



## LESSON PLAN

# Compare and Contrast

Topic: **Similarities and Differences**  
Subject: **Social Studies**

Grade Level: **Middle School**  
Time: **55 minutes**

### OBJECTIVE(S):

Students will learn that many U.S. service members work in countries around the world, including Afghanistan. Students will learn about Afghanistan and will have the opportunity to identify similarities and differences between that country and the United States.

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- *Where Are You Going?* Afghanistan video from the MilitaryKidsConnect.org website
- "Similarities and Differences" Worksheet
- Flip chart, markers, pencils, paper
- Go to "Related Materials" in on-line version of this lesson plan to access all required links: [www.militarykidsconnect.org/p/lp/mid](http://www.militarykidsconnect.org/p/lp/mid)

### OTHER RESOURCES REQUIRED:

- Computer with classroom display and Internet access

## LESSON

### Suggested Activity and Set-up

#### Teacher Set-up (5 minutes)

- Explore what characteristics of a country might be examined to compare and contrast it with another country. Possibilities include geography, climate, flora and fauna, etc. Note ideas on flip chart.
- Explain that culture is made up of the characteristics of everyday life that people from a specific place and time share.
- Ask students to identify aspects of their lives that reflect their culture (such as food, clothing, slang, music, etc.). Record students' ideas on the flip chart.
- Distribute the "Similarities and Differences" Worksheet and instruct students to note differences and similarities between the United States and Afghanistan on the "Similarities and Differences" Worksheet as they watch the video.

#### Video (5 minutes)

- Cue the *Where Are You Going* introductory Afghanistan video followed by at least two sub-topic videos.

#### Teacher-Led Discussion (5 minutes)

- On a flip chart, draw a Venn diagram like the "Similarities and Differences" Worksheet and ask students to help you complete it for one characteristic (such as clothing or animals).

#### Small-Group Work (30 minutes)

- Students form small groups. Instruct each group to select another characteristic to explore and to create and complete a Venn diagram for their topic on a flip chart or posterboard.
- Representatives from each small group present their group's Venn diagram to the class.

### Tips

- **English/Language Arts:** Students can write a brief paper that compares and contrasts characteristics of the United States and Afghanistan.
- **Geography/Social Studies:** Use the same exercises to explore the other *Where Are You Going* countries.
- **Social Studies:** Challenge students to do additional research and prepare a presentation about these countries to share with the class; for example, a presentation might be in the form of a written report, a photo collage or poster, a model, or an audio file.

**WORKSHEET**

**Afghanistan and the United States  
Similarities and Differences Worksheet**

**Things that are the same**

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**Things that are different**

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**WORKSHEET**

**Afghanistan and the United States  
Similarities and Differences Worksheet**

Cultural Characteristic: \_\_\_\_\_

