

FROM BURMA TO NEWFOUNDLAND

I am from Burma. I grew up in a small town on the border of Burma and Thailand. I moved to St. John's in 2008. I like it here because people are friendly. It is a peaceful place to live.

In my school in Burma the teachers were strict. We were punished if we did not know our work. However, they were friendly outside of school. We did not have Music or Gym, but we had free time before school in the morning and at lunch time. We always played outside. Every Friday students and teachers cleaned both inside the school and the school grounds. When we had finished, we had time to play. English was taught in school like French is taught here.

Burma has many celebrations. For New Year, which is in April, we celebrate a water festival called Thingyn. It is called after Thagyamin, a kind-hearted god who helps people in need. Parents tell their children that Thagyamin is watching, so they have to be good. He is a little like Santa.

During this three-day festival, people spend a lot of time getting each other wet. Companies and individuals build platforms that have tanks, buckets, and hoses. People drive from platform to platform to throw water on their friends. The washing with water is a symbol of washing away all the bad things from the previous year. Another thing people do is to release birds into the sky and let fish swim freely in ponds. This is a symbol of freedom. Some people even buy fish and birds so they can let them go free at the Thingyn festival.



Hnin Nwe Oo Than

ABOUT ME

I am from Punjab, India, and I have been living in Canada for eight months. I study at St. Andrew's Elementary School and I really love school because there is less homework to do here than there was in my country, and teachers here are not as strict.

I have an older brother and my parents are doctors. We came here because my parents wanted my brother and me to complete our higher education in Canada. They also believe that there is less pollution and therefore we could also live a healthier lifestyle. My dad says "Canada is God's country."

I really missed India when I first came to Canada. The first time I felt a very cool breeze, I started crying as I realized I was not in the warmth of India anymore. I miss Indian food such as roti, pita, and other foods.

I practice Sikhism. Most Canadians may not know about this religion but I am a god-fearing person. I can speak Hindi, Punjabi, and English but I mostly speak Punjabi at home. I love dancing and I get many chances to represent my Indian dance, and Canadians love it.



Noor Chhatwal

Our thanks to students from
Merci aux élèves des écoles suivantes

Gonzaga High School
Holy Spirit High School
Lady Queen of Peace School
Sheshatshiu Innu School
St. Andrew's Elementary School
St. Paul's Junior High School
St. Peter's Elementary School
St. Teresa's Elementary School

Submissions

We encourage Grade Six students to submit stories about diverse cultures.

**Deadline for the next issue
December 16, 2010**

Dépôt de te

Nous encourageons les élèves de 6^e année de partager des textes qu'ils ont écrits au sujet de différentes cultures.

Date limite pour la prochaine édition

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Cultural Con'txt'



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MA FAMILLE

La famille est importante pour tout le monde car elle nous donne de l'amour et de la joie. La famille est le plus puissant des remèdes contre la tristesse et au chagrin. Aujourd'hui, je vais vous parler d'une famille qui vous paraîtra peut être ordinaire mais pour moi, elle ne l'est pas. Pourquoi? Et bien tout simplement parce que c'est la mienne!

Ma famille est spéciale; elle est partout dans le monde. Elle est au Canada, en France, en Suisse, aux Etats-Unis et en Algérie. Mes parents, mes grands-parents, tantes, oncles, cousins et cousines comptent énormément à mes yeux car ils m'aiment, me chérissent et m'apprennent beaucoup de choses sur la vie. J'ai la chance d'avoir une grande famille. Nous parlons tous au moins quatre langues: le berbère, l'arabe, le français et l'anglais. Chaque été, nous recevons quelques-uns de nos parents, c'est toujours un vrai bonheur de les revoir! On a toujours beaucoup de choses à se raconter et surtout à apprendre sur les autres. Le rêve est de nous retrouver tous sans exception quelque part pour une grande fête, pour mélanger toutes nos différences. Amour et respect, c'est ce que mérite la famille, que ce soit la mienne ou la vôtre.



Louna Fezoui



Uniam Rich

OUR CULTURE

We are first cousins, originally from St. Mary's Bay and St. Vincent's Bay. Presently, we live in Mount Pearl. Our school is St. Peter's Elementary and we are in grade six.

In Courtney's family there is her mom, dad, and sister Madison. In Justin's family there is his mom, dad, sister Kaleigh, and golden retriever Princess.

Family get-togethers often involve interesting Newfoundland kitchen parties. Justin's dad plays the ugly stick, Courtney's dad plays the spoons, and Justin's Nan plays the accordion. Courtney and I usually dance or sing. We play "Going to California," "Michael" by Johnny McEvoy, and "Ise the By."

Often our kitchen party ends with our favourite Newfoundland foods, such as fish and chips. For dessert we have pudding, cake, and ice cream.



Courtney Tobin and Justin St. Croix

MON VOYAGE EN CHINE

Au cours de ma vie, j'ai voyagé beaucoup avec ma famille tout autour du monde. Je suis née en Roumanie et j'ai déménagé en Amérique du Nord à l'âge de 6 ans. Ma famille et moi sommes allés dans plusieurs grandes villes au Canada et aux États-Unis, ainsi qu'en Europe, et aussi les Îles de St. Pierre-et-Miquelon. Toutes ces expériences étaient incroyables, mais elles ne vont jamais être comparables à mon voyage en Chine.

Maintenant, imaginez que vous êtes arrivé en Chine. Vous pouvez observer des différences culturelles partout, dès que vous vous promenez dans l'aéroport. *Nin Hao!* Vous entendez la langue chinoise partout mais vous ne pouvez pas la parler. C'est votre première fois dans un pays asiatique. Vous n'êtes pas habitué à la grande population de la Chine. Par exemple, une grande ville a le même nombre d'habitants que tout le Canada ensemble. Aussi, le climat est différent car c'est beaucoup plus tropical.

Parmi tous ces changements culturels extraordinaires, la cuisine chinoise était ma préférée. J'ai beaucoup aimé les différentes nourritures que j'ai essayées avant dans ma vie. C'était très délicieux. Cela m'a pris un peu de temps pour m'habituer avec les «chopsticks», mais du moment que j'ai réussi, j'ai eu le choix à toute la bonne nourriture. J'ai appris que le riz était traditionnel au sud de la Chine, et les nouilles l'étaient au nord. Pour les repas, c'était traditionnel de commander plusieurs plats, comme un symbole de fierté, et de les partager. La plus riche la table, le plus généreux l'hôte. Quelques exemples de mes plats préférés étaient la racine de lotus, le gâteau aux chrysanthèmes, les champignons au «Hot Pot», aussi que le poulet à la sauce d'arachides.

La Chine est une destination incroyable et si vous avez la chance d'y aller, je vous encourage!



Ioana Dobre



TWO SIDES OF THE WORLD

My picture is a representation of two sides of the world. One side is the good one, which includes love, peace, human rights, nature, unity, and solidarity. It has bright colours because good things produce more good things. That side is alive and humankind has hope. In contrast, the dark side is full of negative things and feelings of hatred. There are weapons; thus there is war. That side is full of thorns. There is no understanding between cultures, and race becomes an issue. Some believe they belong to a superior race.

This picture means that we need to negotiate an understanding between different cultures. We need to change our attitude. We need to be more tolerant and open with other cultures. Moreover, we need to take responsibility for the future of the world. We cannot continue living in inequality, as many people live with almost nothing and few have access to the best. In the centre of the heart of my picture is planet earth – I think we should learn to appreciate the planet we share and choose the good side, which means to do the right thing.

The fact that some people belong to a culture that is different from my Colombian culture makes the world more interesting. I can discover wonderful things if I decide to interact with people from other cultures. I love food, music, art, technology, and clothing from other cultures. Indeed, I dream about having the means to visit different countries and experience different cultures.



Maria Del Mar Torres

ST. JOHN'S TO SHESHATSHIU

My name is Hope Michel and I am part Innu. I was born in St. John's and moved to Sheshatshiu when I was one year old. I am in grade six and my birthday is on November 19. I can speak Innu, English, and some Arabic. I live with my mom, my brother, sister, nephew, and step-dad. I have three dogs called Ugly, No Name, and Jesus. My favourite part of living in Sheshatshiu is my family. I like to play with my cousins a lot. I have a friend named Madaline Nook in grade five.

My teacher's name is Ms. Egerton. I like school because my teacher helps me to learn. I don't like the bullies, though. Sometimes other kids bully me, but my brother sticks up for me. My favourite holidays are Christmas and Halloween because I like presents and candy and I like to dress up. I like to act in church plays at Christmas to celebrate Christ's birth.

I love eating caribou and porcupine. I like vegetables and fruits. My aunt has a farm. When we visit, we pick up eggs that she gives us for free. I feed the chickens and pigs. My favourite thing to do at the farm is swing on the tire swing. My aunt makes apple pies all the time and I like eating them. Even though I am Innu, I do lots of things that other Canadians do.



Hope Michel



FROM LAGOS TO COLD ST. JOHN'S

I want to share with you how my family and I, who are from Nigeria, arrived in Newfoundland. I was excited about going to see my cousins in St. John's. We arrived at the Murtala Mohammed Airport in Lagos in September 2009. The security personnel scanned us for any metallic or unwanted objects, and checked our passports and tickets for the trip to Canada.

While the plane was taking off, I felt like something was pushing me into the seat. It was a strange feeling and I was praying that nothing would go wrong. The little touch screen in front of me was turned on automatically and there was a video of what to do in a plane crash. I thought hopefully this one wouldn't! A few minutes later, I started playing video games.

It was my first time on a plane so I was a bit nervous and I couldn't go to sleep. The flight to Dubai took over seven hours. Our next flight was a big double-decker Boeing 737, which took us to Toronto. It took about 12 hours! I was so tired I could barely open my eyes. After three hours, we boarded the plane for St. John's. I fell asleep until my Dad woke me up and told me we had arrived in St. John's. My uncle brought us winter jackets but I felt cold even with my jacket on.



Charles Atisele Jr.

A SUMMER OF OPPORTUNITIES

Have you ever heard of the Explore Program? It gives students a chance to create a summer experience, to learn and share different cultures from around the world.

I was born in Colombia and this summer I experienced Quebec and improved my French. After a three-hour flight from St. John's, I made my way to Quebec City. I was introduced to the people in charge of making the summer as exciting as possible! After the first two days, I had made a couple of friends. Some came from the other side of the country; others came from towns just hours away from St. John's; while others came from as far away as Switzerland and China.

Learning French was so much fun! Every morning we had classes for four hours. We learned not only about different cultures, but we also learned about the Quebecois culture. In the afternoons, we had a two-hour workshop twice a week. I chose a music workshop in which we learned about Quebecois music. At the end of four weeks, each workshop did a performance or an exposition. My group sang "Un musicien parmi tant d'autres" by the Quebecois band "Harmonium."

The best part about learning a culture is experiencing it! Thus, after the French classes and the fun workshops came the adventure. We explored the beautiful architecture of old Quebec and its famous Château Frontenac. This is the website to learn about the Explore Program:

<http://www.myexplore.ca>



Daniel Torres