**“School-gymnasium №87 named after Abai Kunanbayev” Astana**



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**Discovering English: Language through Culture**

Language and culture are deeply interconnected, with one often serving as a gateway to understanding the other. The elective course, "Discovering English: Language through Culture," is designed for eighth-grade students to explore the richness of the English language through its cultural roots, expressions, and practices. This innovative approach not only enhances language skills but also fosters a broader perspective on the diverse world we live in.

Why Learn Language through Culture?

Traditional methods of teaching English often focus solely on grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. While these elements are essential, they can feel detached and monotonous when taught in isolation. By incorporating culture into the learning process, students gain a deeper, more engaging experience. They see language not just as a set of rules but as a living, breathing entity shaped by history, society, and creativity.

Culture provides the context that makes language meaningful. For example, idiomatic expressions like "spill the beans" or "break the ice" reflect cultural norms and practices. Understanding these phrases goes beyond mere translation; it requires insight into the traditions and stories that gave rise to them. Similarly, examining literature, music, films, and festivals from English-speaking countries allows students to see how language evolves and adapts to various cultural settings.

Course Objectives

The primary goal of the "Discovering English: Language through Culture" course is to make language learning an immersive and enjoyable experience. The course focuses on:

1. Cultural Awareness: Introducing students to the traditions, customs, and values of English-speaking countries, including the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, and more.
2. Language Skills Development: Strengthening listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills through culturally enriched materials.
3. Critical Thinking: Encouraging students to analyze and compare cultural elements, fostering empathy and global awareness.
4. Creativity and Expression: Providing opportunities for students to express themselves through role-play, storytelling, and creative writing inspired by cultural themes.

Course Structure

The course is organized into thematic units, each focusing on a specific aspect of culture. Here are some examples:

* Festivals and Celebrations: Exploring holidays such as Thanksgiving, Diwali, and Christmas, and their associated customs and vocabulary.
* Pop Culture: Learning English through popular music, movies, and television shows, which showcase contemporary slang and expressions.
* Literary Heritage: Delving into classic works by authors like Shakespeare, Mark Twain, and Maya Angelou to understand the historical and cultural context of their writing.
* Everyday Life: Examining cultural norms, food habits, and daily routines in different English-speaking regions.

Interactive Learning Methods

To keep students engaged, the course employs a variety of interactive teaching methods:

* Project-Based Learning: Students create presentations on topics such as "The Evolution of English" or "Cultural Symbols in British Literature."
* Multimedia Resources: Using videos, podcasts, and songs to illustrate cultural nuances and enhance listening skills.
* Cultural Immersion Activities: Hosting events like "English Tea Time" or organizing virtual tours of iconic landmarks.

Benefits for Students

By the end of the course, students will have not only improved their English proficiency but also gained a richer understanding of the diverse cultures that shape the language. This dual benefit prepares them for global citizenship, equipping them with both linguistic skills and cultural intelligence.

"Discovering English: Language through Culture" opens doors to new worlds, making language learning a transformative journey. It’s more than just an elective; it’s an invitation to explore, connect, and grow.