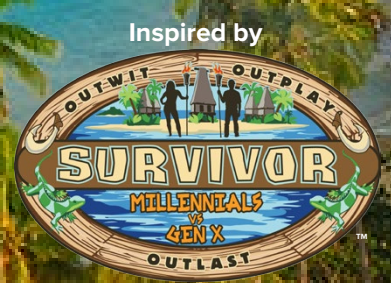


WHAT MAKES A GENERATION?



Goal:

In this activity, students will explore the concept of generations, how they are formed, and how one differs from another. They will also complete a social studies activity that reinforces research, analysis, and data visualization skills.

Materials Required:

Worksheet 1, pen or pencil

Instructions:

- Ask** students two or three “would you rather?” questions, such as: *Would you rather send a letter or use a chat app? If you could only have a TV or a tablet, but not both, which one would you choose?*
- Explain** to students that their answers to the “would you rather?” questions might have a lot to do with the generation they belong to.
- Ask** students: *What is a generation?* Have them name several different generations, if they can. Write their answers on the board.
- Explain** that a generation is a group of people born around the same time and who have gone through similar life experiences. Each generation has a name or label that helps describe them. Members of a generation were born during a specific time frame, usually within 10 to 20 years of one another. *Baby Boomers were born between the mid-1940s and the mid-1960s. The following generation—Generation X—was born between the mid-1960s and the early 1980s.*
- Discuss** with students how historical or cultural events (or both) create similar life experiences for the members of a generation. Major historical changes such as industrialization, the Great Depression, or wars help form group identity. A generation might also be united by cultural or social trends, such as changing civil rights or shifts in technology. Not every generation has an equally strong group identity.
- Refer** back to the “would you rather?” questions. Ask them how they think the experiences of their generation might influence their preferences.
- Write** the following generation names on the board and share the following details:
Baby Boomers (1940s–1960s): *grew up during a strong economy; had many opportunities; enjoyed a high standard of living; embraced rock and roll and youth culture;* **Generation X** (1960s–1980s): *grew up with less adult presence than Boomers; embraced alternative music and causes such as environmentalism;* **Millennial Generation** (1980s–2000): *more tolerant of others than previous generations; confident and upbeat; heavily parented; comfortable with technology and social media;* **Generation Z** (1990s–2010s): *shaped by war, terrorism, and the Great Recession; feels uncertainty about economy; first “digital natives,” comfortable with technology.*
- Have** students read and analyze the *What It Means to be a Millennial vs. Gen Xer?* Students should notice generational differences and similarities in the bios. What stands out most about how the bios reflect different generations? Do you think they are correct?
- Distribute Worksheet 1.** Guide students through the creation of a timeline of generations. Remind students that a good timeline has facts, rather than opinions.
- Direct** students to online resources for research. Advise students to start their research with the Smithsonian Institution. Remind them that generations are shaped by both historical events and cultural changes. *Historical events include: Baby Boomers—Vietnam War, killings of JFK and MLK, Jr., walk on the moon; Gen X—Challenger disaster, Persian Gulf War; Millennials—9/11, Iraq War, crash of 2008; Gen Z—war on terror and the Great Recession.*

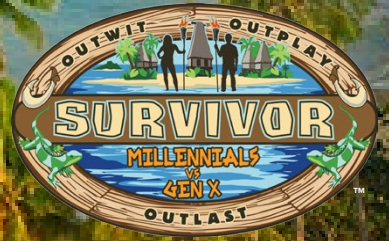
Source: pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/25/millennials-overtake-baby-boomers/

Extension Project—Generation Profile

Have students, individually or in a small group, create a brochure, flyer, or PowerPoint presentation that profiles a historical generation of their choice. The projects should include the dates of the generation, the major historical and cultural events that happened during that generation’s lifetime, and notable expressions of the generation—including clothing, music, self-expression, or technology. Encourage students to consider profiling historical generations, such as the Greatest Generation. Students should include images where possible.

HOW DOES A GENERATION INFLUENCE IDENTITY?

Inspired by



Goal:

In this activity, students will investigate what one can learn about a person from his or her generation. Students will study techniques of interviewing and conduct an interview on a member of an older generation.

Materials Required:

Worksheet 2; pen or pencil; recording device (optional)

Instructions:

- 1. Explain** that attitudes can shift from one generation to the next. Since each generation grows up with different experiences, its members have different worldviews than the others. For example, if your generation grew up during a period of economic wealth, you might have different ideas about the economy than those who grew up during a depression (a period of widespread poverty); you would be optimistic about the economy, while the others might be cautious or fearful. Knowing about a person's generation can give you clues about that person's attitudes.
- 2. Have** students watch the trailer from Episode 1 of *Survivor: Millennials vs. Gen X*. Please be aware that *Survivor: Millennials vs. Gen X* is rated TV-PG due to some intense language. After watching the trailer, ask students for their impressions of the members of each generation. Are they surprised by the differences presented between the generations—keeping mind in
- that these differences are based on the cast members' perceptions of their own and other generations? Do the differences seem natural?
- 3. Ask** students which generation, Millennials or Gen Xers, they believe will be more successful on the show and why?
- 4. Tell** students they will conduct their own interviews to learn about other generations. Discuss techniques of interviewing. An interviewer must establish trust with the subject and be nonjudgmental, must ask questions that are open-ended in order to give the subject the freedom to talk, and must be well-prepared with questions. He or she must also listen closely in order to ask follow-up questions.
- 5. Distribute** *Student Worksheet 2*.
- 6. Have** students watch Jeff Probst, host of *Survivor: Millennials vs. Gen X*, discuss how to conduct an interview.
- 7. Instruct** students to schedule their interview with a parent, grandparent, or older friend of the family. On the day of the interview, students should use *Worksheet 2* for prompts, questions, and to take notes.
- 8. Have** students use the interview responses to write a compare/contrast essay that provides thoughts from their generation and the generation of the person they interviewed.

Extension Project—Classroom Debate

Lead students in a lighthearted generational debate. Divide students into groups according to the generation of their interview subjects. Tell students that they will be debating in the voice of their interview subject. They should review their interview notes and their interview subject's generation in order to argue from their point of view. Explain to students that formal debates begin with a resolution. Have students choose a resolution based on the generation they will be representing as well as the answer to the following question: What is the best way to communicate—writing a letter, sending an email, or using a chat app? Groups will develop a written debate position from the perspective of their interview subject and their subject's generation. Each position paper should begin with an opening statement, respond to possible rebuttals, and incorporate closing statements.

DEFINING GENERATIONS?

A generation is a group of people born around the same time who have shared life experiences.

Generations are shaped by both history and culture. But what is it that specifically makes a generation? Studying generations is the work of historians and sociologists. Thoughtful research and analysis can help tell us who we are and who other generations are.

Directions:

- 1. Label each of the four generations.
- 2. Research these generations using library or online resources.
- 3. Add historical events that shaped each generation. Include the dates. These events can be political, economic, or cultural.
- 4. Add any trends that were influential. These might not have specific dates, but estimate a date or choose a date range, such as 1990–1995. Trends include cultural and social changes.

1940s–1960s

1960s–1980s

1980s–2000s

1990s–2010s

LET'S TALK: A GENERATIONAL INTERVIEW

Directions: Interview a parent, grandparent, or older family friend who is a member of another generation. By getting them to talk about their past, you will open a door into a new world. You might be astonished at how different their lives were in the past and how different their attitudes are today because of it.

Interview Tips:

- Set a specific time and place.
- Make your subject comfortable.
- Be positive and nonjudgmental.
- Have a list of questions ready.
- Questions should be open-ended.
- Listen closely and ask follow-up questions when possible.

Ask your subject the following questions:

1. What were your favorite activities? Who did you do them with? _____

2. If you had free time on a Saturday afternoon, how would you spend it? _____

3. If there was something you were interested in, how would you learn more about it? _____

4. What global events were the most memorable for you? How did these affect your attitudes about the world? _____

5. How did you communicate with your friends? What were the advantages and disadvantages of those methods? _____

6. What kinds of technology did you use on a daily basis? What do you think of today's technology? _____

Follow-Up

On a separate sheet of paper, write a few sentences comparing your subject's answers to your own life. How was their life different from yours, both then and now? How was it the same? How do you think their upbringing shaped the attitudes they hold today?

GENERATIONS: WHO ARE WE AND WHERE ARE WE GOING?

Dear Parents,

In school, your child has been exploring the concept of generations. Students have been learning how the historical and cultural events that members of each generation experience together unites them. What experiences and events have shaped your family? As two different generations get ready to compete on the next season of *Survivor*, take a moment to look at the forces that unite your family.

WHAT'S YOUR FAMILY'S TRIBE?

Name Your Tribe

Use the questions below to help you come up with a Family Tribe Name.

1. Is your family outdoorsy or indoorsy? _____
2. Does your family prefer to read books or watch movies? _____
3. Would your family rather make dinner or go out? _____
4. If your family were a group of wild animals, which animals would you be? _____
5. If you had to face a challenge, would your family use their smarts or their strength? _____

CREATE YOUR FAMILY FLAG

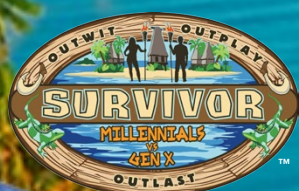
Once you have a Family Tribe Name, assemble a tribe flag that represents your family!

Don't hesitate to use symbols, mythical animals, bold colors, even phrases in other languages. Consider recycling an old sheet or some other fabric for the background and creating the flag design through drawing, painting, collaging, or fabric art.

Attach your flag to a stick or pole and raise it proudly!



Watch the *Survivor: Millennials vs. Gen X* Premiere
Wednesday, September 21 8/7c CBS



WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MILLENNIAL VS. GEN XER



Name (age): Adam Klein (25)
Current residence: San Francisco, CA
Occupation: Homeless shelter manager
Tribe designation: Vanua (Millennials)
Three words to describe you:
 Intelligent, confident, and personable.
Hobbies: Board games, poker, and travel.
Pet peeves: Bullies, long lines, and smokers.

What does it mean to be a Millennial? Millennials believe that, in this moment, anything is possible. If you have dreams, go after them. If you want to change the world, change it. I don't believe you have to "pay your dues" making

copies and fetching coffee before you can be successful—or before you can make a difference.

Don't just work harder, work smarter, and make your goals a reality! My dream is to win *Survivor* and I'm going to make it happen!

Personal claim to fame: As a volunteer, I chaired a Relay for Life event that raised over \$135,000 for cancer research and grew in size from about 10 youth participants to over 500. If any of that money helps save my mom's life, then it is, by far, my most important accomplishment.

Inspiration in life: My mom. She is surviving lung cancer and has survivorship in her blood because her mom survived Auschwitz. She is incredibly physically fit and otherwise healthy. She can tear up the dance floor—that's where I get my moves!—and she's my best friend and supporter.



Name (age): David Wright (42)
Current residence: Sherman Oaks, CA
Occupation: Television writer
Tribe designation: Takali (Gen Xers)
Three words to describe you: OCD, nervous, and paranoid.
Hobbies: 3-D printing puzzles.
Pet peeves: Sudden, loud noises; people who don't use a turn signal;

people who believe in ghosts and psychics; people who are late for dinner; people who incorrectly use the word *nonplussed*; people.

What does it mean to be a Gen Xer: Gen Xers believe in hard work, earning their rewards, and eating breakfast. Why does no one eat breakfast anymore?!

Personal claim to fame: Playing chess against Magnus Carlsen, the No. 1 ranked player in the world.

Inspiration in life: Mr. Spock (from *Star Trek*). He's highly intelligent, logical, and has trouble fitting in.



Name (age): Jessica "Figgy" Figueroa (23)
Current residence: Nashville, TN
Occupation: Bartender
Tribe designation: Vanua (Millennials)
Three words to describe you:
 Adventurous, free spirit, and crowd pleaser.
Hobbies: Kayaking, videography, and

watching football.

Pet peeves: When people are lazy and expect things to just happen. That's not what life is about. Get up and fight.

What does it mean to be a Millennial? Being a millennial means being blessed with an innovative and

creative mind, and the world is at my fingertips. It's all there, I just have to make it happen. I work hard for where I want to be and for everything I have. Millennials get stuff done and work hard while throwing a good snap in our (Snapchat) stories every now and again.

Personal claim to fame: Moving to Nashville and standing on my own two feet at a vulnerable moment in my life. Leaving all that you know for a city of unfamiliarity? Scary. That's why I'm ready for a bigger challenge. *Survivor* is the ultimate challenge.

Inspiration in life: My mother. She did everything she could to make life for us okay, having gone through a very toxic relationship with our father. She showed me courage and strength in standing up for herself and showing us what we are worth. I admire her for that.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MILLENNIAL VS. GEN XER



Name (age): Jessica Lewis (37)

Current residence: Voorheesville, NY

Occupation: Assistant district attorney

Tribe designation: Takali (Gen Xers)

Three words to describe you: Unique, unconventional, and intriguing.

Hobbies: Painting, baking, and photography.

Pet peeves: People who blame others for their own misery.

What does it mean to be a Gen Xer? My parents were farmers, and they worked harder than anyone I have ever known. There were no vacations, days off, or breaks. No matter the weather, their health, or lack of money, they never gave up. They never stopped.

That lesson has never left me. No one will live my life for me. No one is going to give me a break. If I want something, I have to get up and do it, regardless of how I may feel or how hard it may be. My life was decided by no one but

myself. I saw the struggle my parents endured and I made a promise to myself to never stop trying to achieve any goal I set out to achieve. Nothing I have was handed to me. I had to earn it and I continue to do so every day.

Personal claim to fame: Getting into law school, making it through, passing the bar, and excelling as a prosecutor. I did all of this while also getting married and starting a family. Within a six-year time span, I was married, graduated undergrad, started law school, had my first child, passed the bar, was hired as a prosecutor, and had my second child.

I recently had a trial in which the jury gave me a round of applause when it was completed. The presiding judge later told me that he had never seen a prosecutor get a round of applause—and he has been on the bench for over 20 years. That moment was confirmation that the lack of sleep, long hours, hard work, and mental strain were all truly worth enduring.

Inspiration in life: My dad. He was born to be a farmhand, and his upbringing was extremely difficult. He is truly dedicated to his family and has a spirit and a will that are indescribable.



Name (age): Mari Takahashi (31)

Current residence: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Gamer

Tribe designation: Vanua (Millennials)

Three words to describe you: Courageous, adaptable, and calculating.

Hobbies: Video games, rock climbing, and traveling.

Pet peeves: Stagnation and laziness.

Personal claim to fame: Summited Kilimanjaro. More than just the accomplishment of climbing a 19,000-foot mountain, it marked my transition from the world I knew everything about, which was the ballet world I dedicated 25 years to, and walking into the unknown, which led me to playing video games for a living.

Inspiration in life: Facebook Chief Operating Officer Sheryl Sandberg, because she's been a huge inspiration to me and has had a huge impact on the way I've moved up in the industry.



Name (age): Bret LaBelle (42)

Current residence: Dedham, MA

Occupation: Police sergeant

Tribe designation: Takali (Gen Xers)

Three words to describe you: Gregarious, funny/hilarious, and caring.

Hobbies: Going to the gym, golf, improv, and bicycling.

Pet peeves: Couples who sit on the same side of the booth, people who talk politics and religion at Thanksgiving dinner, and bullies.

What does it mean to be a Gen Xer? A Gen Xer is

someone who had to work very hard for everything that they have in life. They actually had to go to school (not just online), ride the bus, and study hard to get good grades. Gen Xers take responsibility for their own actions and do not blame others for their mistakes. Gen Xers remember a time when Saturday morning brought the best cartoons, they know the difference between VHS and Betamax, and they certainly know what it means to drop a dime.

Personal claim to fame: Receiving the George L. Hanna Award for Bravery from the governor of Massachusetts for disarming a gunman in 2014.

Inspiration in life: My father, Donald LaBelle, because he's funny, honest, and compassionate and would give the shirt off his back if need be.