



Island Culture (Puerto Rico)

Summary:

Students will have the opportunity to ask me questions about my Puerto Rico trip and pictures. A timeline will be created to review the island's history. Culture will be experienced through food preparation and tasting, salsa music and dance, listening to folktales, creating a Puerto Rican children's book and art. New vocabulary will be incorporated into writing lessons and through email to students in Puerto Rico.

Background Information:

Culture:

The fundamental values, beliefs, attitudes, & patterns of thinking that are embedded in a society's view of how the world works.

Geography:

Puerto Rico is an island in the Caribbean located near the equator. Some facts concerning the location of Puerto Rico are:

- It is the easternmost island of Greater Antilles
- The Atlantic Ocean is to the north, the Caribbean Sea is to the south, Mona Passage and the Dominican Republic is to the west, and to the east is Vieques.
- 1000 miles SE of Florida/600 miles N of Caracas, Venezuela

There are four types of island's: oceanic (volcanic origin), continental (on shelf & may have been connected to continent low sea level), habitat (terrestrial habitat bordered by distinctly different habitats that are not water), non-marine (between continental shelf & habitat island)

Island Facts:

- *One in every ten people on Earth is an islander. More than 600 million people live on islands.
- *Because of their isolation, islands have a disproportionately high number of endemic species. (only native to 1 island)
- *Due to high rate of endemism, islands have a high # of endangered species. 72% of all plant and animal extinctions

Grade Level: 9-12

Goal: By the end of the unit, students will know more about where Puerto Rico is located, its history and how it formed the island's culture. Culture will be experienced through authentic food, music, dance, and stories. Students will learn some science vocabulary in Spanish that pertains to plant and animal species on the island, along with new words and expressions from the island.

Key Concepts: The key ideas for this unit will relate to history, culture, geography, language, and environmental science.

Objectives: Upon completion of this lesson, students will:

1. Be able to visualize what Puerto Rico is like after hearing my experiences and seeing pictures.
2. Be more oriented with the location of Puerto Rico, its history and relationship with the U.S.
3. Be familiar with language specific to the island, along with folktales, food, music, etc.

Teaching Location:

Most of the lessons will be taught in the classroom where students will be surrounded with memorabilia from the island. One activity involves walking through the school's forest.

ever recorded in the U.S. have occurred in Hawaii.

*Due to self-contained nature of island environments, their ecosystems are extremely vulnerable to damage caused by introduced species.

*Because of astonishing diversity, many tropical islands are surrounded by coral reefs “rainforests of the ocean”

*Due to small and isolated ecosystems, islands are ideal venues for scientific studies of the Earth’s environment.

They serve as scientific “canaries in the coalmine” (habitat destruction/unsustainable dev.)

*Because of typically small pop. And ensuing small economies, most islands are not able to resist pressures from outside development nor can they afford appropriate environmental remediation procedures.

More Background Information:

Puerto Rico’s Landforms:

- 3 main physiographic regions: the mountainous interior, the coastal lowlands, and the Karst area
Karst area consists of mainly formations of rugged volcanic rock dissolved by water throughout the geological ages. This limestone region is attractive—sinkholes, caves, limestone cliffs, mogotes/haystack hills
- hills and steep mountains make up 3/4 of Puerto Rico
- low-lying terrain—narrow coastal plains and inland valleys
- Cordillera Central divides the island into north and south regions (Sierra de Luquillo—NE, Sierra de Cayey—SE, Sierra Bermeja—SW)
- The most famous peak although not the highest on the island is “El Yunque” in the Caribbean Nat. Forest (tropical rainforest)
- Offshore islands include Vieques, Culebra, Mona
- Puerto Rico has many short rivers and streams (longest river is Grande de Arecibo)
- Puerto Rico has many beaches

History:

15TH C.—1493 Spanish (Christopher Columbus) arrived to the island of Boriken/Borinquen –Taino Indians Island was named “San Juan Bautista”

1508---Spanish explorer, Juan Ponce de Leon colonized the island

1510—Ponce de Leon become island’s 1st Spanish governor
Early 16th C.—Spanish settlers focused on mining gold in PR

Lesson Time:

This lesson/unit on PR will take at least one semester.

Components:

*What is culture? Activities may take 1-2 class periods (45 minutes each)

*Geography activities may take 4-5 class periods

*History activities may take several weeks.

*Language component may also take several weeks

(writing/reading)

*Cultural Activities with food and dance could last 3-4 class periods.

*Vieques Controversy will be discussed in 2-3 class periods with weekly emailing for a semester.

*Science component may last 2-3 class periods. (Forest walk may be 1-2 class periods.)

Subject Areas for Infusion:

Environmental Education, Foreign Language, Social Studies (history, geography)

Standards:

Foreign Language (Spanish)

A. 1

D.1

F.1

F.2

I.1

I.2

I.3

K.3

Environmental Ed.:

A.12.1

Social Studies:

A.12.1

A.12.4

A.12.8

B.12.4

Island was military outpost; farming-subsistence crops
sold surplus Merchant class was important to the economy
1511—Tainos revolted against Spanish
1513—African slaves are introduced into the island.
1523—1st sugar cane processing plant is built
1530—Sugar became the most important agricultural product
1550—fewer than 100 Tainos of pure blood remained

19th C.—coffee became important crop
1810-1826—PR remained loyal to Spain
1830—all Spanish American colonies were independent except for
PR and Cuba
1837—PR was represented in Spanish parliament
1860's—People wanted autonomy/independence
1868—El Grito de Lares
1873—Abolition of slavery
1895—Spanish-American War (rebellion against Spanish rule
started in Cuba)
1897—Spanish Liberal Party—PR could vote
1898—Treaty of Paris—Spain ceded PR to U.S.
1917—Jones Act—granted PR. U.S. citizenship and allowed them
to elect both of PR's legislative chambers
1930—Sugar production rose by 1000%--all exported to U.S. tax-free
1989—Hurricane Hugo devastated island
1999—U.S. Marine accidentally killed civilian in practice bomb on Vieques
2000—Sila Calderon was elected the 1st woman governor of Puerto Rico
2003—The US Navy officially pulled out of Vieques

More Background Information:

A Story about Easter Island: Preservation

Islanders were greeted with lush tropical paradise when they first discovered Easter Island. Trees were cut for lumber for housing, wood for fires, and rollers/lever-like devices used to move and erect the moai (symbols of the islanders' power and success). Moai building competition turned into an obsession. With the loss of the trees, the land began to erode. Topsoil quickly washed into the sea. Crops began to fail and clans turned on one another due to scarce resources. Moai were toppled (eyes smashed out /decapitated.) Violence grew worse...victors would eat the enemies bodies for strength. With no wood left to build boats, they were trapped and the culture/people collapsed.

Language:

Taino Words:

Bohios—small, thatch-roofed houses or huts
Hamanca—hammock
Casaba—bread made with cassava ground into flour
Cacique—chief

Cacica—female chief

*Taino society was matriarchal—family was traced through the female line. The cacique was succeeded not by his son but by the eldest son of one of his sisters. (Equality)

New Spanish Words:

Lomos Muertos—speed bumps/ topes en MX

Pare—stop (sign)/alto en MX

Quenepa—fruit from tree, looks like a green cherry. Bite into it and pull off half of shell and suck on inside fruit. A popular liquor is made from the fruit “Bili”

Gua guas publicas—name for VW vans/combis en MX

El charlatan—no tiene verguenza

El guiro—gourd with grooves and rubbed with metal wand to make music

El aji—chile

El bacaleito—a fried tortilla made from fish, pimienta, ajo picado(Goya mix)

La arepa—corn flour patties inflated in oil (fried) made of coconut or guayaba

Metamano—dig in

Guineo—bananas/plantanos

Que rayos—oh too bad

Porqueria—mess/not organized

Voy a llevarle al Cuko—very ugly person who might eat the naughty child

Action: finger nodding

Folktales:

What are they? Reflect culture of people (PR—Tainos, Spaniards, and Africans)

1. Taino Origin of Sea
1. Guanina
2. The Arrogant Princess
3. Medio Pollito
4. Vejigante masks
5. Leyenda Puertorriquenas by Cayetano Coll y Toste (1979)

Materials:

- Computer access with internet connection
 - email accounts
- (class/individual with permission)
- writing supplies
 - maps/atlas (library access)
 - cooking tools
 - CD player
 - sketch pad
 - coloring art supplies, poster board

Vocabulary:

Will be supplied with each introduced activity

Set-Up:

- Arrange classroom conducive to group work and/or stations
- A supply area should be set up
- Talk to principal and librarian about library and computer access (email)
- Seek permission to take students to the school forest
- Check budget for money to buy any needed supplies

Procedure.**Introduction.**

All Spanish levels I-IV will brainstorm in small groups a definition for the word “culture”. Afterwards, the teacher and class will cut and paste words to make a sensible and agreeable definition of the word. (Definitions will be written in English first, then Spanish for each level.)

Activity 1. The Iceberg (All levels)

1. Each student in the class will receive a feature of culture written on a piece of paper. They will need to place the word above or below the line of the iceberg. Is the feature visible or invisible? (Spanish I—features in English, Spanish II-IV—features in Spanish)
2. Students will have the opportunity to change features that they think should be above or below the water surface. Discuss.
3. Answers will be revealed along with more discussion.

Activity 2. Where is PR? Why is an island so special? (All levels)

1. Students will receive specific information on Puerto Rico’s location and landforms. In small groups, each student will have a specific task to do in creating their own map of Puerto Rico and of the entire Caribbean. (drawing the outline shape and labeling of PR and it’s surrounding islands/coloring and labeling bodies of water and other Caribbean islands/labeling and coloring symbols for landforms and 3 main physiographic regions of PR/etc.)

Activity 3. History Timeline of PR (Spanish I—events written in English, II-IV—events written in Spanish, may need to be simplified)

1. Students will be divided into groups and each will be given a decade in history. Give each group some information about the history of their decade, but each decade will need to find 3 new pieces of history to add to their timeline.
2. Pictures or drawings will need to be attached to each event on the timeline in order to give a quick idea as to what the year or period signifies before reading it.

3. Once all of the pieces are completed the timeline will be put together on the classroom wall and evaluated by the students.

Activity 4. Discussion of Easter Island and Importance of Preservation
(I—in English, II-IV—in Spanish)

1. Students will read about the history of Easter Island. We will discuss the story and make notations as to what could have been done to prevent this destruction of a culture and an island.

2. Read “El Lorax” by Dr. Suess (in Spanish) (Levels II-IV)

Activity 5. Culture: language, folktales, food, and dance (Level I—can be done in English and Spanish, II-IV—all Spanish)

1. Students will be introduced to new words in Spanish and words used by the Taino Indians. They will use these words and write a short story to be shared with classmates and the teacher.

2. As a class, we will talk about the relationship between folktales and a country’s culture. Students will be divided into small groups and given a Puerto Rican folktale to read. They will need to give a summary of the story to the class and compare it to a story that they know from their own culture. Stories may also be read relating to food in Puerto Rico.

3. Students will have the opportunity to try different foods that are eaten in Puerto Rico (plantains, mango, passion fruit, papaya, bacaleito, etc.) We may prepare them in class or ahead of time.

4. Salsa music typical to Puerto Rico will be played. A listening activity will be conducted in which students will have to fill in the missing Spanish words from the song verses. They will have the written verses available to them with blanks to fill in. Meaning of the song can be discussed afterwards. Students will then learn the basic steps of how to dance the salsa/meringue. In partners they will dance and practice.

Activity 6: Vieques Controversy (levels II-IV)

1. Students will read several internet articles and other references to the history of the island of Vieques and the U.S. Navy occupation. Key questions will be answered in class to review. I will also share my experiences and pictures of Vieques.

2. An online discussion through email will begin with students from Puerto Rico (Luis Crespo’s class). [An English teacher who works with Luis may also have her students participate. Spanish II may be more involved with this—writing/grammar—not much talk about Vieques.] A list of questions will be developed by Luis and me. We will also have the opportunity to ask questions about other life aspects for Puerto Rican students.

3. Examine pictures taken on Vieques of all of the crosses of people who died as a result of stray fire, cancer, and other causes during the U.S. Navy occupation. There is a painting of the Statue of Liberty surrounded by barbed wire. What is its significance?

Activity 7. Animal Species of Puerto Rico (I-IV)

Summary: My experiences with each animal will be shared with the class, along with personal photos.

1. Sea Turtles: I will show students a poster of the different types of sea turtles and we will read information from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Students in levels II-IV will also be able to ask Puerto Rican students about their experiences in seeing and studying sea turtles in school.
2. PR Parrot: (same lesson as with sea turtles) Students will research stories/folktales about the Puerto Rican parrot and we share and discuss them with the class. Students can create a children's book in Spanish and include topics such as, the birds' colors, the female being dominant, mating for life, etc.
3. Coqui Frog: (same as 1st lesson) Stories about the coqui can be researched. Drawing a particular species of the coqui and hanging them all over the room from the ceiling would add more to our Puerto Rican environment in the classroom.
4. Bats of Puerto Rico: (same lesson) We can look at the poster of different fish eating bats. Perhaps the art activity with the coqui could also be done here.
5. Nature Journaling: Take students on a hike through the forest conservatory and they will need to sketch or take a digital picture of the letters IN NATURE that form their name in Spanish or in English (or just initials). Show an example of the letters found on a tour at Hacienda Verde.

Conclusion:

By the end of this year-long lesson on Puerto Rico, students will have a better understanding about a territory that is part of the United States. Encourage students to travel when the opportunity arises and to always welcome new cultures with open arms. Conclude things with a discussion or journal writing on preservation of the environment "our world".

Assessment: Students will be evaluated on their class participation, writing, and reading skills. Their creativity will be highly praised and continually encouraged. Rubrics may be used on some assignments, whereas a completion grade may be acceptable for other pieces of work.

Adaptations: If one is not able to cover all of the topics on Puerto Rico, still continue a theme of Puerto Rico and Mexico in the classroom environment and in the materials that are selected. Activities not able to be completed can be carried over into the next school year. There are several activities picked out of the Puerto Rican Curriculum Guide for ages K-6. Because it is written in Spanish, it is useful for most Spanish levels. Activities that were chosen were about habitats, preservation of the environment, air, where a person comes from, etc. These activities could be done if others are not successful.

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<http://www.biol.ttu.edu/faculty/FacPages/willig/MRWWilligpage/Research/Interest%20Pages/prmamals.html>

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http://www.southernregion.fs.fed.us/caribbean/resources/fauna_of_the_month/2002/fauna_pr_boa.htm

Coqui Frog: USDS Forests Service Caribbean National Forest

http://www.southernregion.fs.fed.us/caribbean/resources/fauna_of_the_month/2002/fauna_hedricki.htm

Culture: Peace Corps Website

<http://www.peacecorps.gov/www/culturematters/ch1/iceberg.html>

Yale University

<http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1991/2/91.02.06.x.html>

Coll and Toste (1979), Leyendas Puertorriquenas, Originally by Jose Ramirez Rivera

Food:

Welcome to Puerto Rico Organization:

<http://welcome.topuertorico.org/cocina/>

Yale University Curriculum:

<http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1995/4/95.04.01.x.html>

History:

Welcome to Puerto Rico Organization:

<http://welcome.topuertorico.org/history.shtml>

UW-Stevens Point Natural Resource Class 679 Information:

<https://www.uwsp.edu/natres/nres679pr/Enrolled%20Students/Unit4/Unit%204%20Section%20A%20Revised.htm>

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<http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1987/1/87.01.04.x.html>

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<https://www.uwsp.edu/natres/nres679pr/Enrolled%20Students/Unit1/Unit%201%20Section%20A.htm>

Seacology Organization:

<http://www.seacology.org/facts/index.html>

Mysterious Places: Easter Island

http://mysteriousplaces.com/Easter_Island/html/tour4.html

http://mysteriousplaces.com/Easter_Island/html/tour5.html

http://mysteriousplaces.com/Easter_Island/html/tour6.html

Puerto Rican Parrot:

US Fish and Wildlife Service: <http://southeast.fws.gov/prparrot/>

Bernache-Baker, B., The Bioluminescent Bays of Vieques, June 1995.

Ohio State Facts:

<http://iris.biosci.ohio-state.edu/projects/FFiles/frfact.html>