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A Folklore Approach to Teaching Spanish Exploratory Classes

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by Carmen Greenia

During the many years of foreign language teaching in the New Haven Public Schools much of the curriculum has been geared for the high school students, until, a limited version of foreign study was introduced in the middle schools under the camouflage of “exploratory” classes. This was done without reference to the different students of middle school age. Fortunately, and through the concerted efforts of talented and dedicated educators, the middle school curriculum is steadily being revised and improved. This unit represents part of a long range goal to extract the teaching of Spanish and Latin American Studies from its traditional mold and place it in a more comprehensive perspective via the study of contemporary places, people and issues that will heighten students’ awareness and knowledge of cultural diversity. One might speculate that a unit limited in scope cannot accomplish such a goal. But it is indubitably a firm step in the right direction, especially when one considers the paucity of non-pedantic and non-book oriented material available for foreign languages and cultures. This unit is an eclectic approach which can be adapted for Spanish classes, bilingual situations and others.

There exists in education a crucial socio-cultural and educational imperative in the curriculum and philosophy of our schools which involves contemporary cognizance and knowledge of our neighboring Spanish speaking countries. Classroom teachers and educators need to demonstrate a renewed effort to put the study of other cultures in its proper perspective in classroom instruction. A brief perusal of certain local events and the conclusions of many education reports clearly support the need for the study of foreign languages and cultures.

At the local level, one might consider a major event in the State Department of Education. Currently, the State Department of Education has mandated a re-evaluation of the educational system. In its recommendation for a high school diploma, it has reinstated the traditional package of four credits of English, three credits of Mathematics, three credits of Social Studies and others. It did not mention a foreign language requirement or cultural studies even though many colleges and universities have reinstituted their foreign language requirements.

Secondly, various statistics and major reports on education in the United States strongly recommended the study of foreign languages and cultural studies for many reasons. The following statistics summarized by the Connecticut Council of Language Teachers clearly advocate the study of foreign languages and cultural studies: one out of every six manufacturing jobs is directly related to export. Between 1977 and 1980, four out of every five jobs created in manufacturing were export related. More than a third of all corporate profits

derive from foreign investment and trade. More than twenty percent of American industrial output is exported. Two fifths of our farmland produces for export. Despite this involvement with foreign trade and investment, only one out of twenty public high school students studies French, German or Russian beyond the first or second year. The United States is probably the only country in the world where a student can graduate from college having had less than a year of a foreign language.

The National Commission on Excellence in Education in its highly publicized and controversial report supported the study of foreign languages and cultural studies. It recommended that college bound high school students should study two years of a foreign language as a minimum. Furthermore, it said that since proficiency in a foreign language usually requires four to six years of study and immersion, instruction should commence at the elementary level. Studies also indicate that reading skills and comprehension are improved through second language study. SAT scores, both verbal and math, are higher for those who have studied foreign languages. The Twentieth Century Task Force on Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Policy also recommends that public school students study foreign languages and cultures. Other reports such as those conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress also indicate an urgent need for more cultural awareness and knowledge of different peoples and cultures.

Thus, writing a curriculum unit to supplement the existing programs can be justified in many ways and from different points of view. Besides the convincing conclusions of the aforementioned reports, there is preponderant evidence that the study of foreign languages, cultures and geographies enhances and facilitates communication and contacts between different individuals and groups. The multi-ethnic population of our schools necessitates more attention and study in languages and culture. A unit such as the one suggested here is a rather minute step in the achievement of an ongoing general goal of communicating and understanding of other people. It is the contention here that through the study of different manifestations of any given culture, one can gain insight into the collective mind of a people.

Folklore by its very nature is an important expression of a people which if studied can shed light on the traditions, beliefs, superstitions, poetry and history of a given culture. This unit presents a general overview of folklore, including its genesis and categories. First, it examines folklore in its historical perspective and as a preponderant occurrence of a people as well as a cogent pronouncement of its present. Secondly, it concentrates on the folklore of Panama and other Hispanic countries in as far as history and folktales might be interrelated. The history and folklore of Panama like that of other countries represent a wealth of material that can be attractive and interesting to students.

More specifically, the objectives of this unit are to introduce students to vocabulary of folklore in Spanish and English, to have students learn the history of Panama, to increase the students' writing and reading ability, to help students become conversant about the folklore topic, to have students improve their grammar and writing skills by converting a folktale to a mini drama, and finally, students utilize the information learned in a productive and comical way, by creating their own folktale, legend or proverb. Needless to say, none of these objectives can be attained in isolation. One goal or objective promotes another. For example, the total culmination of the above objectives can be to have all students involved in presenting a skit for the school assembly or PTA. This unit is a versatile supplement to the middle school curriculum which hopefully can be used even for the students who are so often and arbitrarily scheduled for foreign language classes without orientation or understanding as to why they are placed in these classes, as well as the student who has an "educated" interest in the culture or language and takes the course as an elective.

The first step towards developing the stated goals is to give a brief talk on the history of Panama and then

supplement this by showing the filmstrip “Panama” available from the audio visual department of the central office or Sheridan Middle School. The teacher can use the following introduction to elicit attention and interest.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PANAMA

Panama was a crossroads of globe trade a century before the first settler struggled at Massachusetts Bay. From its beginnings, the Isthmus was destined to be the so-called center of the universe. Rodrigo de Bastidas, the Spanish explorer and first European to land in the area of Panama in 1501, wandered around for treasures but returned to Spain empty handed. Vasco Nunez de Balboa went to Panama to escape creditors, after having been in Hispaniola. Malaria killed many of the Spaniards that settled with Balboa but he befriended the Indians and seized control after he stood atop a peak in Easter Panama, which he claimed for Spain. After Balboa lost control to Pedriarias the “cruel” he was strangled for treason.

The name Panama was possibly derived from an Indian term meaning “man fish”. It could have also come from the word “panaba” or “far away”, the frequent reply the Indians gave explorers who demanded the location of the nearest gold mines. Pedriarias the “cruel” expanded his endeavors by founding the city of Panama in 1519. For a while Panama City flourished. By 1572, however, other adventurers like the pirates Francis Drake and Henry Drake, transformed Panama into an arena for a struggle to death between the established empire of Spain and the young aspiring English Empire. The Spanish eventually moved to the area that is the present city of Panama (founded in 1673). After 1739, Spain destroyed Panama’s autonomy by attaching it to the Viceroyalty of New Granada (now Colombia). Panama, henceforth, began a century and a half long struggle to regain its independence from its aggressors.

In 1821, after much agony and defeat, Panama was successful in declaring independence from Spain and then became affiliated with Simon Bolivar’s Gran Colombia. The Panamanian economy was on a continuous decline until the 1880’s when interest in transportation across the Isthmus developed. Ferdinand de Lesseps, builder of the Suez Canal, began excavating the Canal, but later sold the rights to the United States. At the time, Theodore Roosevelt was a supporter of the Panamanian Independence Movement in his drive to obtain a favorable treaty for the canal construction. Eventually, Panama revolted and got independence from Colombia in November, 1903.

Subsequently, the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty was signed giving perpetual control of the Panama Canal Zone to the United States. This issue of control over the Panama Canal Zone has been the dominant desideratum in Panamanian history for a long time. In 1978 President Carter signed a treaty with General Torrijos stipulating complete transfer of the Canal to Panama by December, 1999. According to some experts in Central American history, relations between Panama and the United States have improved as a result of the treaty which gives Panama complete control over the Canal in the future.

Geography of Panaman

After the teacher conducts her activities (as per lesson) on the history of Panama, the next strategy is to explicate the geography with a globe, teach the students the important mountains, rivers and mountains and other pertinent information like natural resources, standard of living, and national currency. This is followed by activities found in sample lesson. The teacher can find it interesting to dedicate a few minutes comparing the currency of Panama, the United States and other countries. This has been done in some of our classes and the

students have responded very enthusiastically.

FOLKLORE

The next step is to prepare the students for the study of folklore by presenting the following information with activities as indicated in lesson plan.

The genesis of folklore as a taxonomic study of various aspects of society is a recent phenomenon despite the fact that its subject is perhaps as old as the human race. One might even venture to say that folklore came before the more enlightened disciplines of history, science, art, medicine and others, since these in a broad sense are interrelated. Historically, a definitive interest in the study of folklore seemed to come about in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with the western world's focus on reconstructing society around principles of popular sovereignty and democratic organization. With the gradual decline of dynastic rulers and emphasis on the will of the masses, the concept began to take on new dimensions and ideas. New interest in the progress of human culture as reflected in the people's way of life took roots as classical-humanistic ideals gave way to the rise of romanticism. One recalls Rousseau's essays on the natural man unspoiled by civilization and how he expounded on intrinsic individual worth. As early as 1517, Hernando del Castillo wrote down popular verses found in the oral tradition of his people; Charles Perrault wrote his famous *Contes de Ma Mere L'oye* (Tales of Mother Goose) that were made available in many different languages.

It was not until 1878 that systematic folklore studies were introduced by the London Folklore Society, even though previously the word "folk-lore" was first used by the British archaeologist William J. Thomas in a letter published by the London Journal *Athenaeum* in 1846. The term was subsequently adopted by the London Folklore Society and later incorporated into different languages: (French (*traditionnisme*), Spanish (*saber popular*), Italian (*demologia* or *demopsicologia*), Danish (*folkemunde*), and German (*volkskunde*). Eventually, it was linked with "primitive cultures," traditions, customs and beliefs of peasants, fishermen and villages.

Folklore is often defined as the study of the lore of the "uneducated masses", a definition which does not do justice to its nature and complexity. Regardless of its definition, folklore is an important complement to all cultural science. Through folklore, one can gain insight into the collective mind of a people at a given place and time; close scrutiny of a legend can help understand migrations of people as well as early contacts between different nations. Many folklore ballads contain references to unrecorded historical facts. Alexander Krappe, among other folklorists, maintains that the scope of folklore is to reconstruct the spiritual history of man as exemplified in the more or less inarticulate voices of the folk.

Folklore is manifested in different forms and draws on documents which are partly historical, from chronicles, old law codes, proverbs and is expressed in as many different forms as life itself. Regardless of its traces or origins, it becomes the collective expression of its people. Some of the more popular categories of folklore suggested by various folklorists are popular beliefs and traditional customs, literature of oral tradition and folk arts (these include proverbs, riddles, folk poetry, folk music, folk dance and others). These different forms are manifested in a variety of expressions depending on the language. Many legends reflect the history of a given country. Others, like proverbs, reflect the mores of a national group and at the same time also convey universally accepted precepts that are found in similar or even identical wording in different cultures and languages.

STRATEGIES AND APPLICATIONS

After the teacher presents the previous information followed by suggested activities, the next procedure is helping the students actualize or develop the material as much as possible. A variety of strategies are utilized in order to elicit student involvement. Some examples of “universal” proverbs are elicited from the students. A comparison and analysis is made with at least one Panamanian proverb which is prevalent in other cultures. Students will be asked to interview their grandparents or senior citizens in their neighborhoods.

As previously alluded to, one of the objectives is to make students aware of and appreciate the various aspects of folklore, among these being that history is often reflected in the lore of a country. To accomplish this, La Isla del Encanto, a famous Panamanian legend, will be translated, paraphrased and analyzed. It will then be staged as a mini-drama for the school or PTA.

One of the most distinctive features of folklore is that a given theme or story may be found in different countries. Students will understand this feature through reading and comparing the Panamanian version of Cinderella (Maria la Cenicienta) which is found in other cultures with variations. Students are encouraged to write their version of this story as well as given opportunities for paraphrasing.

One of the ultimate goals is to enhance and further develop the students’ ability and skill to express themselves in verbal and oral forms. For this dual purpose speech improvisations in verse from folklore poetry is read, interpreted and acted out. For example, the popular Tingalayo, which has counterparts in Panama and in the Caribbean, will be studied. Another strategy that is used for an overall attainment of objectives is to invite native Panamanians in the community to visit our foreign language classes during “foreign language week” and encourage them to tell the students “living” versions of folktales. After listening to these folktales students attempt to reconstruct them by writing the stories they heard, and perhaps adding their own creative endings. Students can compare what they write with other tales they know or have heard at the same time have an extra opportunity to develop listening and writing skills (This is also a city-wide objective of the New Haven Public Schools).

SAMPLE LESSON PLANS

The length of this lesson varies depending on school schedule, class size, interruptions, level and teacher.

SECTION I OBJECTIVES

The students will be able to perform the following tasks with reasonable facility and comfort:

1. State at least five important facts about the history of Panama.
2. Identify geographical facts about Panama on a map of Central America, including the capital, area of political conflict, important rivers cities, mountains, and water boundaries.
3. Read, write, and pronounce the Spanish names of the rivers, capital and mountain ranges of Panama.
4. State the main natural resources and monetary currency of Panama.
5. Compare Panama with the U.S.A. and other countries of Central America.
6. Write a short but well organized paragraph on the history of Panama with acceptable grammar

and style.

7. Draw a map of Panama.

MATERIALS

1. Globe or Wall Map
2. Filmstrip with cassette "Panama" available from Audio Visual Department or University of Bridgeport library on free of-charge loan.
3. Crayons
4. Outline map of Panama
5. Mimeographed information fact sheet on Panama
6. Overhead projector
7. Drawing paper

The teacher begins with probing and warm-up questions such as Where is Panama located? Why study this country? It is surprising to find that not many students know the location and importance of countries like Panama.

After viewing and listening to the presentation, the teacher randomly calls on various students to paraphrase the material. Many students lack the ability to summarize what they hear. Students complete question SHEET #1. Again, depending on various factors, the first encounter with this unit takes at least one class period, which culminates with the homework assignment, depending on what the teacher wishes to assign.

SECTION II

An integral part of each section of this unit is keeping class minutes. The teacher assigns the task to a different student each day. These assignments can be given at the beginning of each week. There are many benefits that can be derived from keeping class minutes. It affords the student an extra opportunity to practice listening and notetaking, as well as being able to select important information and read aloud in front of a group. Students can have a quick review of missed material, they might recognize the importance of

contributing to group effort, and perhaps a wandering mind will be brought back to class. The instructor can use class notes as an aid to self-evaluation by asking questions such as was the lesson well structure? Were important points omitted? Do my classroom management strategies need change? Did the students assimilate the material? Were important issues raised?

Before giving students their class minutes assignment, the instructor explicates the mechanical aspects of the procedure. This procedure varies according to teacher's style, but might include the following. The format must be clear to the student, including the name of the student and teacher, date and subject. The teacher gives carbon paper to the student so that a copy of the minutes is available for reference and editing. Notes are taken by assigned student at beginning of the class, a copy is given to the instructor at the end of the class, then the student; takes home the other copy for editing. The next class day the same student reads the minutes which are edited and corrected by teacher and students. The next student assigned for this class session now takes minutes and follows same procedure.

After the teacher explains the note keeping procedures she continues with the following activities.

1. Gives a brief recapitulation of previous class.
2. Discusses the geography of Panama and shows geographical data on the globe, wall map or with overhead projector
3. After discussion students are assigned the task of completing a map of Panama which has to be completed in class. Teacher walks around room checking and assisting.
4. Gives a mini talk on keeping classnotes and if necessary, the teacher also gives an entire class a practice session on keeping notes or minutes on a particular class following the guidelines previously suggested.
5. Homework assignment: write ten short sentences on the geography of Panama.

SECTION III

The teacher checks homework assignments and proceeds as follows:

1. Warmup: previously designated student reads class minutes (of previous class). This takes less than three minutes. Minutes are edited by teacher and students with deletions and additions.
2. The second main topic of this unit is introduced. The teacher proceeds with the following presentation and keeps these objectives in mind:
 - a. students will attain a general understanding of "folklore" and be able to state general genres and one example of folktales, proverbs and folk art they are acquainted with.
 - b. students will listen to the translated version of Seis Choreao and Cielito Lindo and write a short paragraph comparing both folksongs after having heard a class discussion presented by the teacher. (These two songs are available from the Connecticut Migratory Children's Program at

Hamden-New Haven Cooperative Educational Center upon request, free of charge).

c. Students will be able to use, spell and define the folklore vocabulary listed in the Worksheet Vocabulary list for Folklore.

d. Students improve their oral reading ability.

e. Students will improve their note taking skills, their ability to paraphrase a given text and develop the skill of writing well organized and guided short paragraphs.

f. Students will understand and appreciate the possible relationship between the folklore and history of a given country.

3. The teacher presents the narrative section on the subject of folklore after probing and eliciting responses from students to questions like What is folklore? Do you know any folktales? proverbs old sayings?

4. After presenting narrative material on the topic of folklore, students and teacher discuss questions on worksheet #4.

5. Homework assignment: write out answers to questions on worksheet # 4.

SECTION IV

The teacher continues to develop the students understanding and appreciation of folklore material with the following activities:

1. Previous class meetings are read and edited.

2. Teacher prepares the students for the reading of Maria la Cenicienta (the Spanish version of Cinderella found in Panama and other Spanish speaking countries) by having one student tell the class the English version of Cinderella. The class also discusses the concept of "fairytales" and folktales.

3. Students read Maria la Cenicienta as directed by the individual style of the teacher. This story is on worksheet #5.

4. After reading and discussing Maria la Cenicienta students work on questions on the story.

5. Homework assignment: write out questions and answers on Maria la Cenicienta.

6. Next class session begins with reading of class minutes, followed by correcting and editing. Homework is reviewed and corrected.

7. The rest of this section is used to help the students write a short play based on Maria la Cenicienta. It has been found that many students enjoy creating their own playlets and dialogues.

The teacher can assist by introducing the students to techniques like diversified copying, and by enlisting the assistance of the Drama department of the particular school. The language teacher and English or Drama teacher can work together in a team teaching situation and help the class prepare a drama for the school assembly or PTA.

SECTION V

In this section the teacher emphasizes that many aspects of history are sometimes reflected in the folklore of a given country.

1. Minutes of the previous class we read by the designated student. Minutes are edited and corrected by teacher and students.
2. The teacher gives each student a copy of *La Isla del Encanto*. She assigns short passages to various students who read aloud. After reading and discussion, the students answer comprehension questions.
3. Homework assignment: write a two paragraph summary of *La Isla del Encanto*. If time permits students may write a short play based on *La Isla del Encanto*. The teacher can find excellent techniques in Viola Spolin's *Improvizations for the Theatre* .

There are a variety of activities that can be used to further enhance the students' appreciation and knowledge of folklore that will at the same time heighten his cultural awareness and improve reading, writing and listening skills. In the area of proverbs, aphorisms and old sayings, the teacher can ask the students to write down as many completions as they can to common proverbs such as: it never rains but ____; where there is a will, there ____; a stitch in time ____ and so on. There are a variety of exercises and activities that can be used besides these:

1. Compare proverbs in Spanish and English. For example "a bird in one hand is worth two in the bush" is comparable to "más vale pájaro en mano que cien volando." Students can be asked to give literal and personal interpretations, which may include "a bird in the hand is worth more than a hundred flying" or the saying "Don't count the chickens before they are hatched." Excellent examples of proverbs from Mexico, Panama and other countries are found in Frances Toor's *A Treasury of Mexican Folkways* .
2. Students can be encouraged to interview their teachers, principal and relatives for proverbs

and old sayings. They write the proverbs from the adults' dictation. These dictations are a valuable listening and writing exercise when edited and viewed by the instructor.

3. The teacher writes two proverbs on the board, a student acts out one of them in front of the class, and the rest of the students must guess which one is being acted.

4. A technique which has been used by many teachers is interpretation of different situations with a drum. The teacher can write two proverbs on the board and a student interprets one of these. The class guesses which one is being interpreted they may listen for the number of beats in given groupings of "drummings", especially if the student is attempting to catch the spirit of the proverb by tapping out the number of syllables of the word.

SECTION VI

One practical and comical final activity is to present the various versions of Tingalay or Tingalayo which is a popular verse improvisation found in Central America and the Caribbean. The teacher initiates discussion by asking if the students have heard Harry Belfonte sing. Then the teacher plays or mentions "Matilda" or "Stop the Carnival", which are very popular. The English and Spanish versions of Tingalayo are written on the blackboard. Students compare both and eventually memorize the Spanish version because it has few words to learn:

Refrain: Tingalay-O

Come, little donkey, come;

Tingalay-o

Come, little donkey, come.

My donkey eat, my donkey sleep,

My donkey kick with his two hind feet.

Refrain

My donkey walk, my donkey talk,

My donkey eat with a knife and fork

Refrain

My donkey sing, my donkey hum,

My donkey play on his little round drum

Refrain: Tingalay-o

Ven, mi burrito, ven.

Tingalay-o
Ven mi burrito, ven.
Burrito si, burrito no
Burrito come con tenedor

The teacher can play the complete song (available from Sheridan Middle School, Foreign Language Department upon request). Students will realize that both versions are not quite the same: The English version begins with Little donkey (burrito), yes, Little donkey, no,"; they will see "ven" in the Spanish version and "come" and will eventually realize the different meanings, etc. Students continue activity trying to complete their sentences like: My donkey laugh, my donkey cry, My donkey wink with his little right...(eye for example).

Maria la Cenicienta Mary Cinderella

Once upon a time there was a widower who had a daughter named Maria. Every morning the girl used to go to her next door neighbor for embers with which to start her fire. The neighbor, a widow, would give her morsels of bread dipped in honey, saying: "Tell your father to marry me and you will have honey-dipped bread the rest of your life." The girl would go back to her father and say to him: "Father, you should marry our neighbor; she is very kind and always gives me bread dipped in honey."

Her father would reply: "No, Maria. Now she dips it in honey, but later she would dip it in gall."

"I don't believe it father," the girl would insist. "Our neighbor is so very kind."

At last her father agreed to marry the woman, but he warned Maria not to complain if her stepmother should prove to be wicked.

The neighbor had a daughter of her own, whose name was Sofia. She was Maria's age. No sooner did the marriage take place than the woman began to beat and maltreat Maria, who was so much prettier than Sofia; she nicknamed her la Cenicienta, Cinderella, and put her to work in the kitchen dressed in old rags.

Maria Cenicienta owned a heifer calf with which she loved to play every free moment of the day. The envious woman persuaded her husband to buy a calf for her own daughter to play with, and eventually she demanded that he should have Maria's calf slaughtered because la Cenicienta wasted too much time playing with it. The father gave in.

When Maria heard about the killing, she burst into tears and ran to the calf. While she petted it and fondled it, the calf said to her: "Do not cry, Maria; next to my heart you will find a small magic wand which has the power to make all your wishes come true; the moment I am killed, you ask to wash my insides in the brook. Take the wand and keep it securely attached to your waist. No one should see it."

The following day the calf was slaughtered and Maria went to the brook to wash the insides. Sure enough, she found the magic wand and hid it in her sash. When she had finished rinsing the insides and had placed them in her wash basin, they slipped and drifted down the stream.

Terrified at the thought of punishment that awaited her at the hand of her stepmother, she began to cry.

"Why are you crying, Maria," said a kind voice in back of her. The girl turned about and saw a little old lady dressed in blue. "Why should I not cry, my good lady?" answered Maria. "My wash basin and the insides of a calf I just finished washing drifted down the stream; when my stepmother sees me come home without them,

she is going to beat me to death.”

“Do not cry,” said the little old lady, “go to that cottage by the brook, lie down and sleep a while; in the meantime I shall look for what you have lost.”

Maria went to the cottage; she swept it, made a fire and prepared supper for the little old lady and then she lay down and fell asleep. After some time there was a knocking at the door. She got up and went to open it: the washbasin and the insides were on the doorstep. She picked them up and went home.

“What took you so long?” asked the stepmother. Maria told her just what happened.

“What is that on your forehead?” asked the stepmother.

“I don’t know,” said Maria.

A mirror was brought to her and in it she saw a star shining on her forehead. The stepmother tried to rub it out, but the harder she rubbed the more the star would sparkle. Finally, she bandaged the girl’s head with an old rag so that no one should see the shining star which made Cinderella stand out even more brightly next to her step-sister.

Sofia then said to her mother: “Mother, I want to have my calf killed and I will do just as Cinderella did so that I, too, will have a star on my forehead.”

The woman had Sofia’s calf killed; the girl went to the brook, began to wash the calf’s insides, sent the washbasin down the stream, and then she pretended to cry. Immediately the little old woman in blue appeared and said: “Why are you crying little girl?” “Should I not cry when my washbasin went down the stream?” said Sofia. “Go and take in nap in that cottage by the brook,” said the old lady, “and when you wake up you will find your washbasin.”

The girl went to the cottage and said to herself, peevishly: “I can’t sleep in this hard bed in this dirty house.” She sat on a chair and waited. After some time, she went to the door and finding her washbasin there, she took it and went home. When the mother saw her, she said: “What is that on your forehead Sofia?” A mirror was brought and the girl saw the crest of a turkey in the middle of her forehead. The mother tried to remove it but the harder she pulled, the larger and uglier the crest would grow. Finally, she bandaged her daughter’s head in a silk kerchief.

One day there was to be a ball at the palace and Maria Cinderella, who wanted to go, took out her magic wand and wished for fine clothes, carriages, and servants, so that she might appear in grand style. Instantly her wish was granted and with those fine clothes she appeared prettier. When everyone in the house was fast asleep, she stepped into her carriage and soon arrived at the palace. The ballroom became suffused with the light of the star on Maria’s forehead and the prince was so taken with her that all night long he danced with no one but her. When the time came for Maria to leave, she fled from the ballroom and ran to her carriage. The prince tried to follow her, but she was so quick that he could not catch up with her and was left holding one of the girl’s glass slippers which she had lost in her flight.

The next morning the prince gave orders to all servants to search the city for the girl who had worn the glass slipper, announcing that he wanted her, and no one else for his wife. The servants went from house to house, but the slipper would fit no one.

When Cinderella's stepmother heard that the prince's servants were to stop at her house, she told her daughter to bandage her feet tightly so that slipper would fit her and that the prince would marry her. Fearing that they might see Maria with the star on her forehead, she hid her under the kneading trough.

Sofia had a little dog and when the prince's servants arrived and were trying the slipper on the girl's foot, the dog began calling out; "Bow-wow-wow! A turkey crest upon the bench; a star beneath the kneading trough!" And as the dog kept repeating the same thing over and over again, one of the servants became suspicious. The servant tried the glass slipper on Cinderella, after he found her. Then Cinderella took out of pocket the other slipper and put it on her other foot; and everyone knew that she was the one who had danced with the prince the night before. Cinderella was taken to the prince who recognized her immediately. What happened next? Guess? You are right! A royal wedding took place and the prince and Cinderella lived happily ever after.

WORKSHEET # 6

QUESTIONS ON MARIA LA CENICIENTA

1. Compare the "negative" character in the English version with the "negative" character(s) in Maria la Cenicienta.
2. Do you think both folktales come from the same source?
3. Is there a "moral" to be learned from la Cenicienta?
4. Create another ending for Maria la Cenicienta.
5. Are there any allegories in this folktale? If so, what do they represent?

LA ISLA DEL ENCANTO (ISLE OF ENCHANTMENT)

La Isla del Encanto is the name of a small island situated at the mouth of the Tuira River. It is very verdant and full of rich vegetation which has stimulated the imagination of the Darienitas or inhabitants of Panama.

During the colonial period, the Spaniards constructed on the island a solid castle to defend the entry from the pirates such as Sir Francis Drake. There are still remnants of the strong walls which have the inscription: "If you enter Darien (Panama) commend yourself to Maria (the Virgin) for in your hands is the entry and in God's hand your exit." This disturbing warning gives the idea of how dangerous the navigation was in these places, infested with sanguin pirates.

Many inhabitants of La Palma, a village on the Tuira River, say that in the months of April and May, they hear a majestic orchestra when approaching the Isla del Encanto. Some have heard the music in the morning, others at night. Different kinds of music are heard: sometimes the melodies of a religious hymn emanating from an enormous organ or the sweet notes of a flute like that of Pan, other times the wailing notes of a violin,

the symmetry of a piano or the harmony of delicate. No one has been able to pin the source of the music because it constantly changes its direction: sometimes it comes from the sky or is floating with the wind. It is most moving when it seems to be burgeoning from the waters. When this happens the rowers strike the canoes and when they make the surface of the waters vibrate, the music acquires higher tonalities. The symphony that seemed to come from a distance before, then surrounds the traveler and inundates the whole region with its new notes. Why the music and from where?

According to the leyenda La Isla del Encanto was colonized by the Spaniards. In Panamanian history there is also an account of a combat between a troop of marine guards and the English pirate who tried to capture the Island of Enchantment. The pirate and his beautiful wife were imprisoned. The pirate was condemned to death but his daughter was given perpetual imprisonment. Her beauty kindled love in many of the military officers. The military chief, afraid that the others would win her heart first, had the pirate's daughter locked in the castle on the island. He and other admirers sent her many gifts among them musical instruments. He visited her most frequently and demanded her love. As time went the captive daughter perfectionized her music and artistic abilities.

Before her imprisonment she had dedicated much of her life to art and music. She dedicated her time toward the cultivation of art and learned to execute majestic music until she became an exquisite artist. The travelers and fishermen in the proximity of the river would detain themselves to listen to the suave music that emanated from the castle.

The military chief did not cease to importune his beautiful captive with amorous advances. She continued to exhibit dignity and valor before her impassioned pretendiente (lover) whom she viewed as the oppressor and accomplice in the murder of her father. The chief, who was unaccustomed to military defeats and much less amorous ones, gave up the wooing and moral fortitude, and tried to rape her.

The daughter of Albion (the pirate in history also) fought with incredible vigor until she jumped out of the windows of the castle and threw herself into the river.

Thus, according to legend and the inhabitants of the island, the music heard is the grandiose soul of the artist that floats in the environment of the waters. The music dilutes the sadness but sings the epic poem of arrogance (the military officer) and virtue (the daughter). The enchantment is the mysterious music that cannot be accounted for and which brings to mind the similar phenomenon that can be found in other areas like the grotto of Fingal, on the Island of Staffa, on the coast of Scotland, according to Vicente Vera in his book *Amenidades Científicas*.

WORKSHEET #1

History and geography of Panama.

- 1 Where is Panama located?
- 2 What are its geographic boundaries?
3. What is the capital of Panama?

4. Two important cities are ____ and ____.
5. In 1907 Panama got its ____ from ____.
6. What are Panama's Natural Resources?
7. What are the possible origins of "Panama"?
8. Panama's monetary currency is ____.
9. Identify:

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Isthmus | Hispaniola |
| Ferdinand de Lesseps | Viceroyalty |
| Autonomy | Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty |

FOLKLORE VOCABULARY

| | | |
|------------|------------|------------|
| taxonomic | folklore | |
| proverb | adage | |
| folklore | folktale | |
| folk art | | folk music |
| chronicles | codes | |
| collective | legend | |
| cuento | | fabula |
| leyenda | folklorico | |
| costumbres | creencias | |
| historia | adagio | |

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR ISLA DEL ENCANTO

1. Who were the Darienitas?
2. What happens in the months of April and May?
3. Where does the music come from?
4. Describe the music that is heard.
5. According to popular legend, how did the music business begin? Who are the characters involved?
6. What does the music represent?
7. How does the Island of Enchantment relate to history of Panama?
8. Write your version of Isla del Encanto with a different ending.

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