

## Introduction

### Description

This program consists of three parts. Each part is designed as a sequence to introduce students to interfaith dialogue through the use of the “Cincy Celebrations: 2020 Multi-Faith Calendar of Religious Holidays and Observances” mentioned hereafter at the Multi-Faith Calendar. Each part of the program can also be used on their own to supplement existing lessons on diversity, or to create a classroom atmosphere of inclusion and curiosity about the other. This program can be run in a school setting or in summer camps, after-school programs, or even sports teams; anywhere that students are creating diverse mini-communities. Additionally, this program was designed with fifth graders in mind, but can be used or adapted to a wide range of ages.

The first part is a scavenger hunt which introduces learners to the Multi-Faith Calendar and gets them to begin reading about traditions other than their own. The second program is the creation of a community calendar, which allows learners to feel represented in their communal space. The third program is the creation of videos which allow students to speak about their own traditions.

### Enduring Understandings:

- Learning about one another’s faith traditions helps us become a stronger community.
- Each person’s traditions should be represented and respected equally.
- The expression of basic religious pluralism continues to define America.

### Essential Questions:

- How can I educate myself on faith traditions other than my own?
- Why is it important to share about diverse faith traditions with one another?
- How can I make my community more open to diverse faith traditions?

### Goals

**Knowing** → Participants will know more about holidays and observances other than their own.

**Doing** → Participants will learn how to use the Multi-Faith Calendar.

**Believing** → Participants will believe that their own holidays and observances are not the only ones that should be recognized.

**Belonging** → Participants will feel more connected to people in their community who observe different holidays and observances.

## **Part 1: Multi-Faith Calendar Scavenger Hunt**

### *00:00-00:10 Introduction*

Ask the participants for an understanding of the word “diversity.” They should come up with a definition similar to the following: diversity is the existence of difference. Ask the participants for a list of different kinds of diversity that can be found in a community. Examples may include: skin color, hair color, ethnic background, age, gender, and religion. Explain that in this program, they will be focusing on learning about religious diversity in their communities.

The participants can either be split up into pairs or small groups, depending on the number of laptops or tablets available. Preferably, there should be no group with more than 3 participants. Then, assign each group a different month in the calendar. Explain that they will be given a scavenger hunt list to find and discuss in the calendar, and that they will be sharing information about the holidays they found to the larger group at the end of the activity.

### *00:10-00:20 Split into Groups*

Make sure each group has a scavenger hunt list, a writing utensil, a way to access the calendar (laptop or tablet), and assign them a month.

### *00:20-00:35 Scavenger Hunt*

Learners will fill out the information on the scavenger hunt worksheet (see attachment). Make sure to give the groups a five-minute warning before the end.

### *00:35-00:40 Regroup*

Tell all the small groups to come together, preferably sitting in a circle with the members of each small group next to each other.

### *00:40-00:55 Sharing and Discussion*

Have each small group share one of the things they found on the list and explain about that holiday. Then, ask the participants about what they learned about religious diversity based on this activity (follow up questions: What do you think religious diversity means now? Why should we learn about different traditions? What do you think it’s like for someone when their peers don’t know much about their holidays? How much did you think you knew about other traditions before and after this activity?).

## **Multi-Faith Calendar Scavenger Hunt Clues**

Instructions: For each item on the list, find it in the calendar and write at least one sentence about the holiday or tradition.

1. Something new you learned about a holiday that you heard of before.
2. A holiday that at least one person in your group knows of and another person does not know of.
3. A holiday from a faith tradition you never heard of before.
4. A holiday you never heard of before from a faith tradition you know about.
5. A holiday that someone might miss school for.
6. A holiday that involves a dietary restriction of fasting.
7. A holiday with a greeting you have not heard of before.
8. For each person in the group, find a holiday that they observe.
9. A holiday that no one in your group has heard of before.
10. A holiday that everyone in your group has heard of before.

## **Part 2: Creating a Community Calendar**

### *00:00-00:10 Introduction*

If the group has not done the introduction of part 1, begin with the discussion on defining diversity and introducing the concept of religious diversity.

Explain that the participants will be creating a calendar specific to their own community, including all of the different holiday observances celebrated by people in the room.

### *00:10-00:15 Research*

In pairs or small groups depending on the number of laptops and tablets available, the students will use the Multi-Faith Calendar to find the dates of the holidays that they observe. Each group of students will use the Research Sheet (see attachment) to fill out their data. This can include holidays that are not listed in the Multi-Faith calendar; make sure that students know if they are allowed to go to other websites to research these dates, or if they need help from an adult to do so.

### *00:15-00:35 Construction Phase*

Each group will construct one or more months of the calendar. Give each group one piece of construction paper per month, and they should use the Multi-Faith Calendar to draw the dates for their month on the paper. Then, they should use their Research Sheet to write down the names of any holidays that they listed on the correct dates, as well as the holiday greeting if it is applicable. The groups rotate so that they can write down holidays in other months. Tell them that it's ok if someone already wrote down the name of a holiday that they observe. If you choose to do so, you may also invite students to write their birthdays in the calendar; however, be aware that in some faith traditions, birthdays are not celebrated.

### *00:35-00:45 Sharing*

Gather the participants together and ask them the following: What did you learn about putting a calendar of many different traditions together? Did you find all of your holidays listed in the Multi-Faith Calendar or did you have to research some? Why is it that some holidays are on the same date every year and some holidays always fall on different days?

Display the current month in the room. Have students explain a little about the different holidays for that month, and explain that each month, the group will look at the upcoming holidays and explain their observances to one another.

If you have permission from the parents of the participants, please share the videos with the Multi-Faith Calendar so that we can share more perspectives on these holidays and observances.

## Community Calendar Research Sheet

Instructions: In groups, look through the Multi-Faith Calendar to find holidays that each member of the group observes. List the holidays and their dates on this page, as well as any holiday greetings that go with it. After you go through every month of the calendar, if you have a holiday that is not on the calendar, write it here as well and research its date for the upcoming year.

| Holiday | Date | Greeting |
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### Part 3: "My Traditions" Videos

### *00:00-00:10 Introduction*

If the group has not done the previous two parts, begin with the introduction from part 1 on defining diversity and introducing the concept of religious diversity.

Explain that the participants will be creating videos to add to the Multi-Faith Calendar based on their own experiences. Ask if they know the difference between third-person and first-person narration, and explain it if they do not (“they” versus “I”). Although the Multi-Faith Calendar is from the third-person perspective, their videos will be from the first-person perspective. This is important because not everyone observes holidays or traditions in the same way, so it is important to speak about their own perspectives instead of assuming that all people of their tradition do the same thing. The purpose of these videos is to share a diversity of perspectives, even within the same faith tradition.

### *00:10-00:20 Calendar Research*

Split the participants into pairs or small groups based on the number of laptops or tablets available to use. Have the participants watch a few videos in the calendar to understand the format. Next, participants should read the descriptions of a few holidays that they observe and to decide which ones they want to create videos for. If there are multiple people in a group who observe the same faith tradition, ask that they choose different holidays to do.

### *00:20-00:35 Writing and Editing*

Using the attached Script Sheet, participants will create an outline of what they want to talk about. They will share with a partner or with their group, who will help them edit it. The group members should also ask questions about the holiday so that the student can include more information in the video that people might want to know about. The group should also help the writer ensure that they are writing from the first-person perspective.

### *00:35-00:50 Filming*

Videos should be 1-2 minutes. Each group helps the members record the video and upload it to a classroom google drive or other folder. The group can also help “direct” the video to ensure that the length is ok and that the narration goes smoothly.

### *00:50-01:00 Sharing and Discussion*

Bring all the participants back together. Have a discussion with the following questions: What did you learn about the traditions of other participants in your group? Were there any holidays that you share in common with others but celebrate differently? Were there any holidays you filmed that your peers did not know about previously? What was it like to explain about your traditions to others? Why is it important to explain using the first-person?

## **“My Traditions” Video Script Sheet**

Instructions: Fill out this sheet to help you know what to say in the video. Make sure to use the first-person perspective (“I” and “we” instead of “they” and “them”). After you fill out the sheet, go over it with your group to see if they have other questions about what you said. Make sure to practice before filming the video to make sure you know what to say and that it is 1-2 minutes.

1. What holiday are you talking about? When will it be observed?

2. What do you do to observe this holiday?

3. What is your favorite part of this holiday?

4. Why is it important to you?

5. What else do you want people to know about this holiday?