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**DTI Program 8/Culture: A Total Way of Life Seminar**

**PROSPECTUS Rites of Passage: A Case Study of the Amish Rumspringa**

**August 2018**

**Introduction**

Conrad Schools of Science (CSS) is a science/biotechnology magnet school serving almost 1300 students in grades 6 – 12. It is considered an urban school, situated on the outskirts of the most populated city in the state of Delaware, Wilmington, which is well known for its’ violence rates. CSS students come from all over our state’s largest county, New Castle. At the high school level, students can choose to focus on a variety of learning “*strands*” such as biotechnology, physical therapy/athletic healthcare, biomedical science, animal science, and computer science. Our high school is the only one in the state that is not a vocational-technology schoolto offer a Delaware Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program.

Additionally, a variety of Advanced Placement (AP) courses are offered as well as multiple courses that are in conjunction with our local community college and university. I am the teacher of one of these courses, *Sociology*. This is the seventh year that I am teaching this dual-enrollment course in which students (usually seniors) are enrolled at the local community college and receive credit from that institution upon successful completion of the course with me on the high school campus. Moreover, it is a *distance-learning course* in that some of my students are at my school while others are at two sister schools in our district. The course happens real-time – at the three different locations – same teacher (me!), curriculum, activities, etc.

**Rationale**

Luckily, through my involvement with YNI/DTI, I have produced multiple units to date to use with my dual-enrollment Sociology course. From the seminar readings, research, and my participation in ***Culture: A Total Way of Life***, I will have another one. My initial thought of what type of unit I would write was more aligned to the title of this seminar – Culture. Since I currently do not do much with the culture chapter of the sociology text that I am mandated to use, I thought that would be a safe bet. Focusing on the Rumspringa years of the Amish culture was more of a self-interest situation. Over the years, I have purchased multiple books about this topic mainly because I have thought the idea was fascinating but have never dedicated time to read them. Now, seemed like I had a perfect avenue for learning more about a subject that I was interested in. However, the more that I read about the Amish, including the Rumspringa years, I began to believe that this subject is a better aligned for a unit on the Socialization process. I can use it as a case study. The sociological process of socialization entails “The social process through which we develop our personalities and human potential and learn about our society and culture.”[[1]](#endnote-1) Rumspringa, an Amish rite of passage, is part of the socialization process. Reading the materials it was evident that from birth onwards, the Amish are deliberate in socializing their children into the Amish culture. Their expectations are taught through role modeling, immersing the children into adult behaviors (e.g. attending church services and work) from the toddler years on.

I am thinking that this curriculum unit will be divided into three parts: (1) the idea of a growing up/becoming part of a society and how it relates to the sociological concepts and principles of socialization, (2) a focus on the Amish culture with a comparison between students’ “socialization process” including rites of passage and that of the Amish youth, and (3) a case study of Rumspringa-an Amish rite of passage. I believe the use of a case study will not only help to meet the Sociology Standards, but to address the History/Social Studies Common Core Standard for Key Ideas and Details: *Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem*.

**Objectives**

There are a number of Delaware Technical Community College Wide Core Course (CCC) Performance Objectives that I am mandated to follow as I plan my units of instruction. In this unit I will be using the two of them: (1) *Relate sociological concepts, principles, and process to daily life,* and *(2) Assess the impact of socialization on both the individual and society*. In doing so students will explain how rites of passage are related to sociological concepts, illustrate the connection of the socialization process, assess their own understandings and reactions to the meaning and significance of socialization including rites of passage, and relate their own examples to what they have learned about the Amish way of life.

**Overarching Understandings and Questions to Keep in Mind for the Development of the Unit**

**Enduring Understanding** (*These are taken from the Core Concepts of our textbook’s chapter on Socialization*).

Students will understand that:

* in the broadest sense of the word, *socialization* is the process by which people develop a sense of self and learn the ways of the society in which they live.
* socialization depends on meaningful interaction experiences with others.
* Agents of socialization – significant others, primary groups, and institutions – shape our sense of self, thought patterns, and responses to the social and physical environment.

**Essential Questions**

1. What is the socialization process? How does it relate to my life? The Amish way of life?
2. What are some examples of meaningful interaction experiences from my life? From the life of the Amish? How doe these relate to the socialization process?
3. How is an agent of socialization defined? Who/what is an agent of socialization that has deeply impacted you and how? Who/what is an agent of socialization that affects the Amish people? How?

**Texts Investigated Readings/Films/Documentaries (To Date)**

Ferrante-Wallace, Joan. *Sociology: A Global Perspective*. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, 2015.

Our course textbook – chapters on Culture and Socialization.

Gennep, Arnold Van. *The Rites of Passage*. London: Routledge, 2010.

Anthropological information about various rites of passage.

Kraybill, Donald B. *The Riddle of Amish Culture*. Baltimore, MD.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989.

Pollack, Randy Beth. Culture Change in an Amish Community. MS, Wright State University.

*Rumspringa To Be or Not to Be Amish*. Paw Prints, 2010.

Sociological information about the practice of Rumspringa.

Stevick, Richard A. *Growing up Amish: The Rumspringa Years*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014.

Personal account of the Rumspringa years

Stoltzfus, Levi, and Ellis Henican. *Amish Confidential: Looking for Trouble on Heavens Back Roads*. New York: Gallery Books, 2015.

Candid account of his Amish background.

*The American Experience: The Amish*. USA: PBS, 2012. Television Series.

*The American Experience: The Amish Shunned*. USA: PBS, 2014. Television Series.

This episode delves into the Amish’s shunning practices.

*The Devils Playground*.

TURNER, VICTOR. *RITUAL PROCESS: Structure and Anti-structure*. S.l.: ROUTLEDGE, 2017.

Umble, Diane Zimmerman., and David Weaver-Zercher.

*The Amish and the Media*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008.

This book contains essays about the Amish and the media. The one particular chapter applicable to this unit is the one about the reality show, Hollywood Rumspringa: Amish in the City.

1. Crash Course Socialization Episode [↑](#endnote-ref-1)