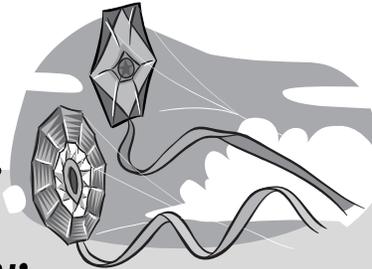


# HANDBOOK INTRODUCTION



## Overview

**B**ermuda Connections Cultural Resource Guide for Classrooms prepares students to examine the cultural resources and heritage of Bermuda. The cultural examples, discussion questions, and activities presented in the guide through a classroom handbook, video, audio CD, posters, and essays are designed to stimulate thought about the role of culture and traditional arts in our lives. While not an encyclopedia of Bermudian culture, the guide provides the resources for students to gain skills for their own investigation, documentation, and understanding of Bermudian folk culture. The guide is cross-disciplinary in nature and easy to adapt to social studies, language arts, and other subject and skill areas. It also provides a content-rich means for integrating technology with the curriculum.

This guide is based on research conducted for the 2001 Smithsonian Folklife Festival and the 2002 Bermuda Homecoming festival. Researchers interviewed tradition bearers in Bermuda and documented their arts. Now with the aide of this resource guide, students can acquire the skills to conduct their own investigation of Bermuda's folk-life and in doing so learn about themselves



Anthony Wade, Louise Tannock, Betty Belanus, Nicola O'Leary, Eugene Durham, Sharmaine Nusam, Lisa Falk

and their community. As a result, they will help preserve Bermuda's rich heritage, become active in the island's cultural life, and help shape our understanding of ourselves and our society.

The resources in this guide provide a jumping-off point for your students to look into the richness of Bermuda's multicultural traditions and heritage. The discussions stimulated by the materials and the cultural discoveries encountered as students step out of the classroom will provoke reflection on who and what is Bermudian. Don't be surprised if you see a surge in pride and increased morale in your students as they realise that they, their families, and their neighbours have rich and valuable stories and traditions. The activities undertaken by your students will also increase their communications skills.



## The Handbook

**E**ach chapter of the handbook begins with a page addressed to the teacher that gives an overview of the chapter, a list of learning objectives, and links to different curriculum areas. Each chapter is a combination of readings, discussion questions, and suggested activities. These are starting-off points for your students. Feel free to choose which readings to use, and to add to or modify the discussion questions and activities to meet the needs of your students and the goals of the curriculum into which you are integrating these cultural studies. Don't feel that you need to do all the readings, all the discussion questions, or all the activities. Words in boldface form a specialised vocabulary whose definitions are provided in the Resources chapter. To meet the needs of your students, you may want to create additional vocabulary lists. A page at the end of each chapter spells out how the chapter's learning objectives fit specific social studies curriculum goals.

The Resources chapter contains forms relating to activities throughout the book, such as a family tree form, interview report and release forms, a Venn diagram, and a map of Bermuda. Information and suggested

activities for how to conduct interviews are in this chapter. Sample lesson plans about the Gombey traditions are also included here, one for each grade level, to give an idea of how the same tradition may be presented and examined at different levels. Notes on the songs on the CD are also in this chapter, as well as suggested activities related to them. Finally, the chapter contains lists of books, websites, and other resources helpful in the study of community traditions.

## The Video

**A** 30-minute video shows students conducting their own investigations of Bermudian traditions. Two students from Sandys Secondary Middle School interview Janice Tucker about making Gombey costumes; a student from the Berkeley Institute interviews Warrington "Soup" Zuill and Colin Blades about cricket; another team of students from the Berkeley Institute make presentations to their class based on documenting Fernanda Pacheco as she makes egg bread for the Easter celebration; and a student from CedarBridge documents the skills associated with racing fitted dinghies. Showing the video and discussing how these students are conducting their fieldwork provides a wonderful introduction before your students set off on their own projects. They will find it to be both inspiring and illuminating.

## The CD

**E**ighteen songs covering many aspects of Bermuda performance traditions make up the enclosed CD. From Gombey to marching bands, sacred music to reggae, calypso to spoken-word pieces, the CD provides a soundscape of Bermuda's oral traditions. See the related essays and notes about individual songs in Part 3: *Bermuda's Musical Connections*.

## The Posters

**T**he kit contains two posters. Hang these in your classroom to inspire your students and whet their appetites for their own ventures to investigate Bermudian folklife. A brightly coloured poster highlights some of the traditions covered in this guide and displays a map of Bermuda. A black and white poster illustrates the steps involved in undertaking a cultural investigation project.

## The Website

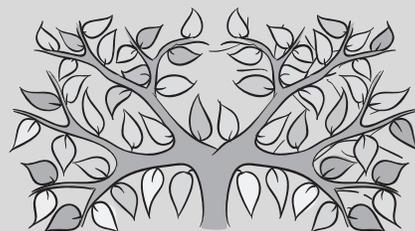
**T**he Bermuda Connections website provides more Bermuda folk culture content materials and lesson plans created by Bermudian teachers. It is also a place to post student work and your own lesson plans. As you work through this guide, be sure to visit the website.



Eugene Durham and Sharmaine Nusam with a display of student cultural projects at the 2002 Bermuda Homecoming Festival. Photograph by Lisa Falk.

## Integrating the Guide Into Your Classroom

**T**his guide was created with the assistance of a group of Bermudian primary, middle, and senior school teachers and their students, who tested earlier versions. Educators from the Bermuda National Trust and *The Royal Gazette* and content advisors also helped develop this guide. Here are some comments from teachers at each school level. They describe what this guide means to them and their students and how they integrated the Bermuda culture studies into their classrooms. They enthusiastically encourage you to do the same.



**From Louise Tannock, history teacher, The Berkeley Institute:**

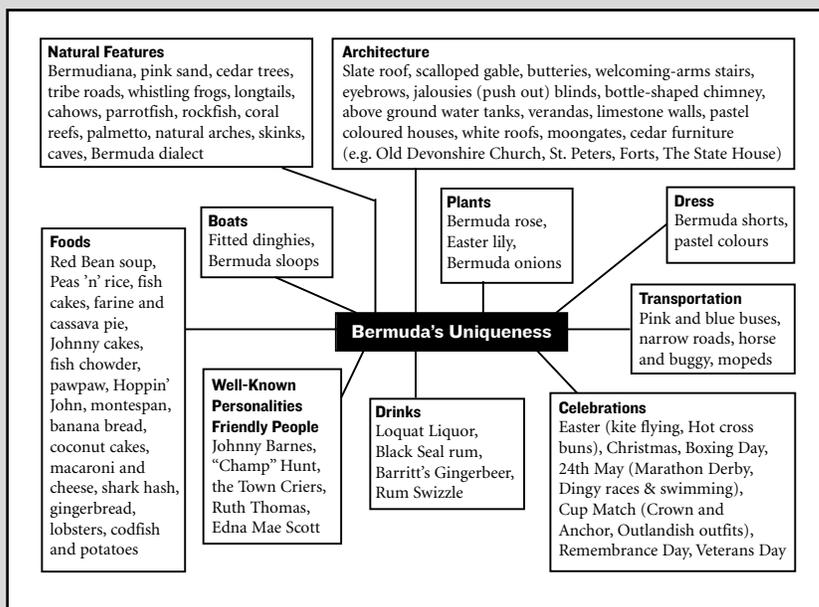
This is an excellent resource guide. I visualise it serving many needs in our community. First of all it is a wonderful definition of what and who is a Bermudian. Anyone would be able to use this document—government ministers, business people, visitors, educators, students and, in general, the average man on the street. The document provides a vivid picture of life in Bermuda. It is compact and especially useful to the educator who is forced to search for resources to build a lesson.

I am pleased with the number of suggested activities offered to aid the understanding of each chapter. It is interesting to note that a teacher at any level of education—primary, middle, or senior school—can find numerous examples of activities that

will enhance a lesson about being Bermudian. Teachers, old and new, will find this to be a valuable resource. It offers easy, ready to be reprinted readings, which are packed with volumes of resources that are adaptable and easy to understand.

This package soundly examines Bermuda’s culture and offers multiple ways to make the lessons taught on this subject informative and creatively skill-based. Teachers can get many useful “Do Nows” from this text (for example, “Your Identity Card,” “Choose a Nickname,” “Who Is your Mama?,” and “Know Your Bike”). Every bit of information can be adjusted to reach any level of our education system.

So much of our folklife/traditional ways of our lives in Bermuda are constantly being minimised. This resource book offers a revival of all that is good for our community.



Bermuda's Uniqueness Graphic Organiser, by Louise Tannock, The Berkeley Institute.



Lisa DeSilva, Nicole Douglas, Anthony Wade, Tony Spring, Sharmaine Nusam, Lisa Falk, Louise Tannock, Eugene Durham, and Deirdre Ross-Nwasike talk about their experiences integrating culture studies into their curriculum at the 2002 Bermuda Homecoming Festival.

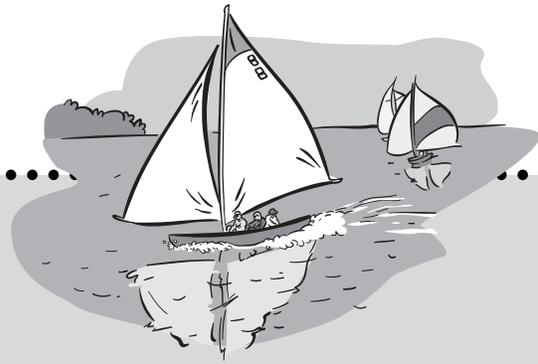
It helps to take us back to the basics and reconnects and reinforces the foundations of who we are when we proclaim with pride to be a Bermudian. Cultural markers (objects with personal meaning) and tradition bearers are given their rightful place of honour and we are able to recognise the value of each to our community. The *Bermuda Connections Cultural Resource Guide for Classrooms* clearly makes the connections alive and meaningful for all. It is a resource package which offers sights and sounds, meanings and directions for finding all that is unique and must be appreciated, valued, and protected in the Bermuda of our present and our future.

**From Sharmaine Nusam,  
Spice Valley Middle School:**

**I**ncorporating cultural work into the curriculum is not an added task. To view it as such would surely be a mistake. As we attempt to meet the objectives of the curriculum we can simultaneously invite discussions about the community in which we live regardless of the discipline taught. Incorporating culture into the curriculum

proved to be a rewarding experience for my students and me. I saw positive changes in my students on many different levels.

At Spice Valley, the children were encouraged to venture out into the community to gain information about various aspects of Bermuda's culture. All students were asked to thoroughly investigate at least one aspect of our culture. They were to become experts on their subjects. The topics they were to investigate (though interviews, videotapings, and photographic essays) ranged from architecture in Bermuda to traditional weddings. They truly gained insight about everything from A to Z. Students learned that there is so much about our island home not yet in a textbook. The significance of oral histories was highlighted. Also, students recognised that the contributions each and every person makes in carrying out a craft is what makes us so unique and so special. A renewed interest in their home and an appreciation for the people of the island developed as a result of completing their research. In addition, students' confidence in public speaking increased as they interviewed persons



in the community in an effort to gain information. More importantly, a sense of pride in being Bermudian was established. They discovered for themselves what it means to be a “real” Bermudian. In essence, they learned that there is no place like home.

I too benefited from my students’ research. There was much about our island I learned as they reported their findings to the class. What I realised as a result of the overall project was that promoting dialogue with persons of different generations is essential in keeping our culture alive. Valuable information about our rich heritage, traditions, and way of life can be obtained from communicating with persons in our community. Our greatest resource is our people. Let’s continue to celebrate who we are by passing this information along to our children—tomorrow’s future.

**From Eugene Hastings  
Durham, Southampton  
Glebe Primary School:**

**T**he *Bermuda Connections Cultural Resources Guide* is about us, all Bermudians. Its uniqueness is that it connects us—in all our diversity of ethnic groups, age groups, genders, occupations—to each other. The people of Bermuda have always lived as if we are separate entities. However, historically and culturally we have always been connected. There is nothing more satisfying, more uplifting than to analyse what “being a Bermudian” means.

This guide could be the connection that helps to bring our communities together.

Teachers can identify with the information in the guide because it is about them. The nicknames, getting a motorcycle at 16, kites, manners, and marriage. These customs have been passed down from generation to generation.

Students will have a wealth of information in the community. Everyone has his or her own personal story to tell. Students can conduct interviews, talk to relatives, look at picture albums, and obtain cultural markers. The list is endless.

Schools in Bermuda, past and present have always taught someone else’s history and culture. However, this guide provides students with the opportunity to learn about themselves and their community.

This guide, particularly in primary school can be studied from a more practical, hands-on approach. Making a kite, a Gombey costume and instruments, a punt, a go-cart, fishing from the rocks are fun and exciting things to do. This guide enables a teacher to be creative and resourceful in this and other subject areas.