

What is Culture Handout

As you watch and read, answer the questions below:

Individualism vs Collectivism Video

1. What is individualism?
2. What behaviors are typical of individualist cultures?
3. What is collectivism?
4. What are behaviors typical of collectivist cultures?
5. Were you raised in a family/culture that was individualist or collectivist? How do you know? Give specific examples from the video & handout to support your conclusion.
6. Because the US is primarily an individualist culture, how can infant classrooms support families and babies who are from collectivist cultures? How can infant teachers arrange the classroom environment, materials, and activities to focus on collectivism (“we”) as opposed to individualism (“me”)? List specific practices and ways staff can support babies and families.

Day (2013)

1. What is an identity and how to infants develop their identity?
2. What is a person’s reference group identity and why is it important?
3. How do infants learn culture, ethnicity and language?
4. What happens when infant teachers focus on the celebration, dress, music and food of culture?
5. What is the cultural empowerment approach and does it enable teachers to do?
6. What happens when a family’s culture is ignored or infant teachers react to babies who are culturally different from them as though they are deficient, underdeveloped, or incompetent?
7. Complete the Chart: Culture as a Process

Essential Concept	What it Means	Connection to Infant Classroom
Culture is a set of rules for behavior.		
Culture is characteristic of groups		
Culture is learned		
Individuals are embedded, to different degrees, within a culture.		
Cultures borrow and share rules.		
Members of a cultural group may be proficient in cultural behavior but unable to describe the rules.		

8. Complete the Chart: Culturally Responsive Practices that Support Infant Identity Development

Practice	What it Means/ Why Do it	How to do it in Infant Classroom

Gonzalez-Mena (2008)

1. What are attributes of culture that influence our life?
2. What messages do babies need to receive from teachers about their family?
3. What is cultural pluralism? What is the goal of cultural pluralism?
4. Why should infant teachers strive for cultural pluralism in early care and education?

5. How does cultural differences impact teachers working with babies?
6. How do families develop their practices for caring for they child?
7. How does socioeconomic class impact raising a child? How could this create conflict with teachers?
8. How can infant teachers approach the challenge of cultural differences?
9. What is required to provide culturally competent infant care?