Culture in Motion

Read a New Orleans parade as evidence of culture, past and present.

SS24.HG.4c "Explain how music, dance, fashion, and art provide avenues for understanding the cultures from which they originate, both past and present."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one detail about each of music, dance, fashion, and art. Label each detail P if it offers evidence about the past or N if it offers evidence about the present.

Reading a Second Line

1. On a Sunday in New Orleans, a brass band leads a second line parade through neighborhood streets. Trumpets and trombones play a steady rhythm, and people behind the band step and sway to it. The sound is not just entertainment. In the late nineteenth century, Black social aid and pleasure clubs helped members with expenses, including funeral costs, when many institutions excluded them. Their processions helped shape the second line tradition. Today, clubs still organize parades that gather neighbors and visitors. Hearing a band in the street can point to both a history of mutual support and a living public tradition.

2. The dancers do not follow a single fixed set of steps. Some bounce, turn, or lift their knees while moving with the band; others watch or join for a block. This freedom suggests that participation matters more than performing one perfect routine. Club members often wear coordinated suits or other distinctive outfits, sometimes with sashes. Such clothing makes a club visible and signals pride in belonging to it. Yet the same outfit cannot tell a viewer what every member believes. Watching who wears it, where, and when provides stronger evidence about its meaning than guessing from appearance alone.

3. Visual art also travels through the parade. Hand-decorated umbrellas and signs can carry a club's colors or name, turning the street into a moving display. A viewer might read these objects as signs of shared identity, then ask a club member what a particular design means. Music, movement, clothing, and decoration work together, but they do not freeze a culture in the past. Clubs make choices in the present while drawing on older practices. To understand those choices, compare what a parade shows today with its history of mutual aid and listen to the people who make it.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How can the sound of a brass band help a listener understand both the history and present-day role of second line parades?

2. What might the dancers' different movements suggest about participation in the parade? Use a detail from the passage.

3. What can club members' outfits suggest about belonging, and what can the outfits not tell a viewer?

4. What might decorated umbrellas and signs suggest about a club? How could a viewer check that interpretation?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a community celebration unrelated to New Orleans. Describe one music or dance choice and one fashion or art choice, explain what each might suggest about the community today, and name a question you would ask before treating an inference as fact.

ANSWER KEY

Culture in Motion

HIGH SCHOOL · SS24.HG.4c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one detail about each of music, dance, fashion, and art. Label each detail P if it offers evidence about the past or N if it offers evidence about the present. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How can the sound of a brass band help a listener understand both the history and present-day role of second line parades?	**The band accompanies a tradition shaped by processions of clubs that once helped members with expenses. Clubs still organize parades today, so the music also marks a living public tradition.**
2	What might the dancers' different movements suggest about participation in the parade? Use a detail from the passage.	**Participation may matter more than following exact steps. People bounce, turn, watch, or join the parade for a block.**
3	What can club members' outfits suggest about belonging, and what can the outfits not tell a viewer?	**Coordinated outfits can show club membership and pride. They cannot reveal what every member believes.**
4	What might decorated umbrellas and signs suggest about a club? How could a viewer check that interpretation?	**A club's colors or name might suggest shared identity. A viewer could ask a club member what a particular design means.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

At an invented hill-town gathering, neighbors sing alternating verses while new voices join each round. This could suggest that the community values sharing stories today. Painted cloth patches on jackets show different garden plants. Those patches might suggest pride in local growing today, but I would ask wearers what the plants mean before treating that guess as fact.

Accept other passage-supported inferences that connect a specific expressive detail to cultural meaning. For Part 3, look for two distinct choices, two qualified inferences about the present, and a question that could test an inference.