



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1995 Volume IV: Coming of Age in Ethnic America

El Sabor del Caribe / A Taste of the Caribbean (An analysis of the symbolism of food in the oral and written literature of the Caribbean)

Curriculum Unit 95.04.01
by Elsa M. Calderon

INTRODUCTION

The intent of this unit is to infuse Caribbean culture into the Spanish curriculum, with a focus on Puerto Rico. The vehicle for this is literature, both oral literature and written literature. The oral literature includes popular children's songs and "refranes." The written literature includes poems, short stories, and books by modern Latina authors. These authors use food as a symbol for identity, patriotism, religious hypocrisy, and nostalgia. Caribbean in this unit refers to two Caribbean islands that are Hispanic: Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. Mexico is included, although part of North America and not the Caribbean, because of the proximity of Mexico and the contributions of a Mexican-American writer, Sandra Cisneros. This does not preclude the possibility of other islands, such as Cuba. The area thus defined as Caribbean is rich with different cultures and traditions. There does exist, however, a common language: Spanish, and similar traditions and cultures. The islands share a common or similar history. The culture is a mixture of the Native Americans, the Spanish, and the Africans. This is referred to as "criollo" (creole). The Caribbean has developed a culture of itself and different from the rest of Latin America.

This unit is part of a continuum of Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute Units. Two of the authors, Rosario Ferre and Sandra Cisneros, have already been discussed in prior Yale-New Haven Teachers Institutes. See Vavzquez, Doris. *Rosario Ferre: una cuentista puertorriquena contemporanea (A Contemporary Puerto Rican Storyteller)* in Volume I, 1987. See Galluci, Frank. *Puerto Rico, Its Land, History, Culture, and Literature*, in Volume I, 1987 for an introduction to Puerto Rico. The rich legacy of Puerto Rican literature and Latin American literature has been covered in prior curriculum units. (Volume V, 1982; Volume I, 1987, Volume III, 1989; Volume I, 1990; Volume II, 1993). See Volume IV, 1993 for Sandra Cisneros' contributions as a Mexican-American writer.

The topic for this unit is literature in the Caribbean and the subtopic is food. How does the literature of certain modern Latina authors include the theme or symbolism of food? Is this symbol central to their works or peripheral? What do these foods symbolize? Food is symbolic of many things in these works: friendship and decay in *El Regalo*, by Rosario Ferre, a Hispanic background in *The House on Mango Street*, by Sandra Cisneros, an idyllic rural life in *When I was Puerto Rican* by Esrgeralda Santiago, nostalgia in *When the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accent*, by Julia Alvarez, and childhood pleasures in the poems *Mango* and *Quenepa* by Isabel

Freire Matos. What foods keep emerging in this literature and why? What does this say about the culture being described? If we examine the oral traditions of children's songs and "refranes" what meanings are attached to these foods? These questions provide a general framework for the class.

Specific foods have been selected for analysis in this unit: rice, plantains, guava, mango, and quenepa. These foods meet the following criteria: they are popular items in the Caribbean cuisine, they are found in "refranes", they have cultural meanings independent of the literature, they are often connected with notions of identity, they are readily available in New Haven, and they are mentioned in at least one of the literary selections.

This unit is appropriate for all high school students of Spanish 2 or higher, Spanish for Hispanics, and honors Spanish courses. English high school teachers may adapt the unit for their classes, selecting poems and short stories and books in English. *The House on Mango Street* is in the reading list for some high school English classes. Teachers of other disciplines may adapt the unit for their classes. (e.g. Social Studies, English as a Second Language, Bilingual Program) It is being used in a Spanish 2 class to enrich the textbook, *Saludos*, with literary selections and cultural activities. Lesson 17 of *Saludos* has a "Lectura Cultural" about a brief trip home to Puerto Rico. Lesson 22 of *Saludos* has a "Lectura Cultural" that mentions the foods of Spain, Mexico, the islands of the Caribbean, and Argentina. Lesson 23 of *Saludos* is organized around the different words in Spain, Mexico, and Puerto Rico for the same objects. (bus, blanket, green beans, peanuts, grocery store, and bedroom) These lessons are possible starting points for this unit. This unit could be used by teachers, whether Hispanic or non-Hispanic, to supplement the meagre "Lecturas Culturales" in their textbooks. Much too often teachers have to develop their own materials in order to teach culture in the Spanish classroom. Much too often, teachers are not familiar with Latin American culture and specifically, Puerto Rican culture, and need supplemental materials. This unit is written in response to this need.

Presently, the New Haven curriculum for Spanish at the high school level (not including Spanish for Hispanics) includes the islands of the Caribbean and specifically, Puerto Rico, in Spanish 1 and 2. The materials, however, cover the Caribbean and Puerto Rico in a perfunctory fashion. The students first encounter Robert and Lupita, from the United States and Mexico, respectively. The next few chapters introduce two friends from Colombia. *Saludos*, which is used in Spanish 1 and 2, hardly mentions anyone from Puerto Rico, with some exceptions, such as Lesson 17! The textbook for Spanish 3, entitled *Amistades*, includes an optional reading selection about Roberto Clemente, a famous Puerto Rican baseball player, and a "Lectura Cultural" about Menudo, a Puerto Rican singing group. When Puerto Rico is mentioned in *Saludos*, it is often grouped together with other Caribbean countries or with Latin American countries. The two countries that are emphasized are Spain (Spanish 1,2) and Mexico (Spanish 2,3) Some other countries mentioned to a lesser degree are Argentina, Chile, and Colombia.

In contrast to this paucity of materials about Puerto Rico, the Hispanic students in New Haven are predominantly from Puerto Rico. Some Puerto Rican students are recent arrivals and are in E. S. L. or Bilingual Programs. Some Puerto Rican students have been in the New Haven school system for most of their school years and are English-dominant. Therefore, these students might be found in a Spanish class, a Spanish for Hispanics class, an English class, or a Social Studies class. Their heritage and contributions to this country should be covered more adequately by the New Haven curriculum. Spanish teachers need materials in support of this curriculum. One way that to accomplish this is by following this unit. This unit enables the students in Spanish 2 to study authentic literature, participate in cultural activities, and sample some Puerto Rican cuisine.

If a teacher has Puerto Rican, Dominican, Cuban, or Mexican-American students in the class, these students could play a pivotal role in the presentation of this unit. They could share their personal experiences. A student that has tasted a mango will bring a different experience to the reading of the poem *El Mango* by Isabel Freire Matos, as compared to a student who has never tasted this delightful fruit. A student who has tasted a plantain and is familiar with the oral tradition of “refranes” will understand the connotations of the phrase “la mancha del platano”, synonymous to the Puerto Rican spirit or identity.

The activities and lesson plans included herein were written for my Spanish 2 and Spanish 3 classes at the high school level. The students are mostly non-Hispanic. Very few students have traveled to Puerto Rico or other countries of the Caribbean or Latin America. Very few students are familiar with the geography, culture, and literature of the Caribbean island. (Two of my students are Jamaican. Two students have a Hispanic parent.) Very few students have sampled the rice dishes, plantains, and fruits of the Caribbean. (Most of my students confuse Mexican food with Caribbean food and with food from Spain. Some of my students think “tacos” and “burritos” are typical cuisine for all Spanish-speaking countries.) The curriculum as it now stands does not include sufficient cultural information and cultural activities about the Caribbean. This unit attempts to address these deficits in the curriculum.

This unit includes geography, foods, and literature (oral and written) of the Caribbean. The activities are meant to motivate the students to read more and to capitalize on their natural curiosity about the Caribbean and its cuisine. Many activities suggested are hands-on and involve active participation and cooperative group activities. One component is student research so that students gather information on their own about Puerto Ricans in New Haven, and make their own Puerto Rico and New Haven connection. If the school does not have a large Puerto Rican population, the teacher can provide guest speakers, such as community leaders, Puerto Rican educators, and staff of local agencies. Field trips into the Puerto Rican community are a central part of the unit.

OBJECTIVES

1. To develop a working definition of culture.
2. To learn the physical and agricultural geography of the Caribbean, with a focus on Puerto Rico.
3. To identify and sample some foods of the Caribbean.
4. To analyze literature from the Caribbean, including the oral tradition of “refranes.”
5. To acquire information about Puerto Ricans in New Haven.

1. Students will develop a working definition of culture.

What is culture? The first thing a teacher must do in presenting this unit is to develop his/her own working

definition of culture. Some sources to assist in this task are included in this unit. *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* defines culture as the integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thought, speech, action, and artifacts and depends upon man's capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations, the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group. The key words here are human behavior and transmitting knowledge. In this unit human behavior includes eating and writing. The knowledge transmitted is the selected body of knowledge which includes such things as the daily activities, centered around food, of people from the Caribbean. If the teacher is not familiar with Caribbean cuisine, cookbooks are an excellent source of information. (See the Teacher's Bibliography.)

One anthropologist's definition of culture is a multiple one; Clyde Kluckhohn is quoted by Clifford Geertz in his book, *The Interpretation of Cultures*. Kluckhohn defines culture as:

- (1) the total way of life of a people;
- (2) the social legacy the individual acquires from his group;
- (3) a way of thinking, feeling, and believing;
- (4) an abstraction from behavior; (5) a theory on the part of the anthropologist about the way in which a group of people in fact behave;
- (6) a storehouse of pooled learning;
- (7) a set of standardized orientations to recurrent problems;
- (8) learned behavior;
- (9) a mechanism for the normative regulation of behavior;
- (10) a set of techniques for adjusting both to the external environment and to other men;
- (11) a precipitate of history, . . . a map, a sieve, a matrix.

Clifford Geertz, a giant in the field of anthropology, states, "Believing man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs." (Geertz 1937,4-5)

The teacher in this unit is encouraged to brainstorm with the students on the question of what is culture. Students should start their journals with their own definitions. At intervals during the unit, the teacher will ask the students to re-examine this definition, to add or change it if desired. Students will rewrite their definitions at the end of the unit. The purpose of the journal is for students to record their impressions, experiences, and thoughts on a weekly basis, and to share their self-selected entries with their classmates. For example,

students will log in their reactions to the foods, their reaction to the literature, the results of the science experiments, the data on their research, and any other thoughts or reactions on an ad hoc basis. After sharing the definitions of culture, the class could develop a class definition, to be displayed in the room in the form of a banner.

My advice at this point is that the teacher accept all student responses at the beginning and continue the inquiry throughout the unit. Whatever the class definition of culture is, the look for these elements to be represented in some form: 1. communication, 2. transmittal of values, verbally and non-verbally, 3. ties that bind a group together, 4. rituals and ceremonies, 5. families and groups of intimates, 6. set reactions to familiar stimuli, 7. daily routine activities such as eating.

Throughout this unit, the goal is for students to realize that culture may be studied via literature, or via life experiences such as traveling or dining. A student will learn a lot about the Puerto Rican culture, for example, by interviewing senior citizens at Casa Otonal. Some schools in New Haven have a partnership already established with Casa Otonal, so the teacher representatives may be contacted for this activity.

What is Puerto Rican culture? Teachers who are not familiar with Puerto Rican culture should read these units from the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute: *An analysis of "The Oxcart" by Rene Marques, Puerto Rican playwright*, by Norine Polio, *La Nueva Cancion en Puerto Rico*, by Doris M. Vavquez, and *Mythology: A Study of Puerto Rican Myths, Legends and Folktales*. by John C. Warner, all from Volume II, 1987; *Cultural Understanding Through Folklore*, by Christine Y. House, and *Puerto Rican Folktales*, by Doris M. Vasquez, both in Volume II, 1993. Other materials may be found in the Teachers' Bibliography at the end of this unit.

Puerto Rican culture shares many similarities with other cultures of the Caribbean, such as Cuban and Dominican. Part of the reason for this is historical. These islands had either Taino (Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico) or Siboney (Cuba) Indians, related to the Arawak Indians from Venezuela. They each had Spanish "conquistadores", beginning in 1492. They each had Africans, brought over as slaves after the Indians were decimated by poor treatment, hard work, and disease. As a result, these islands have a similar racial and ethnic mixture or "mezcla". In contrast, Mexico has a mixture of Spanish and Native American, but the Native Americans were Aztecs and Mayans.

The reason is also geographical. These islands in the Caribbean are tropical, have a moderate and constant climate that hovers around 78 degrees year-round, adequate rainfall, and fertile lands. The islands of Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic are more mountainous, especially in the central region, than Cuba. As a result, the crops are similar in these three countries. That is, they yield similar fruits and root vegetables.

This unit has a geographical component. The teacher begins the unit with the geography of the Caribbean (and Mexico). The purpose is two-fold: to locate the countries and oceans and thus develop map skills, and to draw connections between the geography and the kinds of food found in the countries. The geography they will study is the physical and agricultural geography.

2. Students will learn the physical and agricultural geography of the Caribbean, with a focus on Puerto Rico

I have found many of my students to be lacking in geography, map skills, and general information about Latin America. Some students know Puerto Rico is an island but do not know where it is located and sometimes confuse it with Cuba. Very few know its exact political affiliation with the United States; Puerto Rico is a Commonwealth or "Estado Libre Asociado". That means it is associated with the United States. It has rights more developed than a territory or a military protectorate but less developed than a state. For example,

Puerto Ricans have been citizens of the United States since 1917 but cannot vote for the President of the United States, unless they move to the mainland of the United States. Puerto Ricans may be drafted to the army of the United States but have no vote in the United States Senate or the United States Congress.

Some students cannot locate Mexico and yet it is our neighbor. Most students have no idea how long it would take to fly to Puerto Rico (2 hours by plane from JFK Airport) yet a large percentage of the school-age students in New Haven make this trip every year. I have found that many of my students are not familiar with their own state, Connecticut, and have not traveled much outside of New Haven. Some students believe Fair Haven is a neighbor city and not New Haven at all. Despite this lack of information about their surroundings, I have found my students to be very receptive to basic information about geography, neighboring countries, and other countries. It is hoped that after acquiring the map skills from this unit, a student can transfer these skills. It is hoped that after studying about other countries and traveling by means of the imagination, a student will navigate through his neighborhood and his world with more confidence and knowledge. Perhaps he will even be inspired to travel to a Caribbean island to further his studies. The school system sponsors trips to Africa, France, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Russia. Perhaps it will consider trips to Puerto Rico in the near future

The Caribbean, as the region to be studied, includes the Greater Antilles, the Lesser Antilles, and the other islands located south of Florida, east of Mexico and Central America, and north of South America. The bodies of water include the Atlantic Ocean, the Caribbean Sea, and the Pacific Ocean. (Mexico) Students will be provided with a map of this region. Students will label the islands and Mexico in Spanish. Students will label the bodies of water in Spanish: El Mar Caribe, El Océano Atlántico, El Océano Pacífico. It is important that the maps used are in Spanish and that the students study the maps not only of the country itself but of the regions nearby. Therefore, when studying Puerto Rico, I start off with a map of the Americas, followed by a map of the Caribbean, followed by a map of Puerto Rico. I keep these displayed throughout the entire unit. I add on the student-made maps as soon as they are completed. After each map is studied, I drill the students orally on the countries or capitals on a daily basis, for classroom points. I also give frequent quizzes on labeling and locating.

Students will study and label in Spanish the maps of the following countries: Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, and Cuba. Students will study the capitals and major cities of those islands. Students will label the major rivers and lakes and mountain regions of those islands. The teacher will indicate the names that are Indian in origin. (e.g. Jayuya, and Utuado in Puerto Rico) Since students usually are interested in flags, students will study the flags of all these countries. When students discover the similarities between the flags of Puerto Rico and Cuba, the teacher will explain or the students will research the reason for this similarity.

At the same time, students will study the climate, temperature, rainfall, and wind conditions of these countries. Students will examine the topography of these islands with an eye to growing crops. Students will study the crops that are in fact grown in these islands. If interested, students will study the rain forest of Puerto Rico: El Yunque, and compare it to other rain forests in the world. I have found my students to be very interested in the rain forests and in any projects related to the rain forests. I capitalize on this curiosity by having the students do several hands-on projects on the rain forests. Charting rainfall and temperatures of specific locations is easy and popular. Students use Spanish newspapers and Spanish television shows to chart the temperature changes in the islands. Four different groups will track the temperature in these cities: New York City, San Juan, Santo Domingo, Havana.

After studying the Caribbean region, the students will study Mexico. The class will gather the same sorts of information it gathered about the Caribbean: location, major cities and capitals, bodies of water, climate and

agricultural topography; flag. The teacher will point out that the Native Americans in Mexico were different than the Arawaks, Caribs, Siboneys, and Tamos in the Caribbean, and point out the names of cities and rivers (and pyramids) that are Native American in origin.

After studying Mexico, the class will focus on Puerto Rico. The geographical information will be connected by the students to the crops grown in the island. For example, due to the rainfall, temperature, and other factors, Puerto Rico is able to produce such crops as: the mango, the plantain, the guava, and the quenepa. At this point, the teacher will ask the class who is familiar with these foods. This inquiry provides the transition to the next area: identification and sampling of the actual foods.

3. Students will identify and sample some foods of the Caribbean

This part is the most enjoyable. Students will eat the foods mentioned in the reading selection! What students will resist an activity that is food-centered or that involves eating? I had one student this year who quietly refused to participate in my Spanish class. When I brought in “platanutres” to sample, he came to life and moved his seating from the back of the room to the front of the room. He smiled for the first time this year. When I brought in “arroz con habichuelas” and “tostones” in another class, my students were delighted and rated the activity highly in the post activity evaluation sheet. High school students love to eat and it is a constant battle to enforce the no-eating rules in the classroom. In contrast, this unit encourages food in the classroom, but for a pedagogical reason. An added bonus is that it is nutritious.

I identified and sampled several foods at once, but a teacher may opt for identifying and sampling one food or category at a time. The complete list is: rice (arroz), guayaba (guava), mango (mango), platano (plantain) and “quenepa”. All may be found at a Super Stop and Shop or local small grocery stores or fruit stands in the New Haven area. The teacher first asks the class what a mango is. If nobody is familiar with a mango, the teacher brings in a mango and brings in drawings of a mango and drawings or photos of a mango tree. On the very first day of this activity, every student gets an opportunity to sample this delicious fruit. A teacher may bring in an unripe mango and a ripe mango to indicate when the fruit is ready to be eaten. To generate vocabulary in Spanish, the teacher asks the class to describe the fruit, outside and inside, and to describe the flavor of it. For example, a mango is large, similar to a pear or apple in size but bigger, and has a golden tinge when ripe. “El mango es una fruta grande, parecida a la pera or la manzana, y es amarilla cuando esta madura.” The students make and display a vocabulary list of all the words they learn in this unit. Also, they keep their individual lists in their journals. Another example would be: The mango has a delicious flavor, that is hard to describe. It’s, like a peach and a watermelon but it’s so difficult to eat! “El mango tiene un sabor riquisimo pero es dificil describirlo. El sabor es como un melocoton y una sandia pero que dificil es comerlo!”

I have found that my students like to predict what will happen, so I do science experiments in my Spanish classes. Before we cut the mango, I ask the class to predict what the inside will look like, the colors, seeds, etc. I give my students a lab experiment to write up IN SPANISH. This is an excellent means of learning vocabulary and of reviewing question words and questions in Spanish. A sample question: What color do you think this fruit will be inside? “De que color sera la parte interior (adentro de) de esta fruta?” The students work in groups of three(3). I sometimes choose who will be in each group, I sometimes let the class decide. They always get to choose who will be the person who does the experiment, the recorder who writes the answers, and the reporter who reports their results to the rest of the class. This is an example of cooperative group learning.

Students enjoy sampling recipes from cookbooks, so this is another activity presented in this unit. One student told me that the best activity in the unit was making her own cookbook, so I included it in the unit after

receiving her input. I have several cookbooks from Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Caribbean, in both Spanish and English. If a teacher does not have the same resources, any cookbook on Puerto Rican or Caribbean cuisine may be found at Barnes and Nobles or Waldenbooks. (See Teacher's Bibliography.) Some of the best recipes, however, are those not found in the cookbooks, but in the cook's head. Students are encouraged to ask their mothers, aunts, grandmothers, etc. for their favorite recipes, and the students either write them down or tape them.

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5. Students will acquire information about Puerto Ricans in New Haven.

This last objective may be accomplished in different ways and in different junctures in this unit. The intent is for the students to recognize there is a Puerto Rican community in New Haven, and to gather information about this community as well as to gather information about foods from it. The students will research the basic demographics, such as the total population of Hispanics in New Haven, and the total population of Puerto Ricans in New Haven. Sources include the Census Bureau, El Centro San Jose, and guest speakers. Before embarking on this research, the teacher will ask the students to estimate the number of Puerto Ricans in New Haven and their percentage within the total city population.

The research begins in the classroom and then continues through larger and larger spheres: the school, the community, the city. Schools with a large Puerto Rican population will yield a lot of information. Schools with a small Puerto Rican population will rely on guest speakers and field trips. Field trips include: Centro San Jose, Junta, local agencies, and La Casa Cultural Julia de Burgos. Other sources are Spanish newspapers and magazines.

After gathering information about the Puerto Ricans in New Haven, phase two of the student research project is gathering information from this community. Suggested topics to research, related to food are the following:

1. Have you eaten the following foods?
2. Do you like the following foods: arroz, platano, guava, mango, quenepa?
3. What is your favorite food?
4. What is your favorite of the listed foods in # 2?
5. Do you know any saying or "refranes" about foods?
6. Do you know any "refranes"?
7. Do you know any songs about food?
8. How long have you been in the United States mainland?

The information obtained will be recorded in the student journals, shared in class, and discussed. The class will, as one of the cumulative activities, publish this information in a book entitled: Puerto Rico in New Haven.

Lesson Plans 1-2

Focus:

A Tropical Fruit: the Mango Summary: This Lesson Plan postdates the sections on the culture of Puerto Rico and the geography of Puerto Rico. Students will be exposed to a tropical fruit: a mango. They will observe it, touch it, and sample it. They will observe and/or sample other tropical fruits such as “guavas,” “quenepas,” and “parchas.” They will observe other tropical foods, known as “viandas” or root vegetables: “yame,” “platano,” and “guineo.” They will sample, blind-folded, oranges and lemons. (naranjas y limones) They will describe the color, shape, and taste of the foods in Spanish. They will memorize what is in the mystery bag or “bolsa misteriosa”. They will read “refranes” about tropical foods. They will write their observations and preferences in their journals. They will sing a song about oranges and olives. (Naranja dulce, limon partido)

Student Objectives:

1. Students will identify and sample some foods of the Caribbean. (frutas y viandas)
2. Students will expand their Spanish vocabulary and develop writing skills.
3. Students will read “refranes” and poems about tropical foods.
4. Students will develop memory skills in Spanish, with “la bolsa misteriosa.”
5. Students will sing a song in Spanish.

Materials:

Fruits, such as mango, guava, passion fruit, lemons, oranges, available at Super Stop and Shops or small “bodegas” or “colmados”. Fruit juices, Goya, of tropical fruits. On large paper: “El Mango,” by Isabel Freire Matos, and “Quenepa,” by the same author. Student notebooks for new vocabulary. Small cloth bag for “la bolsa misteriosa.”

Activities:

1. Teacher brings out the mystery bag: “la bolsa misteriosa”. Inside are the following: mangos, guavas, passion fruits, oranges, lemons, banana, plantain, “calabaza,” and “yames,” Teacher asks in Spanish the following questions of each item: Que es? / Como es? If students do not know the name of the food, the teacher supplies it: Es un mango. Es una parcha. Es una guayaba, etc. The teacher then solicits answers about the color, shape, and ripeness. Como es? De que color es? De que forma es? Esta madura o no? Then the teacher puts all the items back in the bag and asks the students to remember: “Ahora, vamos a aprender de memoria las cosas en la bolsa misteriosa.” Students volunteer. If the answer is correct, the student gets one point for class participation. Teacher repeats this activity for several days so that the students develop their memory skills in Spanish.

2. On the second day of the “bolsa misteriosa” the teacher extends the activity with a new question: Como es el sabor de esta fruta? Teacher explains two new words: “dulce” and “agrio.” Acceptable responses are: “Es dulce. Es agrio. No se.” If a “quenepa” is available, teacher explains bitter-sweet: “agridulce.” Teacher asks for a student volunteer to record the answers on the board and tally the points for each fruit, under “dulce” and “agrio”. Based on this activity, the teacher decides what fruit or fruits to introduce to the students for the science experiments. (predict and observe)

3. On the third day of the “bolsa”, the teacher repeats the memory game, asks the same questions, and introduces the juices or “jugos.” The teacher has four juices: mango, guava, lemon, and orange. Students work in pairs. One student blindfolds the partner. The blindfolded student drinks from a straw and tries to guess what he is drinking. The partner must ask: Que jugo es? The other student answers: Jugo, jugo, yo no se; creo que ___ es. If the answer is correct, he gets one point. If the answer is incorrect, he drinks another drink. The pairs fill out a short worksheet with points for the correct answers. After this activity, the teacher summarizes what the class knows. Lo que sabemos de las frutas. Lo que sabemos de los jugos.

4. After the students are familiar with the vocabulary, the teacher presents a short poem: “El Mango” or “La Quenepa”, by Isabel Freire Matos. The class listens to it, repeats it, and breaks up into groups for choral memorization exercises. Each student gets an opportunity to memorize the poem and say it in front of the class.

5. The teacher explains that they will learn a song that is familiar to children throughout Latin America: Naranja dulce, limon partido. Teacher models it for the students, line by line. After the students have repeated the song, the teacher shows the song on a large sheet of paper and distributes individual song sheets. After this activity, the class sings the song on a daily basis, at the end of the Spanish class.

6. The teacher explains what “refranes” or proverbs are. The teacher asks the class for proverbs in English. (A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush; etc.) The teacher gives the Spanish equivalents: “Un pajarito en la mano vale cien volando.” The teacher asks the class if they know any sayings in English about food. The teacher accepts all responses. (e.g., Beber y comer, buen pasatiempo es.) The teacher asks where the students learned or heard these Spanish sayings, since “refranes” are part of an oral tradition, and are not necessarily found only in books. Possible sources are: the radio, the television, a Hispanic neighbor, a Spanish-speaking classmate, etc. The teacher explains that in this unit, the class will learn many “refranes” in worksheets, the class will have for homework a research task about “refranes”, and the class will record all these “refranes” in their notebooks. Finally, each student will choose to either act out or illustrate two “refranes” of their choice. (See Appendix. A)

Lesson Plan 3

Focus:

Predict and Observe(Science Experiments in Spanish) Summary: This Lesson Plan is for a complete class or period. The activity presumes the class has had the introduction or Lesson Plans 1-2 and is familiar with certain vocabulary. If not, the teacher must introduce this vocabulary: All the fruits in Spanish/ la semilla/ Yo creo que/ Yo no se/ Mi reporte/ Mi grupo/ la fruta tendra ___ / la fruta sera ___ /Yo escribi ___ / Nosotros escribimos ___. This is a cooperative group activity. The teacher divides the class into groups of three. Each group decides the roles for: writer, observer, and presenter. Each group has a simple worksheet. The main task is one of observing and predicting in Spanish.

Student Objectives:

1. Students will work in cooperative groups of three.
2. Students will learn new vocabulary words and phrases having to do with science experiments.
3. Students will conduct science experiments in Spanish.

Materials:

Fruits, fruit pieces, zip-lock bags, worksheets.

Activities:

1. Teacher reviews the vocabulary for fruits in Spanish.(By using the “bolsa misteriosa” or oral drills.) Teacher and class sing: “Naranja dulce, limon partido.”
2. Teacher explains that today the class will do something new. “Hoy, vamos a hacer experimentos científicos con las frutas.” The teacher divides the class into groups and explain the roles of the cooperative groups.
3. The experiment itself consists of choosing one of the fruits at the group’s table and predicting: Que sabor tendra? De que color es adentro? Como es la semilla adentro? Cuantas semillas tiene? The group must agree on each answer. The reporter or writer writes down the predictions and writes down the observations. Es dulce. Es amari la adentro. Tiene muchas semillas. (The teacher has the option of doing the flavor predictions one day, the inside color and seeds another day.)
4. After all the groups have finished, the presenter of each group reports in Spanish to the rest of the class. One part of each report is the evaluation: did they like it? Did they have fun? Did they learn new words? What did they learn? (Les gusto el experimento? Se divirtieron? Aprendieron palabras nuevas? Que aprendieron?)

Appendix A

Proverbs Refranes

1. Eso es un *mango bajito*. (That is a short mango tree. That is easy; that is easy to do.)
2. Estar en las *papas* . (To be in the potatoes. To be in a state of extreme happiness or bliss.)
3. Esta como el *arroz blanco* . (He's like white rice. He's everywhere.)
4. Esas son mi *arroz con habichuela* . (They are my rice and beans. They are my source of sustenance; my meat and potatoes.)
5. *Beber y comer* , buen pasatiempo es. (To drink and eat, is a good pastime.)
6. Eres como Blas, comes y te vas. (You are like Blas, who eats and leaves.)
7. Nadie sabe lo que esta en *la olla* . como el que menea la cuchara. (Nobody knows what's in the pot, As much as the person who stirs the spoon.)
8. Cayo como *guanabano* maduro. (It fell like a ripe guanabano. It fell apart.)
9. Eso es un *mamey* . (That's a "mamey". That's easy.)
10. Comer *jobos* . (To eat "jobos". To skip school; play hookey.)
11. Barriga llena, corazon contento. (A full stomach, a happy heart.)
12. Al pan, pan y al *vino, vino* . (Call the bread, bread, and the wine, wine. Call a spade a spade.)
13. Contigo, *pan y cebolla* . (With you, bread and onion. With you, for better or worse.)

Vocabulario : arroz, beber, cebolla, comer, guanabano, habichuelas, jobos, maduro, mamey, mango, olla, pan, papas, vino (2 meanings).

Appendix B

Songs Canciones Infantiles

1. *Arroz con leche* , se quiere casar,

con una viudita de la capital.

Que sepa coser, que sepa bordar,

Que ponga las cosas en su lugar.

Yo soy la viudita, la hija del Rey,

me quiero casar y no hallo con quien.

Contigo si, contigo no,(*Chinta* que si, *chinita* que no,)

contigo, mi vida, me casare yo.

2. *Naranjas dulces, limon* partido,

Dame un abrazo, que yo te pido.

Si fuera falso tu juramento,

En el momento, te olvidare

3. Uno, dos, tres, cho

Uno, dos, tres, co

Uno, dos, tres, la

Uno, dos, tres, te.

Bate, bate, *chocolate* .

4. Que caiga el mango, Con fuerza en la o.

5. *Chinita* que si, *chinita* que no.

Vocabulario: arroz con leche, chinita, naranja, limon, dulce, chocolate, mango.

Appendix C

Vocabulary : food Las comidas

1. achiote—a food coloring, common in Latin America, used instead of saffron which is more common in Spain; makes the rice yellow.
2. aguacate—avocado
3. arroz—rice
4. calabaza—pumpkin
5. china—orange (in countries other than Puerto Rico: la naranja)
6. guayaba—guava
7. guineo—banana
8. habichuelas—beans
9. limon—lemon
10. mango—mango (in Puerto Rico, written with an accent over the o; in other countries in Latin America, no accent)
11. naranja—orange (see china)
12. name—yam
13. papas—potatoes
14. parcha—passion fruit
15. platano—plantain
16. tostones—twice-fried plantains
17. viandas—root vegetables, such as yams, yucca(yauha), and squash

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