

Navigating this Doc; Categories from top to bottom:

- Awareness month campaigns
- Religious, ethnic or cultural holidays and celebrations
 - Due to the fact that the Gregorian and the Lunar calendars do not align, these events are listed categorically rather than chronologically. Religious, ethnic or cultural categories are in no particular order.
- Secular events

Monthly Awareness Campaigns

March

Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Created by the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) and their partners, this annual month of recognition includes a social media campaign that focuses on the contributions of people with developmental disabilities and the barriers that people sometimes face. Developmental disabilities are conditions that result from an impairment in physical, learning, language and/or behavior areas. About one in six children in the United States has one or more developmental disabilities or other developmental delays. A regular part of the NACDD Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month campaign is the inclusion of artwork designed by people with developmental disabilities. NACDD presents the artwork in logos, campaign imagery, virtual exhibits, etc.

Lesson: Understanding Disabilities (Learning for Justice)

Women's History Month

March 8th has long been observed as International Women's Day, honoring international women's rights in honor of women in the USA who protested labor conditions for women in the garment industry in 1908, organizing massive strikes as well as women in Russia who, in 1917, organized massive protests and among other things, successfully gained the right to vote. In response to the passing of Title IX 1972, a civil rights law preventing discrimination based on sex, Women's History Week was established in California. It was adopted nationally in 1980. In 1987, congress declared March Women's History Month, encouraging celebration and education of women's rights and women in history.

Video: <u>History of the Holiday</u>, <u>Untold Stories of Black Women in the Suffrage Movement</u>, <u>the 19th Amendment</u>

Ethnic Equality Month

Ethnic Equality Month is a time to recognize the similarities that exist between people, and at the same time, it reminds us of the importance of acknowledging and respecting our differences. The census in the United States continues to show increases in racial and ethnic diversity among the population, with Hispanics or Latinos experiencing the largest increases in their total share of the population.

Critical Media Project Lesson on Race & Ethnicity

Gender Equality Month

Gender Equality Month is a global celebration that brings people together to "celebrate women, elevate humanity, and create more equitable, more sustainable societies and institutions". National Women's History Month and International Women's Day are also celebrated during the month of March each year.

A Variety of Lessons on Gender Inequality (Educators 4 Social Change)

Greek-American Heritage Month

Greek American Heritage Month falls in March because of the positioning of Greece's National Greek Independence Day on March 25th. That day commemorates that War of Greek Independence, which took place in 1821.

The Greek American Studies Resources Portal - Contains citations for works on Greek Archaeology, Music and Song, Folklore, Media and more.

Irish-American Heritage Month

First designated as Irish-American Heritage Month in 1991, an annual proclamation made by the United States president reaffirms and honors the achievements and contributions of Irish immigrants and their descendants living in the United States. The heritage month coincides with the occurrence of St. Patrick's Day, a Roman Catholic religious holiday that honors the saint, who introduced Christianity to Ireland in the early fifth century.

Culture of Ireland - Facts for Kids

National Music in our Schools Month

First adopted in 1973 by the National Executive Board and the National Assembly of State Presidents of the Music Educators National Conference (MENC) as a single day, the aim of National Music in our Schools Month is to raise awareness about the need for quality music programs for all students.

Activity Ideas to Celebrate Music in our Schools Month

National Nutrition Month

Created by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, National Nutrition Month is a campaign that encourages everyone to learn more about making informed food choices and to be physically active. Through weekly messaging, the Academy reminds us all to eat a variety of nutritious foods and practice planning when it comes to meals and snacks.

National Nutrition Month Toolkits/Resources

Theater in our Schools Month

A joint venture between the Educational Theatre Association and the American Alliance for Theatre & Education, Theatre in our Schools Month looks to raise awareness of the impact of theater education and draw attention to the need for more access to theater education for all students.

Theatre Education Fact Sheet

Youth Art Month

Youth Art Month encourages support for quality school art programs, and promotes art material safety. The Council for Art Education (CFAE) administers the program at the national level. Visual art experiences help students to develop problem solving, observation, and communication skills.

Fun & Engaging Process Art Projects for All Ages



Autism Acceptance Month

Once celebrated as Autism Awareness Month, April has been designated as a month not only to build awareness of those living with autism, and the symptoms people experience, but also to foster acceptance and inclusion of people with autism within schools and communities. World Autism Acceptance Day is acknowledged on **April 2**. In 1970, Bernard Rimland and the Autism Society established April Autism Awareness Month. The change in name occurred in 2021 to call attention to the difference between awareness and true acceptance. April can be a time of increased visibility, conversation, education and celebration of and within the autism community. Autism Society website

#CelebrateDifference Campaign Video

Arab-American Heritage Month

The first immigrants from Arab countries arrived in the United States in the 19th century. Today, most Arab Americans have roots in Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine. In 2019, a congressional resolution was passed to recognize April as Arab-American Heritage Month and a time to celebrate the history, contributions, and culture of the diverse population of Arab Americans. Information about Arab Americans

Community Service Month/National Volunteer Month

First celebrated in the 1940s in Canada, National Volunteer Week began as a way to celebrate the contribution made by women on the home front to the war effort. After World War II ended, National Volunteer Week declined in popularity, and it was eventually revived in the 1960s, taking hold in additional countries, including the United States. It is now an annual, month-long celebration observed to promote and show appreciation for volunteerism and volunteering. Throughout the month, many organizations host special events to help engage their local communities in volunteering and make them aware of opportunities that are available year round.

10 Fun Community Giving Ideas

Earth Month

The first Earth Day took place on April 22, 1970. The Sierra Club offers these 10 ways to celebrate Earth Month.

CoOL Toolkit: 50+ Earth Month Activities

School Library Month

April is School Library Month, an annual celebration of school libraries and their programs held in conjunction with National Library Week (April 4-10). The theme of the first national observance of School Library Month in 1985 was "Where Learning Never Ends: The School Library Media Center."

Tartan (Scottish-American) Heritage Month

As some of the earliest immigrants to the American colonies, Scottish-Americans have had a major impact throughout history in the United States. The first known Scottish immigrant, Robert Sproat, sailed to America on the Mayflower in 1620. Later, many Scots joined the American revolutionary army to fight against the British. Today, about 8% of Americans claim Scottish heritage, including some well-known people like Barack Obama and Hilary Clinton. Unique Scottish Customs



May

Asian-Pacific Islander American Heritage Month (APAHM)/South Asian Heritage Month Asian Pacific American Heritage Month is celebrated to commemorate the arrival in May 1843 of the first Japanese immigrants to the United States. Learn more about the important roles and persistent discrimination faced by Asian-Pacific Islander Americans on this site that includes stories and videos from 1942 to present time.

K-12 Lessons and Information about AAPI Heritage

Haitian Heritage Month

This month-long celebration is an extension of Haitian Flag Day, which is a patriotic celebration in Haiti and the Diaspora. The purpose of the month is to "(1) raise awareness and understanding about Haitian culture and traditions; (2) strengthen the self-esteem and ethnic pride of Haitian and Haitian-American youth; and (3) celebrate Haitian achievements across the globe" (Haitian Mental Health Network).

An Overview of Haitian Culture

Jewish-American Heritage Month

President George W. Bush proclaimed May as Jewish-American Heritage Month in 2006. Jewish people first arrived in America in in 1654 in New Amsterdam. Jewish people played a key role in advocating for other minorities and their rights throughout American history. They participated in the Civil Rights Movement, making up a large portion of white Americans who showed up at voter registrations, rallies, sit-ins, etc. Albert Einstein and Ruth Bader Ginsburg are some of the most prominent Jewish American figures.

Jewish American Heritage Month Resources for Educators

Mental Health Awareness Month

Since 1949, Mental Health Awareness month has been recognized by the Mental Health America organization, which was founded by Clifford Whittingham Beers. Beers was one of five children in his family who all suffered from mental illness and psychological distress. He wrote the book, "A Mind That Found Itself", which is a bestseller even today. Beers believed that mental health patients should not only receive care that is right for them but also that they should not feel alone in their fight against mental diseases.

How to Teach Students About Mental Health

Remove the Stigma Kids Mental Health

National Physical Fitness Month

Started by the President's Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition in 1983, this advocacy month is aimed at encouraging Americans to adopt healthy lifestyles.

Move Your Way: Videos for Teens

National Teen Self-Esteem Month

Sponsored by "I Am Worth More", a nonprofit that connects teens to resources and helps them increase their positive entertainment intake, National Teen Self-Esteem Month unites teens, parents, and teachers all around the country. We come together to focus on the importance of supporting teens—helping them voice their needs, share their perspectives, and build a healthy outlook of themselves" (https://nationaltoday.com/national-teen-self-esteem-month/). Lessons on Self-Confidence from a Teenager (TEDx Talk)

Speech and Hearing Awareness Month

Speech and Hearing Awareness Month exists to raise awareness about communication disorders and to encourage people to get regular hearing checks. The World Health Organization's World Health Report indicates that over 50% of people aged 12–35 years listen to music via personal audio devices at volumes that pose a risk to their hearing. There is no treatment to restore normal hearing (after loss), but you can prevent hearing loss from loud sounds.

<u>Tips for Teaching Kids about Noise-Induced Hearing Loss</u> - Information for Science & Health Teachers, Music Teachers, School Nurses, Etc. (National Institutes of Health)

Cultural, Ethnic and Religious Events

Hindu

Holi - Last Full Moon of Winter on the Hindi Calendar

An ancient Hindu festival, Holi heralds the arrival of spring after winter and is also known as the Festival of Colors. It signifies the victory of good over evil and is celebrated by spreading happiness, love, and peace. This year, Holi will be celebrated during the Hindu calendar month of Phalguna, which is in February or March on the Gregorian calendar. Festival-goers traditionally gather around a bonfire at sunset the evening before and pray that their internal evil is destroyed. The next morning is celebrated as Rangwali Holi -- a free-for-all festival of colors! People throw colored powder or water at each other in the streets, parks, and outside temples and buildings. In the evening, they wash up and dress in their finest clothes to visit family and friends. Some of our students may also know this holiday as Dhulandi/Dhulendi/Dhuleti/Dhulheti.

Here's a joyous <u>1-minute PBS video</u> showing the fun of Holi! <u>Watch some traditional celebrations</u> in this short video

Christian

Easter - 1st Sunday after First Full Moon following Spring Equinox

Easter is a holiday with a fascinating history. For Christians, Good Friday commemorates Jesus Christ's crucifixion. Christians observe the day by fasting and attending church services or re-enactments of Jesus Christ's last hours. In many Spanish speaking countries, Easter is the culminating festival after the holy week, Semana Santa. Easter Sunday commemorates Jesus Christ's resurrection from death. Traditions like colored eggs and bunnies are traceable to Pagan celebrations of Springtime and the resurrection of the earth. Easter customs vary across the world and include sunrise services, midnight vigils, processions, exchanges of Paschal greetings, and decorations. Additional customs that have become associated with Easter, and are observed by both Christians and some non-Christians, include Easter parades, communal dancing (Eastern Europe), the Easter Bunny, baskets of treats, and egg hunting.

Easter from History.com
Easter Around the World



Islam

Ramadan - 9th month of the Islamic Lunar Calendar

Observed for the entire ninth month of the Muslim calendar, followers will honor Ramadan with prayer, reflection, and community. For older children and healthy adults, it also includes fasting which means not eating or drinking from dawn to dusk each day. The spiritual rewards of fasting are believed to be multiplied during Ramadan. Ramadan celebrations often involve prayer late into the night and it is not unusual to be up past midnight for prayers and then to get up at 3:30 or 4:00 am to eat before dawn and pray. In some countries the month long observance also means more rest and in many places schools close. Here in the US, Muslim students may be tired, hungry, and thirsty during classes, and may choose to observe midday prayers at school.

Here's a quick article on how to support students during Ramadan What is Ramandan?
Ramadan around the world

Eid Mubarak/ Eid Al Fitr - Last day of Ramadan

Eid, which marks the end of Ramadan, the Muslim holy month of dawn-to-sunset fasting. Eid al-Fitr has a particular *salat* (Islamic prayer) that may only be performed in a congregation and is generally held in an open field or large hall. Following the salat, Muslims celebrate in various ways with food being a central theme, which also gives the holiday the nickname "Sweet Eid" or "Sugar Feast". Muslims typically decorate their homes and are also encouraged to forgive each other and seek forgiveness. In areas with large Muslim populations, it is normally a public holiday with most schools and businesses closed for the day.

Video: Learn more about Ramadan and Eid Al Fitr

Pagan

May Day - May 1

This often overlooked holiday has a surprisingly rich history. With roots in Pagan Springtime celebrations of Beltane, we can still see traces of ancient celebrations such as Maypole dancing and flower crowns. May Day, also known as International Workers Day, has taken on another layer of historic meaning as it has been long associated with labor movements. In Hawaii, May Day, also called Lei Day, has yet even more layers of meaning.

What is Beltane?
Maypole Dancing
International Workers' Day
Lei Day

Jewish

Passover (Pesach) - 15th day of the 1st month of the Hebrew Calendar

Passover is a major Jewish holiday that begins on the 15th day of the first month of the Jewish calendar and lasts for 7 days in Israel and 8 days in other parts of the world. Passover celebrates the emancipation and exodus of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. On the first and sometimes second night, families and friends have a Seder, where they retell the story of

Exodus through reading the Haggadah, and eat an elaborate meal, traditionally including symbolic foods such as matzah (flatbread), bitter herbs, nuts, and fruit. Throughout the holiday, leavened breads are not eaten to honor the people who fled in such a hurry that they could not bring with them all that was needed to make leavened bread.

Read more: What is a Seder.

Video: PBS the origins of Passover.

Purim - 14th day of the 12th month of the Hebrew Calendar

The jolly festival of Purim is a Jewish holiday that begins on the evening 14th day of the Hebrew month of Adar. According to the Book of Esther, an advisor to the King had a plan to kill all the Jews in the empire but his plans were foiled by Esther. Purim is celebrated by exchanging gifts of food and drink (*mishloach manot*), donating charity to those in need (*mattanot la-evyonim*), eating a celebratory meal (*seudah Purim*), and attending synagogue to hear a public recitation of the Scroll of Esther. It's common to dress up in costume or wear masks during Purim. This often under-recognized holiday is celebrated widely in Israel.

Read more <u>here</u>
<u>What is Purim?</u>
Purim celebration in Jerusalem

Secular Events

National Education Association Read Across America Day - March 2

The National Education Association (NEA) launched its Read Across America program in 1998. The year-round program focused on motivating children and teens to read. The program has begun to highlight books, authors and teaching resources that promote <u>diversity and inclusion</u> in recent years.

14 Big Ideas for Celebrating NEA's Read Across America

International Women's Day - March 8

International Women's Day is observed on March 8th each year; a day when the world celebrates women's achievements and aims to further their rights. The day has been recognized since 1908 and commemorates women in Europe and the United States who organized massive strikes and protests to change labor conditions for women in the garment industry. It was adopted as a National Holiday in the USA in 1987. Commemoration of International Women's Day ranges from being a public holiday in some countries to being largely ignored elsewhere. Although the mission of International Women's Day has evolved throughout the years, in the last few decades it has been largely regarded as a day of activism with supporters calling for equal pay, equal economic opportunities, equal legal rights, and the prevention of violence against women. However, it has been noted that the day has been increasingly sponsored by major corporations and used to promote feel-good messages, rather than radical social reforms. The United Nations began celebrating International Women's Day in 1975 and has given each year a theme. Learn about this year's theme here.

A Brief History 2 min video
PBS Kids https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5JB1-_W29Ng
Learning for Justice.



World Day of Muslim Culture, Peace, Dialogue and Film - March 11

First celebrated in 2010, World Day of Muslin Culture, Peace, Dialogue and Film was started by Javed Mohammed, a writer and producer from California. The purpose is to share and discuss Muslim culture and to create a link and understanding across faiths.

Grades 5-12 Lesson on Five Pillars on Islam

Pi Day - March 14

An annual celebration of the mathematical sign pi, March 14 was selected as the date for the holiday because the numerical date (3.14) represents the first three digits of pi. March 14 also happens to be Albert Einstein's birthday! The discovery of the irrational, transcendental number, which continues on to infinity, is commonly credited to Ancient Greek mathematician Archimedes.

Pi Day Fun!

St. Patrick's Day - March 17

Celebrated as a sometimes rowdy secular celebration of Irish culture and all things green, the Holiday originated in Ireland as a religious tradition honoring the patron saint Patrick who was said to have chased all the snakes out of Ireland. St. Patrick is also credited with bringing Christianity to the country. While there are no native snakes on the island, the holiday has been the subject of controversy as St. Patrick is said to have driven, not snakes, but pagans and paganism from Ireland through brutal means. Celebrations in the USA feature shamrocks, green everything from clothing to food and drink, and a meal of corned beef and cabbage.

Video: History Channel, Dublin Celebrates

Persian New Year - Spring Equinox

Nowruz, also known as Naw-Rúz or Persian New Year, is the first day of the Iranian calendar and falls on the spring equinox, when the sun crosses the equator and day and night are equal in length. Millions of people around the world celebrate the Nowruz festival and the official beginning of spring. It is a secular holiday that is enjoyed by people of several different faiths. The United Nations says Nowruz promotes values of peace and solidarity between generations and within families. It's a time of reconciliation and neighborliness, "contributing to a cultural diversity and friendship among peoples and different communities."

Videos: An introduction, How 300 Million People Celebrate from BBC

Spring Equinox - Astrological Equinox

One of the four solar festivals of the year, the Spring Equinox takes place "when the sun sits vertically above the equator, making day and night equal across the planet" (https://nationaltoday.com/spring-equinox/). The day marks the beginning of spring in the Northern Hemisphere, and, in some parts of the world, it is the beginning of a new year. Happy Equinox! Science of Kids (YouTube)

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination - March 21

First recognized in 1966, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is held on March 21 because that is the day, in 1960, when police opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration in Sharpeville, South Africa. The demonstration was against the apartheid "pass laws". The day recognizes the struggle to end the policy of apartheid in South Africa and the ongoing efforts to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination.

NY Times Curated List of Lessons, Prompts, and Films about Race and Racism

World Down Syndrome Day - March 21

Beginning in 2006, World Down Syndrome day is held on the 21st day of March because of the significance of triplication of the 21st chromosome which causes Down syndrome. "Down syndrome (or Trisomy 21) is a naturally occurring chromosomal arrangement that has always been a part of the human condition, being universally present across racial, gender or socioeconomic lines in approximately 1 in 800 live births, although there is considerable variation worldwide. Down syndrome usually causes varying degrees of intellectual and physical disability and associated medical issues" (World Down Syndrome Day). The day provides opportunities for global awareness raising and advocacy for the rights of people with Down syndrome.

Explaining Down Syndrome (Lessons, Books, Etc.)

Atheist Day - March 23

Originating with a story posted online in 2003 in which April 1 was deemed to be Atheist Day, this annual holiday (now recognized on March 23) focuses on those who do not believe in god. The term 'atheism' first emerged in medieval Europe more than 400 years ago and was used to describe those who rejected the thought of a higher power. Today, Atheist Day is meant to recognize the struggle of atheists to live authentic lives in many parts of the world and the fight to openly affirm one's atheism. Approximately 2% of the world's population does not believe in and follow the practices of any religion (Happy Days 365).

A book for children who want to explore religious ideas: <u>Atheism for Kids, by J Thorpe and T</u> Barnes

International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade - March 25

This day honors and remembers those who suffered and died at the hands of the brutal slavery system. In March of 2015, a memorial was erected at the United Nations Headquarters in New York to honor the victims. The memorial design, "The Ark of Return: Lest We Forget," was created by Rodney Leon, an American architect of Haitian descent.

A Learning for Justice Resource - "Teaching Hard History: American Slavery"

National School Librarian Day - April 4

This internationally-celebrated day of appreciation for school librarians recognizes the important role that librarians play in motivating students to learn. Librarians assist students in accessing critical resources and point them to transformative texts and stories. School librarians are also to be thanked for introducing and encouraging the habit of reading to students! Did you know that the first school libraries were introduced in the early 1800s?

International Day of Reflection on the Genocide in Rwanda - April 7

First recognized as an international observance by the United Nations on April 7, 2004, this date marks the beginning of the genocide perpetrated against members of the Tutsi minority by the Hutu extremist-led government. More than 1 million Tutsi were systematically murdered in under 100 days. In a statement made in 2021, United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, said, "On this day, we honour those who were murdered, we reflect on the suffering and we recognize the resilience of those who have survived. As we join in solidarity with people of Rwanda, we must take a hard look at today's world and ensure that we heed the lessons of 27 years ago."

National Day of Silence - April 7

Started in the mid 90's by two college students, The National Day of Silence is a student-led

demonstration where LGBTQ+ students and allies take a vow of silence to protest the harmful effects of harassment and discrimination of LGBTQ+ people in schools. After spending the day in silence, "Breaking the Silence" rallies and events are held, allowing students to share their experiences during the protest and bring attention to ways their schools and communities can become more inclusive.

How Using Gender-Neutral Language Can Break the Silence of LGBTQA Students

National Student Leadership Week - Late April

Student leaders make significant contributions to the climate and culture of their schools and communities. Student Leadership Week is an annual theme-based week dedicated to recognizing and supporting the vital role of student leaders. Sponsored by National Honor Society, National Junior Honor Society, and National Student Council, this week's origin stems from a U.S. Presidential proclamation in 1972. As part of the week, chapters and councils are encouraged to plan a special project to show how their work and ingenuity positively impacts the school and community.

Suggested Activities to Recognize Student Leaders

Earth Day - April 22

Earth Day marks the anniversary of the birth of the modern environmental movement in 1970. Senator Gaylord Nelson, the junior senator from Wisconsin, wanted to infuse the energy of student anti-war protests of 1969 with an emerging public consciousness about air and water pollution. He announced the idea for a teach-in on college campuses to the national media, and persuaded Pete McCloskey, a conservation-minded Republican Congressman, to serve as his co-chair. Senator Nelson and Mr. McCloskey recruited Denis Hayes, a young activist, to organize the campus teach-ins and they choose April 22, a weekday falling between Spring Break and Final Exams, to maximize the greatest student participation. Earth Day was formed! The Earth Day 2022 Theme is Invest In Our Planet.

52 Ways to Invest in Our Planet

Administrative Professionals Day - April 24

This annual day of recognition provides an opportunity to celebrate the work of all administrative support professionals. The job title 'administrative professional' is an umbrella term for close to a hundred jobs that fall under the category. Administration includes a wide variety of duties including office management, answering the phone, clerical work, speaking with clients, data entry, and record maintenance.

Administrative Professionals Day: What To Do, What To Say, and Why It Matters

School Lunch Hero Day - May 3

School Lunch Hero Day is a national celebration for students, teachers, families, etc. to express gratitude for all of the hard work being done in our school cafeterias!

Graphic Novel Author, Jarrett J. Krosoczka: Why Lunch Ladies are Heroes (TEDTalk)

Cinco de Mayo - May 5

Cinco de Mayo, also known as the Battle of Puebla Day, celebrates the date of the Mexican army's May 5, 1862 victory over France at the Battle of Puebla during the Franco-Mexican War. The win in the battle on May 5 represented a great symbolic victory for the Mexican government and bolstered the resistance movement. In parts of Mexico, Cinco de Mayo is recognized with military parades, battle reenactments and other festivities. Some of the largest celebrations in the United States take place in Houston, Los Angeles and Chicago, where traditional Mexican foods are served and parades and parties take place.

7 Lesser Known Historical Facts about Cinco de Mayo

National School Nurse Day - May 8

Celebrated since 1972, National School Nurse Day recognizes the critical role of school nurses in the educational setting. We have, of course, come to even more fully understand the importance of our EWSD school nurses as we have worked through the COVID-19 pandemic. Find a way to thank your school nurse today!

Memorial Day - Last Monday in May

Also known in Vermont as the official opening of BBQ and yard sale season, Memorial Day is more than a much appreciated three day weekend. This federal holiday has special significance for military service people and families as a day of mourning and remembrance. Many choose to honor the day by gracing graves with flowers, flying the American flag, and attending public events. Others may choose to honor the day with acts in service to peace or by supporting veterans.

