



AMERICANA

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

AMERICANA is an educational program designed to reinforce a positive American identity by providing a safe environment for children to explore their American heritage and interact with other American youngsters. It builds language skills by introducing words, ideas, concepts as well as songs, games, literature (poems, stories...) that are not part of their everyday context, living overseas.

Offered as a youth program, **AMERICANA** seeks to ground American expatriate children in the history and traditions of American life and culture. It introduces themes of cultural, historical, geographic and social relevance while interacting with other children. It highlights American holidays, traditions, history and ideas.

It was started by a member of the American Women's Association in Dubai in 1991, inspired by her son's first-time experience at a baseball game in the US. She realized that there are gaps in knowledge – gaps that exist even if children attend American schools overseas.

WHY START AMERICANA IN YOUR CLUB?

- As a service to members with children to connect to their American heritage
- Creates a space for dialog between the American parent(s) and their children as well as family members living in the US
- Teaches about the rights and responsibilities of being a US citizen
- Prepares those children who plan to return to or study in the USA
- Good PR opportunity to the American Expatriate community and may be a way to attract new members
- Reinforces itself as a club that 'offers' American culture
- Stimulates active participation of members, their children and the American Expat community
- It is Fun!!!

HOW TO START?

1. Select a Program Chair or coordinator (or two persons as a Co-coordinators).



2. Form a core team of volunteers.

Aim to recruit people who like to spend time with children. You'll need organizers for the sessions, and also those who can teach, sing or play instruments, like to present and perform, can lead and engage children in activities.

3. Decide the objectives and topics for your club.

To get you started, pick and choose from the modules already developed and used by other clubs (Dublin, Qatar, Dubai, Amsterdam, Languedoc-Roussillon, etc.). You will find ideas for what you might try to start AMERICANA in your club without having to reinvent the wheel! You could still customize the whole program or specific modules to your club's needs and specific topic areas.

4. Determine the age ranges for the potential youth participants.

For example: DOHA's *AMERICANA* provides an excellent model for designing general program sessions for ages 3 to 12. AWC Amsterdam's *Kids America Program* (nicknamed: KAMP) curriculum is available as a Best Practice for youth of reading ages. KAMP was adapted from experiences shared from AWG Languedoc-Roussillon previous *American Cultural Education for Kids* (ACE for Kids) program.

5. Consider the type of program structures that can be facilitated at your club.

Include a review of resources available, venue options, schedules (frequency, dates, and times), limits to registration, promotion, and funding.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE IDEAS

Outline a structure for the youth in your target audience. Perhaps try different options for different age ranges and topics to be presented.

These program models have been used by several clubs:

Mixed youth group:

- Classes are monthly (during fall and spring) or quarterly.
- General content for diverse ages 3 to 12.
- Each Class meeting is 2 hours long for introductions and multiple activities (music & songs, games, readings, arts & crafts), plus social time.
- Involves parents and older youth to assist with presentations and activities.

Young student group:

- Classes are monthly (during school year).
- Every year has two units of 5 classes → 10 classes total. The 3 year curriculum would have 30 classes (6 units).



- Recommend ages 7 to 12, comfortable to read and comprehend English content materials.
- Each Class meeting is 2 hours long - one hour lesson and one hour for snack, social, and arts & crafts time.

Primary school group:

- Single topic sessions held quarterly.
- Recommend ages 4 to 8.
- Each Class meeting is 1.5 hours long - half-hour lesson and one hour for snack, social, and arts & crafts time

The Program can include topics such as:

- National holidays (Columbus Day, Thanksgiving, Martin Luther King Day)
- Historic events (Revolutionary War, Civil War, Civil Rights Movement)
- Cultural celebrations (Black History, Melting Pot, Cowboys, Music)
- Famous people (Presidents, Explorers, Inventors)
- Geography (Maps of the states, USA, and North America)
- Symbols of the US (Stars & Stripes, Uncle Sam, Bald Eagle)
- Our national flag and state flags
- US currency

Additionally, **AMERICANA Teens** can include topics such as:

- Political Systems, Elections (many nearly voting age)
- More in depth coverage of American History
- Third Culture Kids
- Current events and news
- Book reviews and discussions
- Re-entry into the US

The Program can be further customized by age group:

- Mini-AMERICANA - for pre-school children
- AMERICANA - for 7-12 year olds
- AMERICANA Teens - for 13-17 year old or graduates of a pre-teen program.
- AMERICANA Book Group - for youth (and families) to meet and discuss traditional books.

Contact fawcoyouth@fawco.org for more information.