

1. Read the following passage as a group and respond to the questions.
2. What are some nature-oriented cultural traditions you might encounter in your early childhood programs?
3. How have these cultural traditions been honored? What are some other ways these cultural traditions or similar cultural traditions can be honored?
4. How might you learn more about the cultural traditions of the children you serve?
5. Create a poster that illustrates the role of culture in early childhood environmental education.

#### Young Children, Family Culture, and Nature

Young children are embedded in their family culture. The child's cultural background includes the beliefs and practices related to daily life and child rearing (e.g., eating, sleeping, clothing, guidance and discipline, routines, relationships with others) as well as the family's home language and religious, ethnic, political, and geographic characteristics.

Because many early environmental education activities involve living things and learning through concrete, firsthand experiences, it is important to recognize differences in families regarding attitudes toward their child's handling certain insects or creatures and their reverence toward some animals or plants in nature. Rice, beans, and corn or maize are revered in some cultures. Some religions fear snakes and others use snakes in worship.

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