

Spanish
Text Set
March 20, 2007

EDRD 518 Text Set Assignment

Content Area: Spanish

Grade Level(s): 10-12

Theme or Concept of this text set:

Home and Homeland: Establishing Identity and Crossing Boundaries

Content Standards:

Standard 1.2: Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.

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

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

Standard 3.1: Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.

Standard 3.2: Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.

Standard 4.1: Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own.

Standard 4.2: Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

Rationale:

I will use this text set with my students to expand their knowledge on culture and identity. The theme of home and homeland puts a face on Hispanics in America. I will

use this text set to show my students to rich cultural diversity of Hispanics and how they have shaped their new homes and how the culture of their homeland perseveres. This topic is important because America is a nation of immigrants. Today, this is especially clear with the increasing Hispanic population. Americans cannot be ignorant or ignore the culture, language, and practices of the Hispanics that enter this country. This text set is about acceptance. It is about opening doors and erasing borders. This text set connects to other learnings in a variety of ways. History lessons abound in these texts. I made many connections to historical lessons about Mexican Repatriation, the 1948 California court case that desegregated California schools. Many of the texts connect to cultural learnings: *dichos* (sayings), food, music, and celebrations. A fuller understanding of this customs and traditions comes about from reading works by Hispanic authors and listening to authentic songs and conversations. Home and Homeland provides deeper insight into a culture that has ultimately enriched American culture. In this text set I sought to identify a unifying thread (a place to call home) that connects all humans, Hispanic or not. Languages can be divisive and make connections seem impossible, but through these texts and learning Spanish my students will discover similarities in the human experience.

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Picture Books

Pérez, A.I. (2002). *Mi Diario de aquí hasta allá (My Diary from Here to There)*.
San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.

Summary

My Diary from Here to There is a story based on the author's childhood experience of moving from her home in Juárez, México to Los Angeles, California. The book is divided into three sections. First, the main character Amada describes her life in México. She writes in her diary daily, and the book opens begins with Amada writing a diary entry. She is nervous and scared because she heard her parents talking in low voices about moving to the United States. The next day, Amada's five brothers are excited when their mother tells them they are moving to "el otro lado" (the other side). The second part of the book describes the first part of the move. Amada's family travels to her grandparents' house in the border town of Mexicali. Amada, her mother, and brothers must stay in Mexicali while her father travels to find work in Los Angeles and secure the family's green cards. Amada's father writes to the family and tells them he found work picking grapes and strawberries. Amada is able to leave México to rejoin her family. In the third section of the book she describes her life in America. She continues to write daily in her diary, and she also writes a letter to her friend Michi. She tells Michi that in a year or two she may be able to come back to Mexico for the holidays. She decides that even though she is far away from Michi, her relatives in Mexico, and Juárez the memories of these people and places will always be in her heart.

Commentary

This story describes the three stages of an emotional journey. A teacher could use this book to introduce a unit on immigration. Amada talks about getting a green card.

Students could research the process of entering the U.S., what sort of authorization papers are needed, and how American citizenship is granted. This book mentions many border towns in Mexico. There is also a map on the back cover of the book. Students could locate Amada's hometown, her grandparents' town, and the bus stop in Tijuana. This is a bilingual book. Spanish teachers could easily use the book to introduce useful Spanish phrases in context. For example: "Me vuelven loca." (They drive me crazy.), "¡Qué alivio!" (What a relief!), "Te extraño." (I miss you.), etc. There are two letters written in the book. This would be a great way to introduce the concept of writing letters in Spanish. Note the use of "Querido/a" and "Besos y abrazos" as Spanish salutations. In Amada's father's letter he mentions César Chávez. This could lead to a lesson on farm workers' rights and the movement that Chávez led for migrant workers. Addressing the concept of home and homeland, Amada's grandmother gives her a new diary before she leaves for the United States. She tells Amada: "Never forget who you are and where you are from. Keep your language and culture alive in your diary and in your heart." This could lead to a class discussion and student journal entry about maintaining culture. In what ways have students seen immigrants in the United States preserving their culture? What parts of American culture would the students like to keep if they had to move to a different country? How does Amada maintain her Mexican heritage while living in California? Amada's brothers also have some preconceived notions about America. This could lead to a discussion and journal entry about cultural stereotypes. What notions do the students have about different Hispanic countries?

Pérez, A.I. (2000). *Mi propio cuartito (My Very Own Room)*. San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.

Summary:

My Very Own Room provides a snapshot of Amada's life once she reaches the United States. This book accompanies *My Diary from Here to There* also by Amada Irma Pérez. The book opens with Amada stuck in bed with two of her younger brothers. She cannot sleep because her brother Victor's elbow is jabbing her in the ribs. In another double bed next to Amada, her three other brothers are fast asleep. Amada is nine years old, and all she wants is a room of her own. Her new house in America is very small, and sometimes it is even more crowded because relatives from Mexico come to stay with Amada's family until they can find jobs and places to live in America. Amada discovers she could have her own room in the storage closet of the house. Amada's mother agrees to help her clear out the storage closet. Amada and her family move the boxes, tools, and sewing machine from the storage closet and put them on the back porch. They are careful to cover the items with old blankets so they do not get ruined outside. Amada finds old cans of paint, and she and her brothers mix the pink, blue, and white paint to create enough magenta paint for her new room. Amada's Uncle Pancho brings a spare bed for Amada's room, and her parents let her use the Blue Chip stamps to purchase a new lamp. Amada goes to the library and checks out six books to read in her very own room. That night Amada falls "asleep peacefully under a blanket of books in (her) very own room."

Commentary:

This book is an excellent source for my "Home and Homeland" theme. This bilingual book addresses creating a new home in a foreign land. This book would be the catalyst to

get my students thinking about the definition of “home.” I would discuss with them whether they think people can have multiple homes, and I would ask how they define the terms “home” and “homeland.” How do you make a new place feel like a home? Students could compare Amada’s life in Mexico (from *My Diary from Here to There*) with her new life in America. How do the two homes compare to each other? Students could be asked to reflect on how this book demonstrates the experience of many Hispanic immigrants in this country. Students could discuss how Amada’s family copes in their homeland and how this differs from their real home. I would also use this book to teach my students the words for various furniture in Spanish. Since the book is written in Spanish and English, I would read the book to my students in Spanish, and then they could look at the English translation to decipher the words for different parts of a room and house. The words for lamp, bed, curtains, door, table, furniture, porch, and bench are all included in the Spanish portion of the book. This book is a great source of vocabulary. Students could describe Amada’s room. Students could then describe their own room and draw a picture of it. They could then write an essay about the kind of room they would design and decorate if they could create and have their very own “cuartito.”

Garza, C.L. (1996). *En Mi Familia (In My Family)*. San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.

Summary

Carmen Lomas Garza paints pictures from her childhood growing up as a Mexican-American in a small southern Texas town of Kingsville. She paints to bring about pride to her Mexican heritage. The book begins with an introduction in which Garza says she at times she was made to feel ashamed of her culture. She says, "My art is a way of healing these wounds." Each page is a different memory and story from her childhood. She and her brother play with horned toads, she watches her grandfather clean the cactus pads called *nopalitos*, she makes empanadas, she goes to a birthday barbecue, she retells the story of *La Llorona*, she goes with her mother to see an image of the Virgin of Guadalupe that appeared on a water tank in a little ranch in Texas, she describes decorating Easter eggs with her brothers, she attends her cousins wedding, and goes to a dance at a neighborhood restaurant. Each painting is a scene from these memories and each picture is accompanied by an explanation in both English and Spanish.

Commentary

This book is a source for an infinite number of teaching ideas. While Carmen's home is in the United States she describes how her family is able to keep their homeland (Mexican) traditions alive in Texas. A teacher could use this book to introduce family vocabulary to Spanish students. The vocabulary for father, mother, brother, sister, grandparents, cousins, aunts, and uncles are all in this book. A teacher could then ask students to make their own family tree using the new vocabulary they know. A teacher could talk about the concept of traditions. How do students define the word tradition?

Also, students could be asked to use Spanish to describe one of their most treasured family traditions. A teacher could use this book to talk about fiestas. How are Mexican celebrations different from those in the United States? A teacher could use this book as a catalyst for discussion and practice of present-tense verbs. Students could be asked to describe what is happening in a particular painting. Students could do this through presentations or individual essays. A teacher could put these paintings around the classroom and refer to them whenever students learn a new vocabulary word that is aptly illustrated in the paintings. I would use this book to introduce the concept of the Virgin de Guadalupe. Students would be asked to discover why she is so important in Mexican culture.

Herrera, J. F. (1995). *El canto de las palomas (Calling the Doves)*. Emeryville, CA: Children's Book Press.

Summary

Felipe travels with his parents between labor camps in California. Wherever his parents stopped to work they would set up a tent made of thick green canvas. They slept under blankets and quilts and in the morning Felipe's mother would make breakfast in the open air. One day Felipe's father decided to build a one-room house on top of an abandoned car. When Felipe's father would come home for lunch, he made birdcalls. He would call the doves and "sooner or later a real dove would fly in and perch itself on a nearby tree." Felipe's mother would recite poetry at dinner. After dinner Felipe's father would play the harmonica and tell stories about coming to the United States from Chihuahua, México. Felipe describes how his path would change with the seasons. In the winter his parents trimmed grape vines. In the springtime his family moved to Salinas where they picked melon, lettuce, and broccoli. In the summer they would move to Delano and prune the grapes. By the end of the summer they would travel through the Valley picking grapes and drying them to make raisins. One day when Felipe was eight his mother told his father that it was time to settle down. Felipe needed to start going to school. They traveled toward the cities and Felipe knew that "one day (he) would follow (his) own road."

Commentary

Felipe and his parents are constantly making a new home. All they need to live is their tent, blankets, and food. A teacher could use this book to introduce the notion of home. What items are necessary to have a home? Students could make a list of items they could

not live without or bring in artifacts from their home that best describe what home means to them. A teacher could use this book to introduce the concepts of simile and metaphor. The author is a well-known Mexican poet, so this bilingual book is filled with sentences like “The sky was my blue spoon, the wavy clay of the land was my plate” and “From the distance, my house was a short loaf of bread on wheels.” Students could practice creating similes and metaphors in Spanish. They could write a descriptive essay about their homes using the similes and metaphors they write. This book also mentions many animals. A teacher could use this book to begin teaching the Spanish words for animals such as turkey, dove, wolf, horse, sparrow, fish, and rabbit to students. The illustrations in this book are wonderful. They are full of color and texture. A teacher could use this book to introduce these concepts in Spanish to students.

Stanek, M. (1989). *I Speak English for My Mom*. Niles, IL: Albert Whitman & Company.

Summary

At school Lupe uses English all the time. At home she and her mother speak Spanish together. Lupe translates for her mother. Lupe and her mother go to the clinic together, and Lupe has to tell her mother what the doctor says. Lupe accompanies her mother to parent-teacher conferences so that she can translate what her teacher says in English for her mother in Spanish. At home Lupe answers the telephone and takes messages in English for her mother. She also helps her mother read any mail that is in English. Lupe gets tired of translating for her mother, like the time when she had to stop playing with her friends in order to go with her mom to the dentist so she could tell the dentist that her mother had a toothache. Lupe's mother learns that she might lose her job at the factory where she works, and in order to get a job at another factory downtown she needs to know English. Lupe's mother sees an advertisement for free English classes. She and her friend Mrs. Cruz agree to attend the night classes together. Now, Lupe helps her mom with her homework and they practice English together.

Commentary

Lupe and her mother moved to the United States so that Lupe could get a good job and go to college when she got older. These are the reasons they chose to make America their home. A teacher could use this book to ask students to think about how people go about choosing homes. Students could write journal entries about whether or not they could get by in another country without knowing the language. How can you make yourself understood without speaking a common language? A teacher could use this book to

introduce the concept of circumlocution to beginning Spanish students. This book is also a great resource for a discussion on bilingualism. There are critical periods in development that explain why Lupe is able to pick up English quickly, while her mother is not. Students could discuss why they think young minds are more adaptable. Then the teacher could share the Critical Theory Hypothesis.

Young Adult Novels

Ryan, P.M. (2000). *Esperanza Renace*. New York: Scholastic Press.

Summary

Esperanza Ortega lives in Aguascalientes, México with her parents on their hacienda, El Rancho de las Rosas. Esperanza has a privileged life, and enjoys many luxuries. Her father is killed and the ranch and vineyards are burned. Esperanza and her mother, Ramona, must flee Mexico so that Ramona will not have to marry Esperanza's evil uncle Luís. Esperanza and her mother escape with the help of their servants Alfonso and Hortensia and their son Miguel. Together they go to work on a company-owned farm labor camp in Arvin, California. Ramona contracts Valley Fever after a bad dust storm in the San Joaquin Valley. Esperanza decides she must work in order to pay her mother's hospital bills and to try to save enough money to bring her Abuelita to America as well. Esperanza works cutting potato eyes, packing asparagus, peaches, and grapes in order to make money. During this time there is talk of labor strikes. Marta tells Esperanza that other workers are getting better treatment and that they should strikes so that they will receive better pay and working conditions. One day many of the strikers are rounded-up and deported back to México. Ramona comes home from the hospital, and Miguel takes Esperanza's money in order to buy a ticket for her Abuelita. Esperanza learns to be hopeful in her new land. Surrounded by love, family, and the roses from her father's garden Esperanza begins to dream of a happy future. She is not afraid to start over, and like the phoenix, she rises from adversity in order to begin a new life.

Commentary

This book fits into my Home and Homeland theme because Esperanza learns to start anew in a strange land. She carries her Mexican heritage to the United States, and learns

to create a home in an environment very different from the one she is used to. A Spanish teacher would use the Spanish version of this novel, *Esperanza Renace*, but the themes in this book are applicable to many content areas. It is especially good for the Spanish classroom because it promotes content-based learning. I would use this book as a catalyst to talk about racism against immigrants, the Great Depression, the migrant worker strikes of the 1930s in California, and the Mexican Repatriation in 1929. All of these broad historical themes are addressed in this young adult novel. My students would address racist attitudes that immigrants face and collect and evaluate instances of racism in Mexico and the United States. I would ask them to address how Esperanza feels when she goes from being privileged and of Spanish descent in Mexico to a campesino in America. What does Esperanza mean when she says she and Miguel are on different sides of the river? Students could research migrant camps in the context of the Great Depression and discover why people were moving to California. What were the conditions in the United States at this time? A teacher could use this book to introduce students to the United Farm Workers Movement. Who are Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta? Students could create their own picketing posters or write a news style article about a specific strike. I would ask my students to compare what happened during Mexican Repatriation to what Indians faced in the Trail of Tears. A teacher could use this book to discuss Mexican proverbs (dichos). Students could find and start a running list of dichos. A teacher could also introduce the myth of the Phoenix. How does this myth connect to Esperanza's experiences?

Johnston, T. (2001) *Any Small Goodness: a novel of the barrio*. New York: The Blue Sky Press.

Summary

Arturo Rodriguez loves American names. "American names are cool. Frank. Mike. Jake. They sound sharp as nails shot from guns." So when his teacher, Miss Pringle, decides to call him Arthur, he does not mind. One day Arturo hears his grandmother praying and talking to his deceased grandfather also named Arturo, she says, "One day, *Dios mediante*, he will realize how good is your name. One day he will know what it means— Arturo. He is me. He is you. And all before. And all to come. Soon Arturo and three of his Mexican friends decide to reclaim their names. They demand to be Arturo, Jaime, Alicia, and Raúl not Arthur, Jamie, Alice and Ralph. He adores his school librarian Ms. Cloud. One day an anonymous donation of books shows up at the school, and the students go crazy. They have so many new books; they decide to have a "Gracias for the Books" parade. Arturo's brother, Luís, angers some members of one of the local gangs, and the gang exacts revenge by driving by Arturo's house and spraying bullets into the kitchen. The family is saddened and Arturo is discouraged. He decides to get revenge by starting a gang of his own. The Green Needle Gang goes around and distributes Christmas trees and toys in secret to needy families. Arturo acts on his father's words, "Any small goodness is of value." Arturo and his family celebrate Christmas by giving gifts that give a "part of your heart." The book ends with Arturo and his family celebrating in their barrio that at this moment seems "totally holy."

Commentary

This book is really about the importance of kindness and the love of family. It ties in with the home and homeland theme because while Arturo loves his barrio in Los Angeles, he also misses Mexico. His family is constantly preparing traditional Mexican dishes and celebrating Mexican holidays. A teacher could use this book to introduce students to the Mexican dishes *tamales*, *chiles rellenos*, *atole*, *chilaquiles*, *mole*, *huitlacoche*, and *pozole*. Students could research and prepare one of these traditional dishes. Many Aztec traditions are mentioned in this book as well. Arturo's grandmother speaks Nahuatl, the language of the Aztecs. Students could research the Aztecs and their history in Mexico. The Aztec city, Tenochtitlan, and the tradition of Aztec human sacrifice could be explored. How prevalent are Aztec customs, traditions, and beliefs in Mexico today? (The answer is pretty prevalent.) Students could also, tying in with Arturo's story, research their own name. Who were they named after? What is the origin of their name? What about their last names? Arturo's family celebrates the Day of the Dead (El Día de los Muertos). Students could discover the traditions of this Mexican holiday and create their own shrines to deceased family members or to a famous person. A teacher could use the chapter entitled "Christmas presents" as a model, and ask students to craft their own essay about how their family celebrates a certain holiday (in Spanish, of course, for my classroom).

Mohr, N. (1986). *Going Home*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers

Summary

Felita is a twelve-year-old Puerto Rican girl who lives in New York City. She is excited when her family decides to take a summer trip to Puerto Rico. Felita's parents tell her that she will stay in Puerto Rico the entire summer in order to keep her Tío Jorge company (He has retired and is moving back to Puerto Rico and building a new house). Before Felita leaves for Puerto Rico, she begins a friendship with Vinny. Vinny has just moved to the U.S. from Colombia. Felita agrees to help Vinny with his English if he will help her improve her Spanish. They enjoy spending time together and teaching lessons together. In Puerto Rico, Felita feels out of place. The kids at the Youth Center at Santa Teresa Church make fun of her Spanish and call her a Nuyorican. Three girls in particular, Anita, Marta, and Gladys are particularly mean to her. They tell Felita that she can't be Puerto Rican because she was not born there. Felita struggles with her identity: "All my life I've been Puerto Rican, now I'm told I'm not, that I'm a gringa." At the end of the summer the Youth Center has a carnival and puts on a play about the Taino Indians who inhabited the island before the Spaniards arrived. Felita is in charge of painting the sets. Before the play one of the set backdrops is ruined. Anita and her friends ruin the set by painting in big black letters, "Gringita, go home." Felita is devastated by many community members help her repaint the sets and through the kindness of everyone she finally feels like she belongs in Puerto Rico. When she leaves, she is excited to go home, but proud to know her home country as well. She decides to go back again.

Commentary

This book does a great job of exploring what its like to belong to two countries at once. In America Felita and her family are Puerto Ricans, but when they go to Puerto Rico suddenly their Spanish is not good enough, and some Puerto Ricans resent them for living in America. A teacher could use this book to talk about identity. What does it mean to ethnically be from one country, yet live and belong to another at the same time? A Spanish teacher could use this book to address different dialects and ways of teaching Spanish. Felita and Vinny both speak Spanish, but Felita notes that Puerto Ricans speak much faster. Each Hispanic country has its own style of speech. A teacher could use this book as a springboard to discuss dialectal differences as well as code-switching. Code-switching occurs when people switch between two languages within a sentence or discussion. This could lead to a discussion of Spanglish. What is it? A teacher could address the history of Puerto Rico with this book, especially delving into the topic of the Tainos in Puerto Rico. This book alludes to the recent changes in Puerto Rico. There are many more resorts and shopping malls there, now. Why have these changes occurred? Puerto Rico also has special status as an unincorporated territory with commonwealth status. A teacher could discuss this status, and also ask students to research if Puerto Ricans wish to be the 51st state in America. Researching this topic would say a lot about identity and what the difference between home and homeland is as well.

Osa, N. (2003). *Cuba 15*. New York: Delacorte Press.

Summary

Violet Paz has a Cuban father and a Polish-American mother. She can hardly speak Spanish, but her paternal grandmother still wants her to have the traditional Hispanic 15th birthday party- a *quinceañera*. Violet does not like to wear dresses, and she feels like she does not know enough about her Cuban heritage to participate in such a ceremony.

Violet joins the speech team at her school. She and her teammates enter a few speech tournaments at local schools. Violet enters the Original Comedy competition. She is unsure of what to write about until her family has a domino tournament at their house. They play loud salsa music and her grandfather ends up setting the ham on fire. The police eventually come to tame the noise. Violet realizes after this night she has all the comedy she needs for her speech. As preparations for Violet's *quinceañera* continue she becomes more interested in her Cuban heritage. She agrees to go with her best friend Leda to "Peace with Cuba Rally and Fundraiser." When her father finds out about this he is so angry that he threatens to cancel the *quinceañera*. He is angry that Violet by making a \$5 donation at this rally would have supported the Castro government in any manner. Violet does celebrate her *quinceañera*, and her father agrees to talk with her about his childhood in Cuba. She also gives her comedy speech about the domino party for her family at the *quinceañera*.

Commentary

Violet is searching for her identity in this book. She is Cuban and Polish, yet she just feels American. She wants to know more about Cuban tradition, but her father is

reluctant to speak about his homeland. Along with the theme of Home and Homeland, a teacher could use this book to introduce students to the Cuban population in the United States. Why are they here? What kind of influence do the Cubans in Miami have?

There is a great book called *Cuba Confidential* that could be tied in with this as well. A teacher could discuss the Cuban Revolution, and how it led to so many Cubans fleeing the country and coming to live in the United States. A teacher could also use this book to introduce the Hispanic fiesta, quinceañera, which is a special 15th birthday party that similar to a bat mitzvah announces a girl's transition to womanhood. Violet reads *Quinceañera for the Gringo Dummy* to understand the Cuban traditions. Student could write in Spanish their own guide to celebrating a Spanish fiesta.

Buss, F.L. (1991). *El Viaje de los Gorriones*. New York: Lodestar Books.

Summary

Maria escapes her home in El Salvador by crossing through Mexico and over the United States border. She makes the whole trip packed into a crate on the back of a truck with her older and pregnant sister Julia and her younger brother Oscar. Maria's father and Julia's husband were killed by the Guardias in El Salvador. Maria, Julia, and Oscar go to live in Chicago. Maria begins learning English and starts to work at a sewing factory. There are raids at the factory, and one day her friend Alicia is deported back to El Salvador. Maria goes to a church to pray. At the church she meets Father Jonathan who offers to pay her if she comes everyday to clean the church for a few hours. Father Jonathan also gives Maria food and medicine for her family. As Maria works she continues sending money back to her mother and her one-and-a-half-year-old sister Teresa who are still in El Salvador. Maria's mother is able to send Teresa to safety in Mexico. Maria must cross the border into Mexico in order to get her sister. While in Mexico, she receives news that her mother is still alive. This gives Maria hope that one day her family will be reunited. She takes Teresa back to Chicago where she rejoins Julia and Oscar.

Commentary

This book accurately portrays the plight of immigrants. It especially speaks to the challenges of establishing identity in a new homeland. A teacher could use this book to discuss La Migra (immigration) and how people make it across the border from Mexico to the United States. Maria and her family mention using a Coyote; this is the term for a

liaison between Mexico and the United States. For money the Coyotes lead you across the border, taking more secure paths and bribing immigration officials along the way. There are detailed resources on this process such as the book called *Coyotes*. This would be a great way to integrate this book into current events. A teacher could use this book to discuss the country of El Salvador with students. Civil war plagued this country in the 1980s. Maria's father and brother-in-law are among the many "desaparecidos," people who disappeared or were murdered during this war. There are Spanish and English versions of this book, so a Spanish teacher could ask students to read the Spanish version, and choose any difficult passages to read and compare to the English version.

Non-fiction

Santiago, E. (1993). *Cuando Era Puertorriqueña*. New York: Vintage Books.

Summary

This is the autobiography of Esmeralda Santiago. She describes her life growing up in both Santurce and Macún Puerto Rico. Esmeralda lives in a one-room shed with her parents and ever-expanding number of sisters and brothers. When Esmeralda enters elementary school the *Estado Libre Asociado* (Free Associated State) program of the government begins to provide free breakfast for all students and seminars for Puerto Rican parents on nutrition and health. These seminars were provided by Americans (gringos as Esmeralda called them), and the main gist is to teach Puerto Ricans American ways. Esmeralda's parents are constantly fighting. Her mother accuses her father of having affairs, and Esmeralda's father leaves for days at a time. Eventually Esmeralda moves with her mother and brothers and sisters to join her grandmother in New York City. Esmeralda studies hard in school, and her mother works in a sewing factory to support the family. Esmeralda's life in New York City is further detailed in her follow-up novel *Casi una mujer*.

Commentary

This book, with versions in both Spanish and English, beautifully describes living in Puerto Rico, an island whose inhabitants are considered American citizens, but clearly have a culture and identity distinct from America. So while Esmeralda lives in her new home (America) or tries to adapt to American products, she clearly feels more aligned with her homeland (Puerto Rico) and its traditions. A teacher could use this book to introduce students to a unit on Puerto Rico. This book portrays the Americanization of

Puerto Rico. A teacher could use this book as a historical resource as well. Santiago begins each chapter with a refrain or Puerto Rico saying. These sayings provide great cultural insight. A teacher could use these refrains as a starting point for students to find sayings and refrains from other Hispanic countries. Students could begin a list of these sayings and try to add them to their oral practice. There is also a glossary of terms in the back giving definitions for the Puerto Rican slang and sayings. Santiago also details Puerto Rican food. She begins the book discussing the guava fruit. The guava represents her childhood and past in Puerto Rico. It's sweet unpredictability contrasts with the bittersweet apples and pears of her adulthood in America.

Arias, R. (2007). Una Familia Perdida En La Frontera. *People En Español*. (Enero 2007), 158-164.

Summary

María, whose name was changed for the purpose of this article, lives in southern Arizona with seven of her children. She has lived in the United States for 12 years and has lived in 20 different places since she arrived here from Mexico. Between 11 and 12 million undocumented immigrants live in the United States today, Maria and her family are among these immigrants. María left Mexico in order to escape an abusive husband. She is now the single mother of 13 children. Now, María depends on her 19-year-old daughter Alicia. Alicia picks peppers in order to buy food for the family and pay the monthly rent (\$550). Alicia was one of the best students at her school, and she desperately wanted to continue her education. Alicia could not apply for college because she is an illegal immigrant. Without documents, María and Alicia are both frustrated. Neither one of them can realize their dreams. Alicia says that she loves the United States and even wishes to enlist in the Army in order to help America, but she is not given the chance to do anything because she has no documents. María says she refuses to buy fake documents on the black market because she wants to abide by the law. A pastor at a local church has been helping María and her family get the food and clothes they need.

Commentary

This article describes as the pastor says in the article, a new class of Americans. María and her family live and work in the United States, but they are illegal immigrants. They call the United States home, but are not legally allowed to work here. This influx of Hispanic immigrants has changed the shape of America. A teacher could use this article

to address how Mexican immigrants are changing Americans' homeland. A teacher could use this article to set up a debate in Spanish. Alicia asks, "Si uno se porta bien y no comete ningún delito, ¿por qué no te van a permitir que te quedes?" Students could gather in groups and respond to this question. This article has many "datos" and "cifras." Spanish students could do further work on the number of immigrants in their state or town and make graphs and charts. A teacher could ask students to show how this number has grown and by how much in the past 10 years. Which states have the most immigrants? This would be a way to incorporate content-based instruction (math) into the Spanish classroom. This article describes the typical day in the life of María. Spanish students could describe María's daily routine using reflexive verbs like (despertarse, ducharse, cepillarse los dientes, etc.).

Strom, Y. (1996). *Quilted Landscape*. New York: Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers.

Summary

In this book Yale Strom interviews 26 young people of different nationalities about the experience moving to the United States. The children and young adults describe their experiences of leaving their country and making a new life in America. The book contains six interviews with children from Hispanic countries. I focused on these interviews since my content area is Spanish. Carlos Nuñez moved from the Dominican Republic and says he liked the house he lived in in Santo Domingo much better than his apartment in New York City. Carlos says he will never forget how to speak Spanish. What he thinks about most is how he “will never be able to save enough money to be able to visit (his) homeland, (his) friends and cousins.” José Salvador Cotto moved from El Salvador. José came to America to better his education and begin a new life. He likes math and wants to design cars. Alexander Collazos moved from Peru. He comments that people in Peru seem more sincere. He fears for his safety because there are so many gangs in his neighborhood in South San Francisco. Alexander feels unique because he is the only Peruvian at his school. Edward Rosa Maldonado moved from Puerto Rico. Edward moved with his mother to get away from the murders and drug dealing in Guaynabo. He wants to build planes for the U.S. Air Force. Xittali Guerrero moved from Tijuana, Mexico. She lives in San Ysidro, California and can walk across the border to visit her relatives. She said it was not hard adjusting to life in America because she heard Spanish in the streets and smelled Mexican cooking coming from the homes and restaurants here. Carlos Curiel moved from Tijuana, Mexico. Carlos says, “It’s kind of

funny when you think about it, the border is a mark on a paper, on dirt. People a long time ago said this is yours and this ours.”

Commentary

The children in this book have begun their lives again in a new home. This is the story of America. A teacher could use this book to have students begin a project on their family heritage. Students could research their homeland, and write a report in the style of the interviews in this book (a first person narrative describing how they got to the United States and what their life is like here). A teacher could use this book to start a history lesson on when the major waves of immigrants entered the United States and why. Many students would be interested to find if their families entered at Ellis Island. The introduction of this book contains an excerpt from the poem on the Statue of Liberty: “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free...” This poem is so powerful. A teacher could have students read this poem and then write their own poem starting with the line, “The immigrant’s journey is...” A Romanian student interviewed in the book wrote a poem starting with these words. This book also contains a fact section on each of the countries that the children come from in this book. A teacher could ask students to choose one of these countries (in a Spanish class, of course one of the Hispanic countries) and ask them to add to these fact sheets. They could present more information than the book gives, for example the flag of each country, the country’s motto, or could do more research on some of the internationally known people from each country listed in the book.

Carlson, L.M., ed. (1994). *Cool Salsa: Bilingual Poems on Growing Up Latino in the United States*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Summary

This book contains bilingual poems by Hispanic authors. Some of the poems are written in both English and Spanish, and some of the poems have been translated from all English into Spanish and vice versa. The poems are divided into six sub-topics: School Days, Home and Homeland, Memories, Hard Times, Time to Party, and A Promising Future. For my text-set, I looked at the poems under the Home and Homeland heading. "Where You From?" by Gina Valdés adequately expresses what it is like to belong to two places at once: "Soy de aquí/ y soy de allá/ from here/ and from there." She talks about growing up in both Los Angeles and Ensenada. "Día de los muertos" by Abelardo B. Delgado expresses the different views held of death in México and the United States. The poem interestingly mixes Spanish and English. When the action of the poem is set in Mexico, Delgado writes in Spanish. When the action is in the United States the poem is in English. He says, "Here in the U.S./ the idea is to hide, / to ignore the dead/ and to even avoid death/ in our conversations." In "Domingo Means Scrubbing" Alicia Gaspar De Alba describes a typical Sunday at home. Her grandparents and cousins all come go to Mass together and come over for dinner. She eats raisin tamales and sneaks a beer to drink in the bathroom. In "Take Me Down to the Mexican Moon," Cristina Moreno longs for the "MEXICAN moon/ where my primos and i used/ to play/ with cold mud/ like clay." All the poems in this section present separate instances and memories of growing up between aquí y allá.

Commentary

In “Where You From?” Valdés says, “I didn’t build/ this border/ that halts me / the word fron/ tera splits/ on my tongue.” A teacher could use this book to introduce the concept of boundaries and borders to students. How are boundaries drawn? Also, another question for research and discussion could be how did the boundary between the United States and Mexico come about. This poem could also lead to a discussion on Spanish phonetics. How are Spanish words divided into syllables? Syllables in Spanish are counted from the last syllable to the first. Words in Spanish are divided into the categories: agudo, llano, and esdrújulo based upon which syllable the accent is on. This concept could be introduced to students from this poem based on Valdés comment about the word frontera (boundary). A Spanish teacher could use this book to get students to think about writing poetry in Spanish. Depending upon the level of Spanish students, early Spanish learners could be required to write bilingual poems that intersperse Spanish words into a mainly English poem. “Take Me Down to the Mexican Moon” is written in this manner. Students could follow the style of this poem to begin thinking about using Spanish as a way to express themselves.

Carlson, L.M., ed. (2005). *Red Hot Salsa: Bilingual Poems on Being Young and Latino in the United States*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Summary

This book is the follow up to the anthology *Cool Salsa*. The poems in this book are divided by the following themes: Language and Identity; Neighborhoods; Amor; Family Moments, Memories; and Victory. I chose two poems from the Language and Identity Section to go with my theme of Home and Homeland. "Soy Como Soy y Qué" by Raquel Valle Senties is presented in its Spanish and English version in the book. Senties says, "I am a grafted flower that didn't take, a Mexican without being one, an American without feeling like one." Senties says the Mexican National Anthem and the "Star Spangled Banner" both give her goose bumps, but she does not know where she belongs because her heart "has no room for two countries as it has no room for two lovers." Senties is from the border town Laredo, and she ends the poem by saying she defends both the United States and Mexico with "volcanic passion." In the poem she ends with this self-definition: "I am a walking contradiction." I also chose the bilingual poem "My Graduation Speech" by Tato Laviera. The poem begins with these simple sentences: "i think in Spanish/ i write in English." Laviera wants to go back to live in Puerto Rico, but he is unsure he would fit in. His mind is muddled with both English and Spanish, and he feels he cannot grasp either one well enough.

Commentary

A teacher could use this book of poetry to get students thinking about identity. A teacher could ask students to respond to Senties poem by writing their own poem entitled, "Soy Como Soy y Qué" (I Am What I Am, So What?). Senties believes there is a very distinct

border culture in the United States. Students could use this poem to Americans and Mexicans living on the border of both countries. What is the culture like in Laredo where Sentías is from? This poem would also be a good way for a teacher to elaborate on the verb “ser” meaning to be. Sentías uses “ser” to talk about all the things she is and is not. This would be a great way to discuss why she used “ser” and not “estar” (the other verb meaning to be). “My Graduation Speech” could be used to introduce the concept of bilingualism. A teacher could discuss various theories on Second Language Acquisition with student’s like Krashen’s Five Hypotheses and Chomsky theories on language acquisition. This would be a great poem to use with early Spanish learners, who doubt their ability to learn a new language. This poem shows the hardships that come along with learning a new language, but the benefits as well.

Websites

La Raza. Retrieved March 15, 2007 from, <http://www.laraza.com>

Summary

The website www.laraza.com is an online newspaper for Hispanics living in the United States. The website is produced in the Chicago area, so the paper reports on many cultural events in this area. The website has various sections to choose from on the right-hand side of the web page. There are sections entitled *Primera Plana*, which shows the front-page story and picture from the print version of the paper *La Raza*. There are other sections such as *Noticias Nacionales*, *Chicago*, *América Latina*, *México*, and *Puerto Rico*. These sections all contain news from the respective areas listed. There are also sections for Health, Education, Cultural Events, Cooking, Finances, Tourism, and Editorials. This website has a great mixture of American and Hispanic news, and it shows how Hispanics try to incorporate cultures and tradition from their homeland into their life in their new home, the United States. For example in the cooking section there is a recipe for how to make pork chops with a Latino flair by using tomatillos and jalapeños for a sauce to go with the meat.

Commentary

This website is a great resource for teachers. Students could check the weather in Spanish because there is a link to a detailed forecast in Spanish. A teacher could ask students to improve their reading and writing skills by choosing to follow for a week (or any period to time) one of the columnists for *La Raza*. What is the columnist writing about and how does this reflect the concerns of the Hispanic community in the United States? This site presents the news totally in Spanish so a teacher could ask students to use this site as their daily source for news and comment on one interesting news article

everyday in class. This would promote oral participation in the Spanish classroom at the same time students would be picking up culture from the sections on cooking and entertainment.

Are Chicanos the Same as Mexicans? Retrieved March 10, 2007 from,
<http://www.mexica.net/chicano.html>

Summary

This is a simple website that defines many of the popular terms given to various Hispanic groups. This website defines the following terms: Spanish people, Hispanics, Latinos, Mexican, Mexican-American, Hispano, and Chicano. This website makes the distinction that there are many Mexicans who feel that their land was unrightfully colonized when just 150 years ago almost 50% of Mexican land was appropriated by the United States as spoils of war. Many Mexican citizens became American citizens as a result of this boundary shift. This site also mentions another group which it calls, "Mexicans First, 'Americans' Second." This group of Mexicans live and work in the United States, but still maintain strong cultural ties to Mexico. They "conceived themselves as temporarily displaced from Mexico by economic circumstances." There is also the new population of American citizens born to Hispanic immigrants, that don't maintain as strong of cultural ties to their homeland, but still pertain to that culture.

Commentary

This website is a good place to send students for a discussion on identity and labels. What do these labels say about the people's homeland, what do they say about how the people in their new home view them? A teacher could ask students to come to this website and then answer the following questions in Spanish as a journal response or as an essay: Who decides how a group of people is named? Do these labels influence your opinion about the people who are defined by this term? What are the advantages or

disadvantages of using a term to define a group of people? Teachers could ask students to share anecdotes about a time that they questioned their identity or wondered what they should check on the forms where it says to fill out Race. What does society mean by these labels? What is race?

What is ethnicity? A great thing to talk about in Spanish classes based on these terms is the heterogeneous nature of Hispanic populations. As a history lesson to coincide with this web page, a teacher could discuss the definitions of the terms mestizo, mulatto, and zambo. These terms describe the various mixtures of Spanish, African, and Indian blood that occurred when the Spanish conquered Central and South America.

Mendez v. Westminster: Desegregating California's Schools. Retrieved March 15 from, <http://www.teachersdomain.org/resources/osi04/soc/ush/civil/mendez/index.html>

Summary

This website is about the California court case *Mendez v. Westminster*. The site is a resource for teachers and contains a nine-minute video about the case. The video interviews Sylvia Mendez who recounts the day in 1945 that her aunt took her and her cousins to school in Westminster, California. Sylvia was turned away from the school because she was Mexican, while her cousins were not. Her cousins had a French father, had a French last name, and most importantly light skin. Sylvia was forced to attend a Mexican school across town. Sylvia's parents Gonzalo and Felicitas decided to fight this segregation in court. In 1946 the judge declared that segregation based on national origin was unconstitutional. The video also interviews a history scholar and lawyer about the case. The video shows many good photos of children from this time period in California as well. The Web site also contains an introduction that gives background information into the state of the country before and during when the trial took place. The Web site also includes discussion questions and a list of standards addressed from using this video as a class resource.

Commentary

I think this Web site is an extremely important resource. *Mendez v. Westminster* is a little known case that set the precedent for a better-known case *Brown v. Board of Education*. The issue of segregation many times is painted as a black and white issue, but

in reality segregation was much more far-reaching. A discussion of this court case would lead students to think about how segregation caused Mexican-Americans to feel unwelcome in their own home. They were not accepted because of their national origin (homeland). A teacher could use this Web site to show students how Mexicans in California paved the way for desegregation across the country. A teacher could ask why this court case is not as well known as *Brown v. Board of Education*. A teacher could use this Web site to start a unit on racism or segregation. This Web site could even be a preliminary resource for a unit on the Civil Rights Movement. In the Spanish classroom, a teacher could use this Web site to show an example of how Hispanics have shaped United States history. Students could respond to the video by researching further the conditions of Mexican-Americans in the 1940s in the United States.

Nuevo Latino. Retrieved March 15, 2007 from, <http://www.nuevo-latino.com/whatis.html>

Summary

This Web site provides a look into a new type of cuisine called Nuevo Latino. Nuevo Latino cuisine is Latin cooking with an American twist. “Most of the ingredients and recipes can be linked to Cuban, Caribbean, Puerto Rican, South American, and Central American influences.” The Web site has many sections. The Nuevo Latino section defines and describes Nuevo Latino cooking. The Latino section give an overview of Latin food and many of the traditional ingredients and foods used in Latin cooking. The recipes section gives a wide variety of Nuevo Latino recipes to try, such as: Fruit Barbecue Sauces, Latino Shepherd’s Pie, Plantain Bread, and Picadillo Stuffed Chile Rellenos. The Latin Food Statistics section documents the growing number of Hispanics in the United States and talks about the growing Latin food market in America as well. There is also a glossary of food terms such as: “Mojo-- a Latin sauce similar to a salsa, mojos generally consist of vinegar or acid (citrus), olive oil, herbs and spices. The traditional Cuban mojo is made with sour orange, olive oil, garlic, cumin and oregano.”

Commentary

This Web site provides an inside look into one of the fastest growing types of cuisine in America. Spanish students can use the glossary to describe and investigate traditional Latino dishes. A teacher could use this Web site to find recipes to make with his/her class that are traditional Hispanic foods, but contain ingredients that are easy to find in the United States. A teacher could use the recipes in a Spanish class for students to learn cooking vocabulary and also measurement vocabulary. The recipes on this Web site also

contain information about their country of origin. A teacher could use this Web site as a starting point to put students in groups and have them choose a Latin American country whose food the students will research and present to the class.

Hispanic Population of the United States. Retrieved March 17, 2007 from, <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hispanic.html>

Summary

This website provides a detailed look at the Hispanic population that has made its new home in the United States. This Web page provides Current Population Surveys, Estimates and Projection, and a look at the 2000 Census. The website has links to graphs, charts, and tables all prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau. The latest Population Survey is from 2004. Each Population Survey is broken down into charts describing the Hispanic population in terms of sex, age, Hispanic origin, and race. There are also charts describing household income, marital status, and educational attainment of the population age 25 years and older. There is a section about population projections and methodology. This describes how projections are different from estimates and there are data tables for both. There is also a link to a Spanish translation of the 2000 Census of the Hispanic population entitled “La Población Hispana.”

Commentary

The Spanish translation for the 2000 U.S. Census of the Hispanic population is a great resource for a Spanish teacher. A teacher could use this report and the data tables from this website to have students compile data about the number of Hispanics living in the United States. A teacher could use these materials as part of a content-based lesson, teaching Spanish students math instead of language for language’s sake. A teacher could help students make a graph depicting how the Spanish population has changed over the past five years. A teacher could also use this information as a catalyst for discussion to answer such questions as “Why has the Hispanic population grown so rapidly in the past

10 years?” “Where do most Hispanics live in the United States?” “Which Hispanic groups are most prevalent in certain areas of the United States, why?” This statistical data is an excellent way for a Spanish teacher to use math in the classroom, but still have math pertain to learning Spanish.

Other

Kidron, A. (2006). *Nuestro Himno* [Recorded by Wyclef Jean, Carlos Ponce, Olga Tañón, et al.] On *Somos Americanos* [CD]. New York: Urban Box Office.

Summary

Nuestro Himno is a Spanish translation of the *Star Spangled Banner*. The song, however, is not a literal translation, but the essential message of the song remains the same. Adam Kidron, a British music executive, came up with the idea for the song to show support for Hispanic immigrants in the United States. This was in 2006 when many immigrants were protesting for equal rights. The song opens with the following lines:

Amanece, ¿lo veis, a la luz de la aurora,
 lo que tanto aclamamos la noche al caer?
 Sus estrellas sus franjas, flotaban ayer
 en el fiero combate, en señal de victoria.

This first verse is closely based on an original translation provided to the U.S. Bureau of Education in 1919. *Nuestro Himno* makes no mention of rockets or bombs like the original English version of the song. The following line of *Nuestro Himno* are in my opinion the most striking words of the song, “¡Somos iguales!, ¡Somos hermanos!, ¡Es nuestro himno.” (We are equal. We are brothers. It’s our anthem.) These lines are the most telling about the reasons why the song was translated.

Commentary

This song fits nicely in the home and homeland theme. A teacher could ask her students to look at the song from two points of view. There were numerous debates about the appropriateness of the song (see articles from *The Washington Post* and a discussion on

the song from NPR). Some people felt the song was an expression of Hispanic pride in living in the United States, and wanting to make this country their own. Others saw it as a symbol of disrespect and blatant refusal to assimilate into American culture and learn English. The teacher could remind students that in actuality the United States does not have an official language. Students could debate whether this song is an expression of love for the United States or a rejection of the English language. George Bush said that the Star Spangled Banner should be sung in English and that people should learn and be able to sing it in English. A teacher could ask students to compare the Spanish and English translations for similarities and differences. How does the structure in the Spanish version differ from the English version. A teacher could ask students to translate their own favorite song, without translating it literally word for word. This would enhance translation skills as students would realize that expressions in Spanish cannot always be translated literally into English and vice versa.

Escovedo, A. (2002). *Mexico Americano*. On *By The Hand of the Father Son* [CD].

Dallas: Texas Music Group.

Summary

This Spanish song speaks about having two homes and two heritages. The song opens with Escovedo saying that by blood he is Mexican, but by destiny he is American.

Escovedo understands English but says that he also speaks Spanish. He is from “la raza de oro” (the race of gold). From Zacatecas to Minnesota and from Tijuana to New York, Escovedo says two countries are his home, and that he defends them with honor. The third verse of the song says, “Dos idiomas y dos paises/Dos culturas tengo yo” (I have two languages, two countries, and two cultures.) Escovedo feels lucky, and he is proud because God made him a part of both cultures. He ends the song by repeating the first verse again: “Por mi madre yo soy mexicano/Por destino soy americano./ Yo soy de la raza de oro./ Yo soy México Americano.”

Commentary

This song is written in the traditional style of music called Tejano music, which is in and of itself a blend of Mexican and American music. This type of music uses accordion, guitar, and bass to create a distinct sound. It is folk music with influences from rock, country, and mariachi music. The layers of discussion for this song are many fold. The type of music and the lyrics themselves represent a mixture of home and homeland. A teacher could use this song to introduce Tejano music to students. A Spanish teacher could use this song, not only to discuss the theme of home and homeland, but also to introduce students to music vocabulary such as tempo, rhythm, instruments.

Diez, M. (2006, November 30). [Podcast] Choques Culturales. *Notes In Spanish*. Retrieved March 1, 2007, from <http://www.notesinspanish.com/2006/11/30/advanced-spanish-podcast-56-choques-culturales/>

Summary

In this podcast in Spanish, Marina and Ben discuss culture shock. Marina said she experienced culture shock when she went to a market in Thailand, and at this market there were dog heads for sale. Ben said he experienced culture shock after traveling to Australia. He said being on a flight for around 18 hours made him feel very far from his home. When he went to order a drink he remembered that he could speak English in Australia, and he said this seemed strange to him because he traveled so far yet was still able to speak his native language in this strange land. Marina said she has experienced culture shock in her own home country of Spain. In the northwest region of Galicia, Marina said people are much more authentic and less-Westernized. She said their way of life seemed foreign to her. Marina and Ben observed how it is odd to feel like a stranger in your own land, but very common to feel out of place in a new country, but at the heart of it all people are really the same.

Commentary

A teacher could use this podcast to get students to access prior knowledge of traveling. The teacher could ask students to share a time when they felt out of place or not at home in their own country. Has there been a time when the student traveled abroad and felt out of place? A Spanish teacher could then ask students to think about Hispanic traditions. Students could write an essay about various Hispanic traditions studied and why they might experience culture shock if they were to go to any of these countries. From a

language standpoint, a teacher could use this podcast to get students to evaluate Marina and Ben's speech. Are there phrases they repeat often? For example in this podcast this phrase "A mi me chocó" is used a lot. Students could try to add some of these phrases into their daily class discussions. A teacher could also give students a transcript of the podcast with occasional words and phrases missing, as the students listen they will be asked to fill in the blanks. This promotes close listening and checks for listening comprehension—key skills in the foreign language acquisition.

Diez, M. (2006, August 29). [Podcast] Entrevista con Pilar. *Notes In Spanish*. Retrieved March 1, 2007, from <http://www.notesinspanish.com/2006/08/29/notes-in-spanish-podcast-advanced-42-entrevista-con-pilar/>

Summary

In this podcast two madrileñas, Marina and Pilar, discuss what it is like to live in country that is not their own. Marina and Pilar are both married to English men. Pilar moved to England to live with her husband. Marina asked Pilar how her life had been since moving. Pilar said that her life has totally changed since she moved in 1999. The first year was exciting because everything was new and exciting, but the second year was much harder because Pilar began to grapple with learning English and finding a job. Pilar said she cannot get used to the English winters. The days are so short (días tan cortos). Nor can she bear eating dinner at 6:00 like *Englishers* do. *Spaniards* eat dinner at 9:00 or later. Pilar said she has experienced “tantas bajadas de morales” meaning many experiences that lowered her moral because the language and customs in England are not her own. Slowly, Pilar said she is finding her way. She works as a teacher helping adults learn Spanish, while meanwhile taking classes to improve her English. Pilar’s advice to *Spaniards* moving to England (or anyone moving to another country): “Venir con una mente abierta” (Come with an open mind). Pilar said no matter where you go you will find people who hold the door open for you and those that do not.

Commentary

I just discovered podcasts this year, and they are an awesome tool for foreign language teachers. The podcast I love and listen to on a weekly basis come from www.notesinspanish.com Ben Cutis (an English man who moved to Spain) and his

Spanish wife Marina have conversations totally in Spanish about various topics. This podcast in particular is a great catalyst for discussing the concept of home and homeland. There is much to learn about Spanish and English culture from this podcast. A teacher could use this podcast to discuss meal traditions (Pilar hates eating at 6:00 p.m.). A teacher could also provide a “Dear Abby” style writing assignment. Students could use RAFT writing to complete this. They can write from the point of view of Abby or Pilar. Pilar would talk about what she misses from Spanish culture. Students writing from Abby’s perspective will respond to Pilar telling her how she can keep Spanish culture alive in England, or how what to do when you find yourself in a new country. Students could also analyze this authentic conversational speech compared to the writing in their Spanish textbook.

Neruda, P. (Speaker). (1971). *Hacia la ciudad espléndida*. (Audio recording from <http://Nobelprize.org>). Stockholm, Sweden: Nobel Lecture.

Summary

This sound recording is of Pablo Neruda giving his Nobel Lecture in 1971 (in Spanish). The speech is entitled *Hacia la ciudad espléndida* and describes when Neruda fled Chile by escaping through the Andes Mountains into Argentina. He almost died during this journey while he was crossing the Curringue River. Neruda was forced into exile because he was a Communist. The Communist Party was banned from Chile in 1948, and he was forced to live in exile in Argentina and Italy for his political views. Neruda took this trip with four companions. They rode on horses and there were no tracks or paths to guide their way. Just before Neruda and his friends reached the border between Chile and Argentina, they came upon some run-down buildings. There were men inside and also many stacks of cheese that were made in this region. Neruda and his friends rested and rejoiced at having almost completed the journey. Also in this speech, Neruda details how this experience helped him write: "During this long journey I found the necessary components for the making of the poem. There I received contributions from the earth and from the soul."

Commentary

Neruda lived in many countries throughout his life and was an ambassador for Chile. Along with Argentina and Italy, he lived in México and Spain as well. Neruda wrote of his home (Chile) while he lived in these other countries. He participated in the Spanish

Civil War and wrote *España en el corazón* describing his affection and support for the Republicans in Spain. Neruda's life is an example of Home and Homeland. He lived and worked in many countries, and this speech is a great resource for a Spanish teacher.

First, the teacher can ask students to listen to the speech and summarize it to check for comprehension. Students could use Neruda's speech as a prompt to write their own essay in Spanish about an arduous journey or challenge they have completed themselves.

Overall, this recording is a great resource to introduce Neruda and his illustrious poetry to students. This was a Nobel lecture he gave. After students hear this, the teacher can help students delve further into Neruda's work to find out why he awarded with the prestigious Nobel Prize.

Annotations

- Are Chicanos the Same as Mexicans? Retrieved March 10, 2007 from, <http://www.mexica.net/chicano.html>
- Arias, R. (2007). Una Familia Perdida En La Frontera. *People En Español*. (Enero 2007), 158-164.
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