# Lava Beds National Monument

## **Unit 1 – Activity B: Cultural Attitudes**

#### **OBJECTIVES**:

Students will dispel common myths about bats and learn about other culture's beliefs and ideas about bats through discussion and use of language arts.

### **MATERIALS:**

Overhead projector if desired

#### **CURRICULUM:**

CA: OR:

#### **SUBJECTS:**

English, language arts.

#### **SKILLS:**

Discussion, English, understanding fears and prejudices.

#### **METHOD:**

1. Begin by discussing with your students that culture is a very important part of society. Different beliefs and ideas are passed from generation to generation. Cultures all over the world have different perceptions about bats. Ask your students for short stories they have heard about bats or an idea they have about bats or ask for one adjective from each student that they feel describes a bat. Some of the stories may exemplify common myths in American culture. Use poems below to help discuss which statements are true and which are false.

#### Common Bat Fact/Myths

- There are only 40 kinds of bats **False**.
  - o There are almost 1000 different kinds of bats.
- Mother Bats nurse their babies **True**.
- Bats are blind **False**.
  - o Bats can see well their sight is comparable to human sight.
- Bats "see" with sounds **True**.
- Bats get caught in people's hair **False**.
  - Bats do not get caught in people's hair and use echolocation to avoid flying into objects such as people, trees or walls.

- Most bats have rabies and are sick **False**.
  - Most bats are healthy and do not have rabies, however, bats that can be caught by humans are more likely to be sick.
- Some bats eat fish **True**.
- Some bats are vampires and eat only blood **True**.
- Some bats eat fruit **True**.
- Some bats can catch 1000 insects in an hour **True**.
- 2. Read "A Batty Poem" and "Bats" to your class or pass out as a worksheet, you may use the overhead in appendix A to display the poem as well. Use the poems to help your class identify some of the statements about bats as true or false.

#### **A Batty Poem**

Bats are mammals like you and like me Some live in caves and some live in trees.

Bats are nocturnal they are active at night. No bats are blind, some have good eye sight.

They use echolocation to find insects they eat.
They can fly at 60 miles per hour at 10,000 feet!

When the weather turns cold and there's no food to eat Some bats migrate or hibernate in a deep, deep "sleep".

Some bats are pollinators and some eat fruit. Just look at their noses or ears, they are adapted to suit.

So, don't be afraid next time you see a bat. They are part of nature and belong just where they're at.

—Arizona Game and Fish Department, WILD Kids, Number 15

#### **Bats**

Swooping, diving, avoiding things
They fly through the air on five finger wings
Aided by squeaks we don't usually hear
They catch a squeak's echoes to navigate by ear

Gobbling mosquitoes and other like fare
They will not try to get stuck in your hair
While they may fly quite near have no fear
They're just gathering speed
So they can swoop out and fly free

-Carolyn Hunt, Park Ranger, Lava Beds National Monument

- 3. Now that your class has successfully dispelled myths in American culture, select culture cards you wish to use. Break your class into groups and have each group read and discuss the culture card they were given.
- 4. Have students present their findings to the class. Have each group report to the class why they think the story is positive, negative or if it has examples of both and explain why. Compare and contrast the differences between stories and beliefs your class knew originally and other cultures stories and beliefs surrounding bats. As each group presents their information you may use Appendix A for available illustrations.

#### **EXTENSION:**

**Haiku** is a form of poetry which has 5 syllables in the first line of the poem, 7 syllables in the middle and 5 syllables in the last line. Read bat haiku poem to students. Have students write their own true haiku poem about bats.

Lava Beds has bats Fourteen amazing species Unique and alive

-Carolyn Hunt, Park Ranger, Lava Beds National Monument