

## Culture, Communication and Love

Fluency level:	Low Intermediate and above
Age of students:	Older teenagers and adults
Lesson length:	Adjustable
Subject Area:	Reading, writing, oral skills development
Lesson Context:	Theme of love within a crosscultural context

### Objectives:

1. To help the students learn and use expressions used in storytelling and, comparison and contrasts
2. To practice expressions and idioms related to love relationships and dating.
3. To help students find out the customs and traditions about love and relationships in different cultures
4. To have students discover how their views are influenced by culture as well as personality.

### Materials:

1. Video clip from the movie "Romeo and Juliet"\*
2. Handouts
3. Access to internet or library
4. CD and player
5. Love songs\*
6. "Language of Love" Game\*

### Summary of Unit of instruction

The unit starts with the theme of dating and relationships. One thing that is common in ALL cultures is the existence of the human feeling of "love." Relationships vary according to the culture. By introducing vocabulary related to love and relationships and having the students discuss cultural variations with the use of "Language of Love", students gain awareness of their own cultural views on relationships.

### Ideas for Anticipatory Activities:

1. The teacher shows a part from the movie "Romeo and Juliet" and asks the students to guess what the movie is or is about. After eliciting the theme "love story," the teacher asks the students if there are famous love stories like this in their culture.
2. OR The teacher may ask how the students met with their partners or how their parents met to get into a discussion.

## PART I

Depending on the level of the students either find as a lab activity famous love stories from their culture, OR have them write about famous love stories as a writing activity. Related vocabulary is presented (see handout)

### Task Chain

#### Option 1

After finding out or writing about different love stories, students walk around asking each other about the stories (see chart)

#### Option 2

Students do a presentation of the love story from their culture. The other students listen carefully to answer related questions about the story they heard (What happened? – Where did it take place? – How did it end?)

#### Variation:

If the students are from one culture or if there is not much variation of cultures in the classroom, the instructor may assign them to research different love stories from other cultures.

#### References:

##### **Games**

“The Language of Love” [www.learning-with-ease.com](http://www.learning-with-ease.com)

##### **Songs**

[www.esl-loung.com/songs.tv.shtml](http://www.esl-loung.com/songs.tv.shtml)

[www.musicalenglishlessons.com/music-index.htm](http://www.musicalenglishlessons.com/music-index.htm)

## Focus Sheet 1

### Layla and Madjnun (An Arabian Love Story)

This romantic love story can be dated back in its original form to the second half of the 7<sup>th</sup> Century. The content of the romance, insofar as it can be extracted from the ancient versions, is relatively simple. However, from the start there have been two different versions:

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In one, the two young people spent their youth together tending their flocks; while in the other, Madjnun [meaning madman] whose actual name according to the narrators was Qays, meets Layla, by chance at a gathering of women, and the effect on him is devastating...

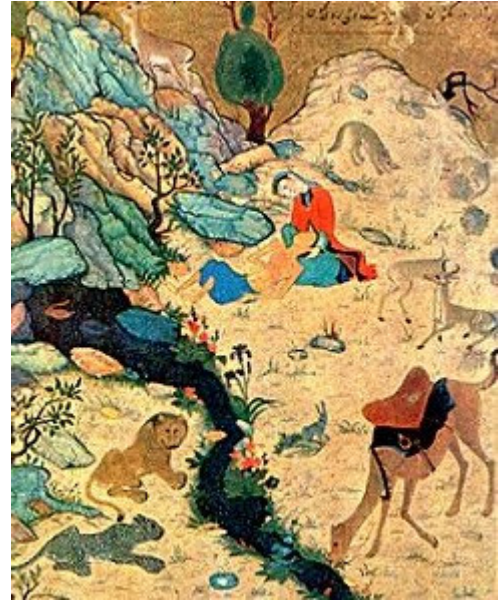
He kills his camel as a contribution to the feast, and Layla falls in love with him from the start. Subsequently he asks for her hand in marriage, but her father has already promised her to another. Grippped by the most violent pain, Qays loses his reason and sets out to wander half-naked, refusing nourishment and living among wild animals. His father tries to make him forget Layla, by taking him on a trip , but his madness only gets worse.

He does, however, show moments of lucidity in his poetry about his lady-love, and while talking about her to those curious people who have come to see him...

He dies alone, only meeting Layla one more time.

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The origins of this story is difficult to establish. It is thought that it may have been a young man of the Umayyad clan who, under the name of Madjnun, circulated some stories designed to introduce verses in which he sang of his love for his cousin. This identification is, however, isolated and in any case, the poet is anonymous. The fact that historical individuals such as Nawfal ben Musahik, governor of Medina (702 AD) are mentioned in the traditions relating to the adventures of Qays, suggests that the latter version came to existence at about this period. The author, or rather authors of the verses attributed to this Madjnun and the introductory or explanatory tales, will always be unknown, which makes the legend more unusual and exciting.



"Layli and Madjnun in the Desert"  
Persian Miniature, Herat Style  
( 15<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> Century )

## Focus Sheet 2

### The Seventh Daughter (A Chinese Love Tale)

Chinese Valentine's Day is on the 7th day of the 7th lunar month in the Chinese calendar. A love story for this day is about the 7th daughter of Emperor of Heaven and an orphaned cowherd. The Emperor separated them. The 7th daughter was forced to move to the star Vega and the cowherd moved to the star Altair. They are allowed to meet only once a year on the day of 7th day of 7th lunar month.

The story began from the good-looking poor orphaned boy living with his elder brother and sister-in-law. After his parents past away, his brother inherited the house and the land. The boy owned an old ox. He needed to work on the farm's field with the ox everyday. So he was called a cowherd. His daily life was just like in a Cinderella story.

The 7th daughter of Emperor is good at handcrafting, especially weaving clothing. So she was called a Weaving Maid. The Emperor likes her skill to weave clouds and rainbows to beautify the world.

The ox was actually an immortal from the Heaven. He made mistakes in the Heaven and was punished as an ox in the Earth. One day, the ox suddenly said to the cowherd, "You are a nice person. If you want to get married, go to the brook and your wish will be come true." The cowherd went to the brook and saw all 7 pretty daughters of Emperor came down from Heaven and took a bath in there. Fascinated by the youngest and also the most beautiful one, he took away her fairy clothes secretly. The other six fairies went away after the bath. The youngest couldn't fly back without her fairy clothes. Then the cowherd appeared and told her that he would not return her clothes unless she promised to be his wife. After a little hesitation and with a mixture of shyness and eagerness, she agreed to the request from this handsome man. So they married and had two children two years later.

One day, the old ox was dying and told the cowherd that he should keep his hide for emergency purpose.

The Emperor found the sky was not as beautiful as before without the 7th daughter weaving clouds and rainbows. He wanted his daughter's grandmother to find the missing daughter and to bring her back. While the 7th princess was flying to the Heaven with her grandmother, the cowboy wore the ox hide, took his children in two bamboo baskets with his wife's old fairy clothes and chased after his wife in the sky. The grandmother made a Milky Way in the sky with her hairpin, which kept them separated. The 7th princess was moved to the star Vega (The swooping - Eagle) in the Lyra (Harp) constellation. And the cowherd with his two children stayed in the star Altair (Flying One) in the Aquila (Eagle) constellation. The star of Vega is also known as the Weaving Maid Star and the star of Altair is as the Cowherd Star in China.

Magpies were moved by their true love and many of them gathered and formed a bridge for the couple to meet in the evening of the 7th day of the 7th lunar month, which is the day the Emperor allowed them to meet once a year.

**Discussion Questions**

1. What are the similarities in the stories?
2. What are some of the differences in the stories?
3. What cultural characteristics can you identify from the stories?

## Focus Sheet 3

### Some Useful Expressions

#### Telling a Story

First,  
 First of all,  
 Once upon a time, there was (beginnings of fairy tales)  
 To begin with,  
 Then,  
 After that,  
 So,  
 At the end,  
 Finally,

#### Example:

Once upon a time there was a beautiful princess who was in love with a shepherd. One day her father found out about their love. Then he locked her into her room. When the shepherd heard this, he charged into the castle and saved her. At the end, her father forgave the shepherd and they lived happily ever after.

#### Comparing

Just as  
 Both common  
 alike  
 Like  
 Likewise  
 Compared to  
 Same  
 Similar

#### Example:

In spite of their different origins, the Chinese Love Story and the Arabian love story are very similar. They both involve a poor man and a rich girl. Like the Arabian story, the Chinese story has...

#### Contrasting

Although  
 But  
 Different  
 Unlike  
 In contrast  
 On the other hand  
 Whereas  
 Yet

#### Example:

Although both the Chinese and Arabian stories are love stories, there are many differences. The Chinese story has a lot of supernatural elements whereas the Arabian story is more realistic.

## Worksheet 1

### Expressions and Idioms in the “Language of Love” Game

Match the following idioms to the meanings below:

1. double date
  2. blind date
  3. to go dutch
  4. to break up
  5. to go steady
  6. to make out
  7. to have an affair
  8. to get engaged
  9. to be stood up
  10. to play hard to get
  11. to flirt
  12. to feed someone a line
  13. to get to know someone
  14. to have a crush on someone
- a. To have your date fail to appear at the appointed time
  - b. Invest time to know someone before getting into a serious relationship
  - c. This is what you do before you get married
  - d. A date where each person pays his or her own way
  - e. To kiss and touch passionately
  - f. To say words without meaning them, with the hopes of gaining someone's interest
  - g. To date with an intention of a serious relationship
  - h. A date arranged by a third party for two people who have not met
  - i. To like someone platonically
  - j. To get the attention of a person of the opposite sex with your body or by what you say
  - k. To cheat on your spouse or significant other with another person
  - l. To end a relationship
  - m. A date where couples go out together
  - n. To appear not interested even though you may be interested

## Assessment Sheet 1

These questions are designed to give you an overview of what you have gained from the lesson.

1. Which love story did you like the best? Why?
2. What were the most surprising cultural facts that you learned from the stories?
3. Were there any questions in the “Language of Love” game that made you uncomfortable? Which ones?
4. What part did you most like in the game?
5. Can you think of any intercultural relationships that you know?
6. Why do you think people oppose these kinds of relationships?
7. What do you think was the most important thing you have learned from this lesson?



## Assessment Sheet 2

### Vocabulary and Idioms Quiz

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate vocabulary and idioms that you have gained from the lesson.

get her out of my mind	similarly	blind date
going steady	blinded	a crush on
broke up	once upon a time	whereas
		meant to be

1. John and Jane have been going out for four months now. They are finally \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Mary has \_\_\_\_\_ our chemistry professor. I'm not surprised, he's very handsome.
3. My sister set me up on a \_\_\_\_\_ next Saturday. I don't even know her name.
4. Did you hear that John and Jane \_\_\_\_\_?  
Oh That's too bad. I thought they were going to get married.
5. Every moment, every second I think about her. I can't \_\_\_\_\_ her \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Oh darling, we are so perfect together. We are \_\_\_\_\_.
7. I am \_\_\_\_\_ by her beauty. I can't see anything else.
8. Romeo and Juliet ends in a tragedy. \_\_\_\_\_, Leila and Majnun does too.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ there was a beautiful princess that had a bad spell cast on her.
10. In Romeo and Juliet both lovers die. \_\_\_\_\_ in Leila and Majnun only Majnun dies at the end of the story.

## Presentation

### Role Play

Students, in groups of 2-4 people, develop an original plot for a multicultural love story and present it to the class through their choice of medium (music, role play or narration).

Full credit will be given to each student who takes a part in the presentation and if the presentations are well prepared.

Name:	Comments
1. Uses the expressions from the lesson	
2. Adequately prepared and presented	