



A teacher's guide
created by **Marcie Colleen**
based upon the picture book
written by **Elisavet Arkolaki** and
illustrated by **Platon**

This classroom guide is designed for students in first through fifth grade. It is assumed that teachers will adapt each activity to fit the needs and abilities of their own students.

It offers activities to help teachers integrate *Where Am I From?* into the curricula.

All activities were created in conjunction with the Common Core and other relevant content standards.

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Before You Read...

Before reading *Where Am I From?*...

Look closely at the Front Cover ~

- Read the title aloud.
- Describe what you see.
- Who do you think the boy is? Does he look like you or anyone you know?
- What is he leaning on? Why?
- Imagine you are the boy in the illustration. How does this pose make you feel?
- Can you guess what the story might be about?

Now read or listen to the book.

Help students summarize in their own words what the book is about.

- What is the riddle that the children of the world are trying to solve?
- Why might the children be confused?
- Why might they be excited?
- Eva is from Malta. Do you know where Malta is?
 - Can you find it on a map or globe?
 - Malta is an island nation. Do you know what an island is?
- Chen is from China. Do you know where China is?
 - Can you find China on a map or globe?
 - China is has the largest population in all of the world. Do you know what population is?
- Tobias is from Norway. Do you know where Norway is?
 - Can you find Norway on a map or globe?
 - Look closely at the illustration of Tobias. What do you see? What can you guess about the weather in Norway?

- Sebastian is from Venezuela. Do you know where Venezuela is?
 - Can you find Venezuela on a map or globe?
 - Compare the illustrations of Sebastian to the illustrations of Tobias. How does Venezuela differ from Norway?
- Osiobe is from Nigeria. Do you know where Nigeria is?
 - Can you find Nigeria on a map or a globe?
 - Use three words to describe Osiobe’s village.
- Alice is from California. Do you know where California is?
 - Can you find California on a map or a globe?
 - California, unlike the other places mentioned in the book, is not a country. What country is California located in?
- John is from Australia. Do you know where Australia is?
 - Can you find Australia on a map or globe?
 - After locating Australia on the map/globe, can you guess why it is referred to as “down under?”
- Eric knows that the children all come from different places around the world. According to Eric, we might be from different places in the world, but where are we *all* from?

Let’s talk about the people who made *Where Am I From?*

- Who is the author?
- Who is the illustrator?
- What kind of work did each person do to make the book?

Now, let’s look closely at the illustrations.

- Each of these illustrations are of large murals on the walls of schools in Greece.
- The largest murals created for the book were 7m x 3.5m. Use a tape measure and see how big that is.
- Find graffiti murals in your own town and find photos on the internet to share with everyone.
- In the style of Platon, design a mural based on where you are from geographically.
- Display the finished drawings in the classroom.

Language

My Language Portrait

This activity shines a light on all the different languages that children speak and help them celebrate multilingualism as something that makes them unique and exceptional.

Using the attached human outline (page 7), students choose a number of coloring pencils that equals the number of languages they speak. They are then free to decorate their human outline in any way they wish to symbolize the many languages they speak.

Finished Language Portraits can be displayed and shared with the class.

Action Vocabulary

Where Am I From? contains many “action-related” words.

Swam	Flew	Ran	Jumped
Rode	Paddled	Hopped	

Read through the book and when you come to an action word, students must perform the action until you say “stop.”

Then, ask students to come up with a list of seven more action words and read through *Where Am I From?* again, this time replacing the verbs with a verb from the new list. Once again, students must perform the action until you say, "stop."

Social Studies

All About Me; All About My Family

This project allows students the opportunity to get to know one another, and serves as an introduction to family.

Students will make books that contain pages with answered questions and pictures about themselves and other loved ones in their lives.

Yarn is used to bind the pages together.

Each student should have a special day that he reads his book to the class.

- Pages in each book include:

A portrait
I am called ____
My first and last name is ____
I was born in the country of _____.
I have lived in the following places: _____.
My current address is ____
I live with ____.
My ancestors are from _____.
I speak the following languages: _____.
I am good at ____
My favorite snack is ____
My favorite activity is _____.
My favorite thing about school is _____.
When I am asked "Where are you from?" I answer _____.

- In addition to the page about themselves, additional pages should be created about family and other loved ones in the student's life.

Finding Commonalities/Uniqueness

We may not all be from the same geographic location, but that doesn't mean we don't have lots of things in common. After all, we all started our journey in a mother's belly.

Finding things you have in common with other people is a good way to start a meaningful relationship.

Here is a way to learn what you have in common with your classmates, while also celebrating what makes each of you unique.

Materials: A pen and two pieces of paper.

- This activity can be done as a whole class or in pairs.
- On one sheet of paper, you will have twenty minutes to come up with a list of things in common. Completely obvious answers such as "we both have hair" or "we are both in ____ class" are not allowed!
- After twenty minutes, switch to the other paper. You now have twenty minutes to come up with a list of things that are unique to only one person.
- Share both lists with the class when finished.

Geography

Destination: Exploration

As a class, locate the many places mentioned in *Where Am I From?* on a map and or/globe. Then, conduct research of that area and it's people on the Internet.

Information of interest can include:

- History
- Culture
- Music and dance
- Diet
- Shelter
- Climate
- Geography
- Economy

Gather photographs of the place.

Then, plan a week-long fictitious trip there. Be sure to plan transportation to and within the place of exploration, food, what to pack, what to do and see. Detail your trip in a daily itinerary. Include a budget, considering local economy and the currency of your country.

- How would you get there?
- What would you see?
- What would you hear?
- What would you do?
- What would the weather be like?

Create a large postcard of your trip. Be sure to illustrate one side and include a note to a best friend or family member on the other side. Be sure to be descriptive, so that the person who gets the postcard can best imagine your trip.

Display the postcards on a bulletin board, along with a map indicating where it is located in the world.

Science

A Handy Family Tree

Some of the special traits about each one of us are "handed" down from our family members. These traits are *inherited* traits. Other traits are *learned* traits that you pick up from the environment.

As a class, create a list of inherited traits and a list of learned traits to make sure everyone understands the difference.

To create their family trees each student will need:

- A piece of poster board or large piece of paper
- Colored construction paper
- Scissors
- Pens or markers
- Tape or glue

Instructions:

1. Trace the right and left hand of the student onto a piece of colored construction paper. There will need to be a pair of handprints to represent each family member. So depending on the size of their family, more handprints might be needed. Students with large families may choose to only do immediate family.
2. Cut out the handprints.
3. On each finger of the left hand, list an inherited trait (physical characteristic), such as eye color, hair color, dimples, freckles, chin shape, etc. There should be 5 inherited traits, one for each finger.
4. On each finger of the right hand, list a learned trait that has been acquired or learned based on personality, such as hobbies, interests, likes or dislikes, etc. There should be 5 learned traits, one for each finger.
5. Draw a tree trunk onto a large piece of paper or poster board.
6. Glue or tape the handprints above the trunk to form a tree. The oldest person's pair of hands should be placed the closest to the trunk. Work upward with the youngest person's handprints on top.

Create a bulletin board display of the family trees. Allow time for discussion in which students trace their own inherited and learned traits through their family trees.

Art

More Than My Outside

We are more than what we look like on the outside.

The Project:

- Have each student lay down on a large piece of paper while someone traces their body with a pencil.
- Once the student has the silhouette of their body, write words that describe who they are on the inside of the outline. Examples can be likes and dislikes, what they want to be when they grow up, what makes them smile, etc.
- Finished silhouettes can be displayed with the title "More Than My Outside."

A Public Mural

Throughout history, graffiti art has been used to transform public spaces into places of beauty and reflection. Most importantly, these pieces of public art are used to bring about a tighter community and make those in the community aware of issues.

Look up examples of public graffiti art on the Internet: examples in subways, under bridges and in parks. Be sure to find examples of traditional murals painted on walls, but also sculptures and knit-bombing.

How can art be used to further awareness of a cause?

- Bring people together to create it
- Reflect all people in the community in the artwork
- Create a space that people will want to visit and hang out in
- Why do you think graffiti art was chosen as the medium for *Where Am I From?*

Students can make their own piece of public art for the school community!

1. Choose a space within the school that could use some brightening or some inspiration.
2. Brainstorm a mural or other piece of temporary art called "Where We're From" that can be created in this space.
3. Brainstorm how this mural can build community and tell a story of its creators.
4. Involve as many people as possible in the creation.



language portrait



