CULTURAL CONNECTION DAYS

Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad Program
Curriculum Project
Argentina/Peru
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SUMMARY OF PROJECT

This curriculum project is designed to incorporate culture into the Spanish classroom on a more regular basis. After reviewing all of the information I gathered while participating in the Fulbright-Hays Seminar, I realized that I needed to have a specific focus for sharing information about each country with my students. Cultural connection days will allow me to step outside of teaching Spanish and focus on something cultural once a month. This will give students a concrete moment to learn about different celebrations in many Spanish-speaking countries of the world.

I have chosen one day from each month of the year that corresponds to a holiday in a specific Spanish-speaking country. On each of these days, I will follow the following format: 10-15 minute lesson (including a PowerPoint presentation) about the basic facts of the country and some details about the celebrations to be expected on that particular holiday; 30-40 minutes dedicated to learning a song, learning a dance, cooking/eating a particular prepared food or making a craft that represents something about the culture. In addition to this, I have decorated my classroom to match the countries that I will be teaching about during the first semester. On each country “wall”, I have included the following items: their flag, a map of the country, postcards, a scenic or art poster, photos of myself in this country, words that represent aspects of the country’s culture, a list of holidays and 3-D objects of artesania bought in the country.

The countries I have chosen are the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Celebration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 16</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Independence Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 12</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Hispanic Heritage Month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1</td>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>Day of the Dead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 15</td>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>Christmas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 9</td>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>Independence Day (July 9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 27</td>
<td>Dom. Rep.</td>
<td>Independence Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March ?</td>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>Feast Day Celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Holy Week Celebrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 21</td>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>Inti Raymi (June 21)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of these dates have to be changed according to the school calendar.

At the end of the year, the students will be paired up and required to choose one of the remaining Spanish-speaking countries. They will need to create a five minute presentation on their chosen country and include a visual (poster board or PowerPoint
presentation). They should include the following in their presentation: a brief synopsis of the history; an explanation of the people; a map and pictures. They will also need to choose 1-2 universals of culture and create a project to display. On a specified day, the half of the students will present in a gallery walk format. Students will have a handout out to record the information they learn.

This project can be used for any level of Spanish class. I am choosing to use it for my Spanish 1 students at the high school level. This includes students from grades nine through twelve. I have also chosen to use the countries with which I or another teacher in my building have either lived in or traveled to in order to make this an even more authentic experience for my students.

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

*How can I incorporate culture into the classroom?*

*How can I help my students to make meaningful connections between different Spanish-speaking cultures and the U.S. culture?*

*What are the essential facts of each country that students in a level one Spanish class need to know?*

*What type of multiple intelligences activity would be best for students to do in order to develop a deeper understanding of the celebration we are studying?*

**BACKGROUND NOTES**

For their homework assignment prior to the cultural day, the students will need to fill out a KWL (What do you **K**now? What do you **W**ant to know? What did you **L**earn?) worksheet. This is a literacy strategy that will help them to start thinking about the country that we will be talking about. In addition to this, I will have to prepare the classroom so that they have some sort of reference for when we talk about it. At the end of each semester, students will take a test about the information they have learned regarding culture. For each country, I have outlined the types of activities I might like to do.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>CRAFT</th>
<th>DANCE</th>
<th>FOOD</th>
<th>MUSIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>México</td>
<td>papel picado</td>
<td>cumbia</td>
<td>tamales,</td>
<td>ranchera,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>conchas</td>
<td>mariachi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Cultural Item</td>
<td>Dance/Music</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Artists/Traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estados Unidos</td>
<td>coat of arms</td>
<td>salsa</td>
<td>salsa, tacos, nachos, Taco Bell</td>
<td>Selena, Gloria Estefan, Carlos Santana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>skeleton puppets</td>
<td></td>
<td>empanadas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>poesía picada, arpilleras</td>
<td>cueca</td>
<td>empanadas</td>
<td>Pablo Neruda’s poems set to music, Chilean Rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>Cueva de las manos</td>
<td>tango</td>
<td>alfajores, humitas, empanadas</td>
<td>tango, altiplano, Diego Torres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>República Dominicana</td>
<td>máscara, cerámica taina</td>
<td>merengue, bachata</td>
<td>yuca, morro, tostones</td>
<td>merengue, perico ripiao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>clay animals from rain forest</td>
<td></td>
<td>gallo pinto</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>España</td>
<td>cascarones</td>
<td>flamenco</td>
<td>tortilla española</td>
<td>las Ketchup la Oreja de Van Gogh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perú</td>
<td>Nazca Lines, weaving replica</td>
<td>huayla, huayna, marinera</td>
<td>ceviche, papa a la huancaína</td>
<td>Inca, GianCarlo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STANDARDS**

This project is related to the National Foreign Language teaching standards.

**Standard 2.1:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied.

**Standard 2.2:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.

Students will be able to demonstrate this knowledge with the project they do in class on the cultural day. They will also make comparisons and connections between the different countries on the cultural test at the end of the semester.

**OBJECTIVES**
Teacher: Will create interesting and engaging projects from different genres that are connected to each country being studied.

Student: Will demonstrate understanding of practices, products and perspectives of each culture studied.

MATERIALS

*appropriate *artesania* from each country
*posters of scenery and art
*maps and flags
*photos and postcards
*historical timeline for each country
*music and videos that tie to culture
*PowerPoint presentation for each country
*craft materials when appropriate
*see Appendix A for specific material on Argentina
*see Appendix B for specific material on Peru
STRATEGIES

In an effort to make the learning of culture more meaningful and fun to my students, I am using several different teaching strategies. Before the cultural day, students will read a little about the country we will be studying and fill out a KWL sheet as a reading strategy to help them form ideas and interests. On the cultural day, I will begin by giving a short 5-10 minute lecture on the celebration that we are studying for that country. Students will be encouraged to take notes and will be given a fact sheet to give them more information about the country. For the rest of the class period, we will do a hands-on activity. Studies have shown that we remember 10% of what we read, 80% of what we experience and 90% of what we teach to others. The hands-on activity could include learning to sing a song, learning a specific dance, cooking or tasting a certain food or creating a craft that represents some aspect of the country we are studying.

ASSESSMENT

At the end of each semester, the students will be required to demonstrate what they remember on a final exam on culture. At the end of the year, the students will be paired up and required to choose one of the remaining Spanish-speaking countries. They will need to create a five minute presentation on their chosen country and include a visual (poster board or PowerPoint presentation). They should include the following in their presentation: a brief synopsis of the history; an explanation of the people; a map and pictures. They will also need to choose 1-2 universals of culture and create a project to display. On a specified day, the half of the students will present in a gallery walk format. Students will have a handout out to record the information they learn.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Please see the summary, assessment information and other areas of my proposal.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

*Books on all Spanish-speaking countries.
*Websites with information regarding countries and cultural celebrations.
*Embassy information for each country.

1 www.unlv.edu/centers/tlc/articles/Learning/tlc_howwelearn
REFERENCES

1- Fulbright Southern Cone Journal 2004:
   www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/lilas/centers/fulbrightsa
2- Standards for Foreign Language Learning:
   www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/indexcfm?pageid=3392
3- Country Specific Information : www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook