

# Cultural Appropriation and proper use of culture in business

## Goals / Theme

A learning activity around the topic of cultural appropriation and proper use of culture in business. Through the activity, students gain understanding on the concept of cultural appropriation, learn about examples of cultural appropriation in real life, and practice reflecting how culture can be used in business in a sustainable way.

## School subjects and course

- JA year (Junior Achievement) entrepreneurship course (Swedish upper secondary school)
- ENA3 English course (Finnish upper secondary school)

## Participants

Strömbackaskolan Piteå: 4 students / 2 teachers (JA year entrepreneurship course)

Haukipudas high school: 4 students / 1 teacher (ENA3 English course)

**Total number of participants: 11**

## Activity structure

### Learning goals:

- Students gain understanding of the concept of cultural appropriation
- Students learn to reflect on how culture can be used in a sustainable way in business

**Duration:** 60-75 minutes (+ 60 minutes of individual preparation for students)

**Materials needed:** Laptop for each student, Miro account for facilitator

### Platforms:

- Microsoft Teams for online meeting
- Miro for facilitating the activity

### 1. Get to know (completed online individually)

Students were paired with another student from the other school and assigned to do a short interview as a get-to-know-you exercise. In the interview, they asked each other questions such as: What do you study?, What are your hobbies?, favorite foods/recipes, favorite songs or books to recommend etc. The answers to the interviews were filled in to a ready-made template on a Miro board.

## **2. Introduction to the topic and preparation for the digital collaboration session (completed individually)**

Students were asked to read in advance an article about cultural appropriation of Ungava Inuits within an Ungava Gin marketing campaign ([link to article](#)). After reading the article, students then responded to a reading comprehension assignment on Miro board with statements about the article. After the reading comprehension task, students were asked to find and come up with their own examples of cultural appropriation.

## **3. Digital collaboration (60 minutes)**

The digital collaboration session between the two classes was organized on Microsoft Teams platform. The session started with an icebreaker exercise where students were asked to come up with positive and negative examples of companies which use culture and to reflect on how marketing with culture affects the students individually as consumers.

The next part of the session, students worked in mixed groups from both schools, analysing the article about cultural appropriation of Ungava Inuits within an Ungava Gin marketing campaign. The task was to find concrete examples of cultural appropriation from the article and reflect on what the Ungava Gin company could have done differently to use culture in a good and more sustainable way.

During the final part of the session, the JA year entrepreneurship students from the Swedish high school presented shortly their JA companies, putting special focus on how they have used culture in their business. After the presentation, Finnish students interviewed the company 'owners' and gave comments/conclusions from the perspective of using culture in business. The presentations and interviews were completed in smaller mixed groups.

The whole digital collaboration session, including the pre-assignments was facilitated on the Miro platform.

## **Lessons learned**