



My Culture Book



This book belongs to:

What is Cultural Identity?

Identity is who you are!
This includes all of the things about yourself that are important to you.

Culture is your community's beliefs, traditions, languages, foods, manners, routines and all of the things important to a group of people. There are many cultures around the world, and they shape how we interact with the world!

Cultural Identity is how you identify with your culture(s)! The cultures that you feel are important to who you are. A person can have multiple cultures be a part of their cultural identity, and it can also change over time depending on who you spend time around, where you live, and many more factors which we will learn and think about through this book!



Here are some things that are a part of your **cultural identity!**



The traditions you celebrate



The languages you speak

Your family



The places you live



The friends you have



The foods you eat



The Religions you practice

The values you hold

Meet 桜 (Sakura)!

Sakura's dad is from Japan, and her mom is from Iran.

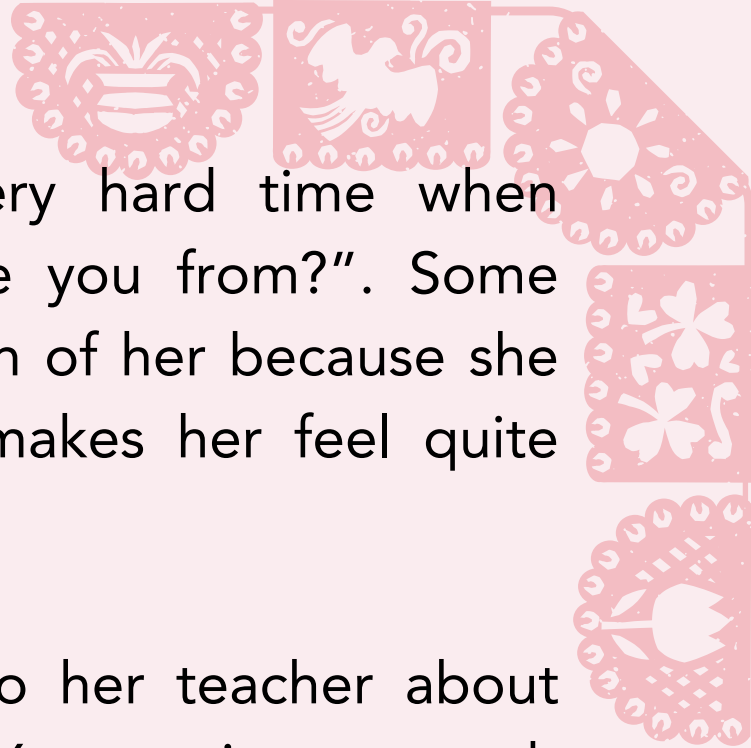
She lives in Mexico City, Mexico and goes to an international school so she has lots of friends from all over the world.

She speaks Farsi and Japanese at home, and speaks English at school and with her friends. Her favorite foods are udon and esquites!

Some traditions she celebrates are Cinco de Mayo (Day of the dead), 正月 (New Year), and Nowruz (Iranian New Year).

Sakura sometimes goes to a Mosque near her home and when she is in Japan, she goes to the Shrines and prays to her late ancestors at the shrine in her grandparents' house.

Sakura's mom has many beliefs about health and medicine from traditional Iranian medicine, which Sakura does her best to follow such as making sure she is eating the right foods for each season.



Sakura used to have a very hard time when someone asked “Where are you from?”. Some kids at school have made fun of her because she has a unique accent. This makes her feel quite sad.

One day, she was talking to her teacher about this, and her teacher said, “You are just as much Japanese as you are Persian. You are also Mexican because you were born and raised here! You are you, and that is all that matters. Don’t let anyone else tell you who you are and be proud of being you!”

After hearing this, Sakura felt a lot more comfortable in her own skin. Now when people ask her where she is from, she says very proudly, “I am from Japan, Iranian and Mexico!”.

Sakura’s cultural identity has multiple cultures in it! Her beliefs and values, her lifestyle and is what is important her cultural identity.



Now, let's think about your own cultural identity!

Here are some starting questions you could answer if you're feeling stuck!



- What holidays do you celebrate and how do you celebrate them? Is there anything in particular you like about them?
- What is your favorite food, and why? Where can you get this food? How were you introduced to this food?

- What language(s) do you speak with your friends and family? What language do you watch TV shows and movies in?
- Who influences your life the most, and what culture(s) do they represent? How do you think that affects your own cultural identity?

Cultural Identity is a Journey

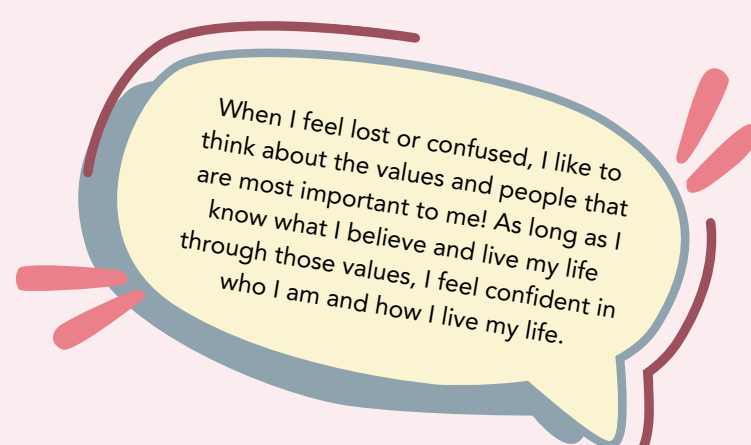
A person's cultural identity can (and most likely will) change throughout their life! As small things change in your life, so will your cultural identity. If you move to a new country or marry someone from another culture, it could change how you identify. That is what's so awesome about cultural identity, **YOU** are the centre of it!



It's normal to feel lost sometimes. It happens to everyone and it means you are growing!



The most important thing is that you are exploring **your identity!**



Sometimes, other people might tell you things that make you doubt yourself, or wonder who you really are. When things like this happen, try to keep a positive mindset and remember that you define who you are, not anyone else!



It's normal and healthy to struggle with your cultural identity!

It can be helpful to reach out for support when you are struggling, feeling confused, or just need someone to chat to or sit with.

Having a unique cultural identity comes with some challenges, but it also comes with many opportunities and advantages! Take it from these quotes from people with multicultural identities!

“
I have the capacity to be a
community connector,
collaborator, and change-maker!
”

“
Be PROUD of who you
are, and don't let anyone
tell you otherwise!
”

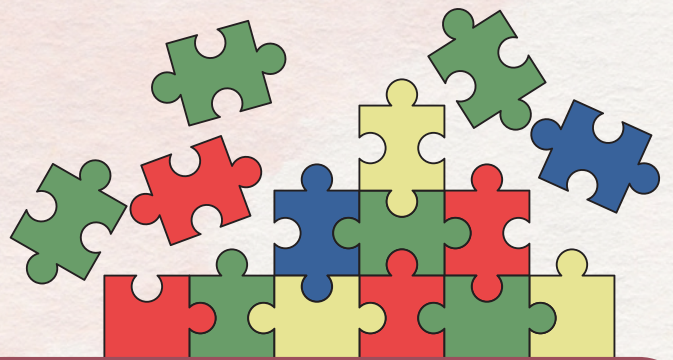


Exploration is great!

Unfortunately, there are people in this world that think that some people are better than others based on the fact that they are different from other. You may encounter people telling you to chose one side, or that reject you because you are different.

If you feel like you are being pressured to chose one side, or don't know enough about an aspect of your cultural identity, exploring those questions and cultures can often help you understand what you need better. Ask questions, meet new people and see what's out there!

“
If you don't fit anywhere,
then maybe you can fit
everywhere
”



“
The more I talk, the more both of my
parents can begin to see the pain I
have felt, the confusion I've wrangles
with, but most of all the joy and pride I
have come to feel in who I am.
”