explore deeper issues. Generate reflection and discussion with such questions as:

*'If someone from this culture walked through our town, or moved in to live next door to you-what range of reactions would they get?'*

*'If someone from this culture was an asylum seeker, how would they be treated in Cumbria?'*