

Lesson 4 (Part 1). Exploring Visual Culture Through Food Wrappers

HAND OUT

As we look at the world around us, exploration of cultural artifacts and visual culture can help us read and understand our world. Consider the essential questions:

- How do artifacts and characteristics of culture influence your life?
 - What are artifacts of your culture, such as images, music, food, clothing, ceremonies, or pop culture icons?
 - What do artifacts of culture suggest about cultural characteristics? (For instance, if an artifact is a protein bar, what does this demonstrate about culture? Does it suggest that our culture needs protein or is obsessed with body image?)
 - How do you imagine these artifacts and characteristics of culture will continue to influence your life in the future?

Activity 1: Defining Culture

As a team, develop a response to the following questions and post it in our online class space:

- What is culture? What is American culture?
- What characteristics are important to culture?
- How might these questions be important to our reading of literature and our world?

Activity 2: Food Wrapper Analysis

Look at the wrapper and identify what it tells us about the culture the wrapper is from. In a group document, write down everything you might assume about this culture by looking at these wrappers.

- What kind of assumptions does this document make of its audience?
- What are you expected to know when you look at this?
- What sort of legal, safety, or other presumptions does this make?
- What does it tell us about business in that culture? Systems of measurement in that culture? Technology in that culture?

Activity 3: Arguments About Visual Culture

Based on our work with exploring ideas related to culture, we can make some general arguments about visual culture. We will look at a slide presentation, adapted from

(Continued)

(Continued)

Danielle DeVoss at Michigan State University, as a way to think about how images and culture connect. Consider these questions as you view the slides:

- How do you define culture? Why do you define culture in this way? What value is there in defining culture?
- What are some of the factors that influence culture? Why are these significant?
- How does the changing nature of texts impact culture? How do digital spaces impact culture? What impact does that have on your understanding about culture?
- What texts do you consume? What texts do you produce? How would you define a “prosumer” culture? How are you a part of that culture?
- How is meaning made in a culture? How are visuals a part of culture?
- What role do remixing, remaking, and rehashing have in how we define culture?