



# New Mexico and the World

Curriculum Resources for New Mexico Teachers



## Guess What They Like

*Game to interpret material values in other cultures to begin to appreciate differences. Can be played at any secondary school level.*

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**Grade Level:** 5-8

**Area:** Social Studies

**Strand(s):** History, Geography, Economics

**NM Benchmark(s):** I-C, D; II-A,B,C,E; III-A,C

**Length:** 2-3 Days

**# of Students:** One class or can be played between grade level sections

**Learning Objectives:** To gain insights into cultural objects  
To begin to create a sense of hierarchy of objects  
To begin to see how foreign objects have value

**Introduction:** International auction is a game that allows students to interact over historical and cultural values. Students discover historical objects, gather background information, place a value in dollars or in local currency, and then try to market these objects. The trading of cultural objects from other cultures allow students to see relative values within other societies.

**Materials:** Web access  
Library access  
Notebook and writing utensil

**Procedures:**

1. Students draw a country by lottery. Students may work alone or in pairs. This activity can be done within a continent or more globally.
2. For example, students are challenged to discover 5 objects from their selected country that can represent 5 different centuries, or students can be given a contemporary challenge only. Other criteria might be that the objects have to represent one religious object, one common trade item, one clothing item, one

tool, one furnishing, and one transportation technology. Other combinations and numbers of objects can vary. A good example would be to base the game on foods alone or on household goods. An innovative approach would be for students to select music and value it.

3. Using a blank chart, each object is named, described by its use in the home society and points are assigned.

Point System (example only):

1. Historically important. (Example: the individual or group owner or user is mentioned in Wikipedi or encyclopedia.) Example: Nelson Mandela's diary from prison (5 points)

2. Rarity Unique object. Example: Drum from 5th century India (4 points)

3. Common household item for over three generations Example: coffee grinder from Brazil (2 points)

4. Common household item for one generation only, modern Example: CD of local Argentine music group (1 point)

5. Students total the points

6. Students then create labeled scaled drawings of the objects for observation by classmates. Students may write only one word on the object. The word should reference person, place, or use. Students do NOT disclose values to each other or the significance of any item.

7. All students make up a second chart with each classmate's name and six columns. When each object is a "auctioned" off, each student will guess what it is worth and write down the number. The total for a fellow classmate will be posted in the far right hand column. With one student presenting objects at a time, students then allow their classmates to ask them 5 questions per object. The questions must be of the animal, vegetable, or mineral type or by using "Jeopardy" questions forms and not directly asking "what is it and who used it?" Questioners are seeking to know what it is through oblique questions.

8. Each student then assigns a "guess" point number for the object and adds up the number of points for his or her fellow student in column six. Next to each classmates name the student keeps a total.

9. After all students have presented, a comparison can be made between the actual point values and the guesses. The students with the closest guess totals are the winners.

**Background Info:** Games allow students to evaluate other people's things, the stuff of their lives and place them in context. A game of this kind can be played within a century(ies) of the past or the present; the teacher or students can decide.

**References-  
Resources:**

**Student Activities:**

**Assessment:** Research skills based on depth of information. I prefer to use a research chart that has columns to include: what function, materials and special design features, when, how used, cultural significance, points. Notes are fine as opposed to full sentences. Completeness is key success. Being able to answer questions accurately is key. Do you want to reward the best guessers?

**Technology  
Integration:**

**Accommodations:**

**Review Questions:** What did you learn about how cultures change over time?  
What information do you need to ascertain its significance?

**Related Careers:** Any career that requires critical thinking, especially evaluative perspectives using criteria.

**Career Education:**

**Hints and Tips:** Student art is optional. If students are paired a teacher can assign an artist and a speaker, for example.

**Lesson Evaluation:** Students are asked to evaluate three questions in writing:

1. What object that they researched was the most fascinating and why
2. What was the hardest object to value and why?
3. If the game were played again, would you change the rules? Why, why not? How?