

4: Unity Versus Diversity

Ancient World History

CLASS TIME

One to two 45- to 50-minute sessions

OBJECTIVES

Students will analyze how the 50 State Quarters® Program represents both the diversity and unity of the United States. They will identify human and physical geographic characteristics of Roman culture from Roman coins and examine how Roman emperors used coins to help unify their empire.

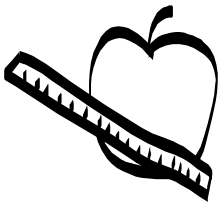
NATIONAL STANDARDS

The standards used for these lesson plans reference the “10 Thematic Standards in Social Studies” developed by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS).

- **Culture**—Articulate the implications of cultural diversity, as well as cohesion, within and across groups.
- **People, Places, and Environment**—Examine, interpret, and analyze physical and cultural patterns and their interactions, such as land use, settlement patterns, cultural transmission of customs and ideas, and ecosystem changes.
- **Power, Authority, and Governance**—Describe the ways nations and organizations respond to forces of unity and diversity affecting order and security.

MATERIALS

- Copies of the “American Diversity” chart (1 per student)
- Copies of the “Quarter Designs” sheet on page 71 (1 per student)
- Chalkboard
- Chalk
- A reserved computer lab with Internet access
- Several Web sites with information about coins originating from the Roman Empire, such as those available at:
 - www.beastcoins.com/LRE/LRE.htm
 - www.romancoins.info/
 - www.usask.ca/antiquities/coins/coins_index.html
- Copies of the “Roman Diversity” chart (1 per student)
- Copies of the “Circulating Coin Images” sheet on page 73 (1 per student)



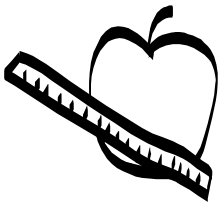
Unity Versus Diversity

TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- The United States Mint 50 State Quarters® Program
- Obverse (front)
- Reverse (back)
- Unity
- Diversity
- Human and physical geographic characteristics
- United States Mint

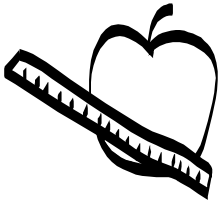
PROCEDURES

1. Distribute one “American Diversity” chart and one “Quarter Designs” page to each student.
2. Explain the 50 State Quarters Program to students and provide definitions for obverse and reverse. Introduce today’s activity by explaining to the students that they will be examining a few of the quarters in order to understand how the coins of a nation can provide information about its culture.
3. Direct students to work in pairs to examine ten of the new quarter designs and record on the chart the human and physical geographic characteristics they observe. Model the first example on the chart with your students. If necessary, explain the distinction between physical geography and human geography.
4. Allow an appropriate amount of time for students to finish filling in their charts.
5. Discuss student responses. Ask students to analyze their chart for patterns. Allow students to share their observations. If necessary, include the idea that the new quarters reflect many different aspects of American culture and heritage. Ask students if any of the new quarters could represent a national coin for the United States. Have students back up their responses with justifiable reasons. Guide students to respond that most of the new quarter reverses represent one region’s culture and history, making them less-likely choices for a national coin.
6. Direct students to now closely examine the obverse of a new quarter, pointing out the phrase “E Pluribus Unum.” Explain that this image and phrase is found on all American coins and it means “Out of many, one.” Ask students why they think this phrase is on all of the quarters. If necessary, explain to students that this motto lends itself to the value we as Americans place on our distinct regional identities and our unified national identity.
7. Lead a class discussion on why it is important that the quarters reflect both the unity and diversity of the United States. Ask students to discuss how the new quarter designs accomplish this. Guide students to respond that the obverses show common national symbols and the reverses display the individual states’ cultures and histories.



Unity Versus Diversity

8. Challenge students to generate a list of other countries that also currently celebrate unity and diversity on their currency. If necessary, introduce the idea that the euro honors individual countries' cultures while simultaneously creating a common Western-European currency.
9. Ask students if they can think of other civilizations in the past that have used currency to celebrate diversity. Guide students to respond that the Roman Empire was one of these civilizations. If necessary, explain to students that the Roman Empire was also a land of great diversity with many regions.
10. Review with students the areas that the Roman Empire controlled at its height (most of Europe, North Africa, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Syria, etc.).
11. Introduce the next activity by explaining to students that they will examine several Roman coins in order to answer the following questions (written on the board):
 - What do the geographic characteristics reveal about the culture of the Roman empire?
 - What evidence of Roman unity is found on the coins?
12. Visit the school computer lab with your class.
13. Distribute one "Roman Diversity" chart to each student and direct students in pairs to use a variety of Web sites to search for 10 different Roman coins to examine. Students should record their observations on the "Roman Diversity" chart.
14. Allow an appropriate amount of time for students to complete their research.
15. Direct student pairs to join with one other pair of students to share their information and add to their charts additional examples of diversity within the Roman Empire.
16. As a whole class, use student responses to create a class chart on the chalkboard listing human and physical geographic characteristics of the Roman Empire. Ask students to discuss what they noticed about the diversity of the Roman Empire. Guide students to respond that they found evidence of various animals, gods, plants, occupations, locations, etc. Ask students to discuss what evidence they found of unity within the Roman Empire. Students should respond that coins often have the same emperor's image on one side of the coin, even though the other side is different. Ask students why they think emperors minted coins with their own images once they came to power. Guide students to respond that the coins were used to establish an emperor's power and to give the image of holding the whole empire under his control.
17. Distribute one "Circulating Coin Images" page to each student. Ask students to identify any symbols or images that look similar to ones they found on coins minted during the Roman Empire. Guide students to respond that they see an olive branch, oak leaves, etc. Discuss with the students why these images might still be important symbols of unity and/or diversity today.



Unity Versus Diversity

18. Assign students homework in which they will need to research the meanings and backgrounds of these classical symbols and then write a complete paragraph summary.

EXTENSION

Have students design their own coins, representing their middle school (obverse) and their grade or team (reverse). Hang the coins in the classroom as a reminder of the importance of unity and diversity.

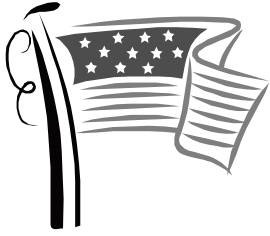


NAME _____

American Diversity Chart

GEOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

STATE COIN	HUMAN CHARACTERISTICS	PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS



NAME _____

Roman Diversity Chart

GEOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

COIN, EMPEROR, &/OR REGION	HUMAN CHARACTERISTICS	PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS