

If you only have 30 minutes ...

Seated at the foothills of the volcanic Caucasus Mountain Range in southern Georgia is a small ethnic Azerbaijani village. Here, a community works to preserve its heritage by recreating colorful geometric patterns passed down for generations. These patterns—featuring symbols like the **tree of life**—connect the people of Kosalar to nomadic spirituality and centuries-old traditions.

Text Mining (10 minutes)

Complete the paragraph below using the **Cloze Word Bank**:

Zemfira Kajarova was only 16 when she came to the _____ Azerbaijani village of Kosalar in 1976. She soon discovered a community that took great _____ in its rug-weaving _____. The carpets are _____ with a luxuriously soft, but thick pile of wool dyed in a variety of natural colors extracted from _____ that include juniper, walnut and madder. Their _____ use simple _____ symbols like the tree of life and medallions known as guls. Despite _____ examples fetching high prices at _____ premier auction houses, such as Christie’s, contemporary Borchalo _____ faces a bleak _____. All of the active _____ in the community are _____ than 50. Unless more _____ women learn the craft, it risks _____ forever. “I’m afraid that this _____ will die,” says Kajarova. “The elderly can’t weave anymore, and the young people don’t want to take the _____. They say it’s _____ work.” Regardless of the _____, there is a growing _____ of the _____ of ethnic Azerbaijani rug-weaving in Georgia, and with new efforts on the way, there is hope that this tradition can be _____.¹

Cloze Word Bank:

antique	challenges	difficult	disappearing	ethnic	future	geometric
handwoven	heritage	older	patterns	plants	pride	responsibility
recognition	rug-weaving	saved	tradition	uniqueness	weavers	young

Text Analysis (15 minutes)

Task 1: Interpretation

The article describes Borchalo rug-weaving as “risking disappearance” or “having a bleak future.” For this activity, we’ll use the phrase “**fading into history**” to mean the same thing. **Question:** Why does Borchalo rug-weaving risk fading into history? Write **one or two reasons** from the text.

Task 2: Application

Fill in the Fading into History Graphic Organizer on the next page with six activities or traditions from your own culture that, like Borchalo weaving, are practiced less and less. Example might include: family dinners; sewing by hand; oral storytelling, etc.



Synthesis (5 minutes)

Write a one-sentence thesis that explains why preserving cultural traditions, like Borchalo rug-weaving, matters for the future of society. Your thesis should address: 1) the role of mindfulness or slower living; 2) the value of cultural continuity; 3) an example from the article.

Common Core Standard(s) Met:

CCRA.R.1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCRA.R.2 Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

CCRA.R.3 Analyze how individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

1 Zemfira Kajarova was only 16 when she came to the **ethnic** Azerbaijani village of Kosalar in 1976. She soon discovered a community that took great **pride** in its rug-weaving **tradition**. The carpets are **handwoven** with a luxuriously soft but thick pile of wool dyed in a variety of natural colors extracted from **plants** that include juniper, walnut and madder. Their **patterns** use simple **geometric** symbols like the tree of life and medallions known as guls. Despite **antique** examples fetching high prices at premier auction houses, such as Christie's, contemporary Borchalo **rug-weaving** faces a bleak **future**. All of the active **weavers** in the community are **older** than 50. Unless more **young** women learn the craft, it risks **disappearing** forever. "I'm afraid that this **heritage** will die," says Kajarova. "The elderly can't weave anymore, and the young people don't want to take the **responsibility**. They say it's **difficult** work." Regardless of the **challenges**, there is a growing **recognition** of the **uniqueness** of ethnic Azerbaijani rug-weaving in Georgia, and with new efforts on the way, there is hope that this tradition can be **saved**.