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Puebla, Mexico
Final Project

5th Grade Interdisciplinary Unit on Spanish

Introduction: 5th grade is a perfect year to begin introducing Spanish vocabulary and Mexican cultural studies. In this unit, I have selected several areas of instruction where I felt I could expand the curriculum to include Spanish vocabulary and Mexican culture. The Unit focuses on five lesson plans, in five different subjects as examples of how I would integrate Spanish studies in my classroom. The five subjects are drama, math, history, art, and literacy. I feel that students will connect to the Spanish vocabulary and make cultural connections better if the material they are exposed to is integrated into material they are already learning. Therefore, these lessons do not stand alone as a unit, but rather should be appropriately aligned with the 5th grade curricular calendar. Below I will outline the lessons in this unit, well as when they would be introduced.

- **History-** In New York State, the 5th grade social studies curriculum includes study of the Aztec and the Mayas. During this study I would introduce the Aztec and Mayan calendars, as well as authentic materials from Teotihuacán, and teach the modern calendar days and months in Spanish.
- **Drama-** In 5th grade, we participate in a "Reading Buddies" program with a kindergarten class. My 5th graders not only read to their younger partners, but they perform plays that teach morals as well. It would be in this context that I would introduce the play La Hormiguita, and have the 5th grade students learn the names of the animals in Spanish.
- **Art-** Our school begins every year with self portraits. Each grade has a different focus, so it does not become repetitive. I would use this time to teach about Frida Kahlo's magnificent self portraits and how she chose to represent herself. Students will learn the colors in Spanish as they think about what they place in their portrait to represent themselves.
- **Math-** One of the trickiest things for 5th graders to master in math is mean, mode, range, maximum and minimum. I learned about using

the balero to count from Anne Mueller over the summer. I thought it was such a clever way to engage children and get them to recall the numbers in Spanish quickly. I have adapted this lesson for 5th graders so they not only learn the numbers, but would focus on mathematical means as well.

- **Literacy-** One of the Read-Aloud books that we are going to explore this year is Esperanza Rising. In 5th grade, we have one of our literacy theme units is "social action". During this literacy unit, I would teach labor issues facing Mexicans and Mexican Americans. The Spanish vocabulary that would integrate into these lessons would be on "family" terms.

Lesson #1 The Aztec and Mayan Calendar

Objective: Students will gain cultural appreciation for the Mayan and Aztec accomplishments while learning the modern Mexican calendar vocabulary.

Background: This lesson will supplement the textbook readings on the Aztecs and Mayas. It should be given after students have been introduced to the subject matter in their textbooks and are ready for further exploration and enrichment.

Procedure: I would begin by asking the students what they know about the Aztec and Mayan Calendars and create a KWL chart. Since they have been reading about the Aztecs and Mayans, I would expect to see the similar examples for the "K" and "W" columns:

what we K now	what we W ant to know	what we've L earned
The Mayans were an advanced civilization that is famous for its written language, art, and astronomy.	Why did the Mayans create a calendar?	The Mayans needed to develop a calendar to keep track of their corn production. They used the Earth and Sun's movement as a template.
The Aztecs worshipped the sun and had a calendar stone.	What happened to the Aztec and Mayan people?	There are still many Mayan people in Mexico and while over 6 million still speak Mayan, most Mexicans speak Spanish.
The Aztecs priests were in charge of determining the calendar and making	How accurate were the Mayan and Aztec calendars?	
	Were the Aztec and	Both the Mayan and

the gods happy.	Mayan calendars similar to ours?	<p>the Aztec calendars had 20 days in a cycle.</p> <p>The Aztecs actually had 2 Calendars: one agricultural and one religious.</p> <p>The Aztecs believed each cycle lasted 52 years.</p>
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To find their answers and complete the "L" column I would have the students complete Webquests and explore sources online:

<http://www.mayacalendar.com/f-components.html>

<http://www.azteccalendar.com/>

<http://library.thinkquest.org/27981/>

One those site students will learn more about the Aztec and Mayan number system, how the calendars were created, their accuracy, as well as be able to find their own birthdays and what those dates would have represented in Aztec terms. I would also share pictures, glyphs, and calendar stones from my personal collection of photographs taken in Mexico.



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Once students have completed the Webquests on the Aztec and Mayan Calendar, I would ask them about the current calendar used in Mexico. This may sound silly, but many students have a poor understanding of timelines and while we will have just learned that Mayan people still exist, I want to emphasize that modern Mexicans use the same *Gregorian* calendar that we do, albeit in Spanish. We will then learn the days of the week in Spanish as well as the months.

Vocabulary:

enero
febrero
marzo
abril
mayo
junio

julio
agosto
septiembre
octubre
noviembre
diciembre

domingo
lunes

martes
miércoles
jueves
viernes
sábado

My students work in pairs to learn new vocabulary with white boards. They would practice saying and writing the words in their partner pairs. Once students had a chance to study and practice I would teach them the song that Ann Mueller taught our institute:

"En Enero Hace Frío". We would keep a calendar in class with both English and Spanish on it. It is a different student's job to write the days of the week on the board each day and they would begin to write the days of the week in Spanish as well. As an extension activity students could make their own Spanish calendars in the Computer Lab as Holiday presents for their families. Students may decorate their Spanish calendars with copy and pasted images from the Aztec and Mayan calendars. Students will continually engage in mini dialogues in which they will ask one another (in English except for days and Months) questions. For example, "What is the month and date of Valentine's Day?" or "When day is your birthday on this year?".

Evaluation: Students will be assessed two ways. One way will be through anecdotal evidence- I will walk around the classroom with my clipboard of student names and take notes on how students are progressing during their mini-dialogues. The other assessment tool will be in the form of a traditional vocabulary quiz.

Lesson # 2 The Play "La Hormiguita"

Objective: Students will perform a traditional Mexican folktale for their younger "Reading Buddies", while learning the Spanish vocabulary for animals.

Background: This lesson will be appropriate to help struggling students gain confidence and continue their exploration of folktales from other cultures. We have been comparing morals or messages from text to text. Students might make comparisons of La Hormiguita to "The Ant and the Grasshopper".

Procedure: The play La Hormiguita has many versions, but the copy of the play that I have is wonderful because it has 20 parts. It is very easy to adjust to add more parts and several students might be assigned roles in scenery or costume making. Students will select their part by picking a random card with a Spanish word on it (all the roles have Spanish names). Then students will have to look up what their word means in the Spanish-English dictionary. Students will add their roles (in English & Spanish) to a piece of chart paper at the front of the room titled "Cast List":

Role in English	Role in Spanish
The littlest ant	La Hormiguita
The dog	El Perro
The cat	El Gato
The birds	Los Pájaros
The mouse	El Ratón
The rooster	El Gallo
The rabbit	El Conejo
The duck	El Pato
The pig	El Cerdo
The Horse	El Caballo

Practicing the play will give students many chances to learn and use the new vocabulary. The 5th grade students will then be the "experts" and teach their younger reading buddies the animals' names in Spanish.

Evaluation: I will video tape the performed play and have students assess their success with the new Spanish vocabulary. The students will also take a traditional vocabulary test.



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Lesson Plan #3 - Self Portraits and of Frida Kahlo

Objective: Students will learn the Spanish vocabulary for colors as they create their beginning of the year self portraits. Students will carefully choose the objects they place within their portraits using Frida Kahlo's art as a mentor.

Background: At the commencement each school year, students in every grade must create a self portrait. Each year has a different theme and

because this year my student's will be "living a writerly life" I wanted them to start reflecting on themselves as artists. We used Frida Kahlo as an example because she was constantly using her art as a way to examine her personal life.

Procedure: I read the book "Frida Kahlo-The Artist who Painted Herself" to the class. I also showed my many postcards and photographs taken of Frida's house and artwork in Mexico City. Together we charted the different objects that Frida painted into her self portraits and what they represented.

Example Chart:

Object	What it might represent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A deer that is hunted with arrows 	Fate: that a deer will wind up some hunter's dinner and that is just a part of the earth's suffering. Frida, too, was destined to suffer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Macabre Wedding Veil 	Her marriage to Diego furthered her suffering, but she still valued the union and dwelled on its importance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scissors 	Frida was in pain, she felt jabbed and stabbed and underwent many operations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Black Monkey 	Frida was fascinated with "native" things. She was probably

	influenced by Carl Jung, dreams, and the indigenous culture of Mexico
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Students then chose objects from their own life that hold meaning.

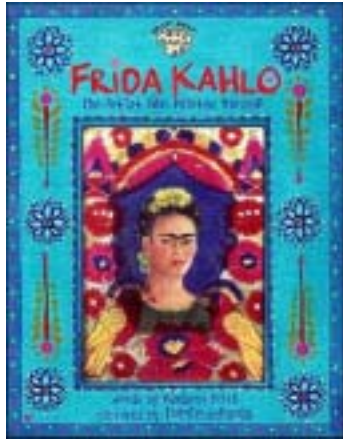
Students completed the first sketch of their self portraits with pencil.

Before using the paint, I introduced the Spanish vocabulary for the colors.

Vocabulary : rojo (red), azul (blue), blanco (white), verde (green), amarillo (yellow), negro (black), plata (silver), gris (gray), oro (gold), marrón or café-- Mexico only-- (brown), naranja (orange), rosado (pink), morado (purple).

The students practiced these words throughout the week. When it became time to begin painting, students had to use the vocabulary they learned to get paint from their table captain. Each student would have to ask for the paints they need in Spanish and the table captain would have to identify the colors they were requesting. Students would identify the paints that they mix together to make new colors.

Evaluation: Students present their self portraits to the class and explain what their representational objects mean. The students will then point to the colors in their portraits and identify them.



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Lesson Plan # 4 - Mean, Mode, Median, and Range with Baleros

Objective: Students will further their understanding of Mean, Mode, Median, and Range by playing with a traditional Mexican toy. Students will learn the numbers in Spanish as they play and compute the math.

Background: One of the hardest things for my students to grasp in 5th grade is mean, mode, median, and range. We have done many activities on

paper but students still have trouble grasping the concepts. When Anne had our groups count with the baleros over the summer, I knew I had to buy a class set and use them in a math activity!

Vocabulary:

0 cero	11 once
1 una	12 doce
2 dos	13 trece
3 tres	14 catorce
4 cuatro	15 quince
5 cinco	16 dieciséis
6 seis	17 diecisiete
7 siete	18 dieciocho
8 ocho	19 diecinueve
9 nueve	20 veinte
10 diez	

Procedure: After students have had several lessons on mean, mode, median, and range, I would introduce the baleros and show my photographs of the markets in Puebla and Oaxaca where you can buy them. I would give one balero to each group. I have 32 students, and they are divided into 8 groups. One student would count in Spanish, one would record, one would time, and the last would see how many "captures" he/she could make in one minute. They would switch until all students had performed each role. Students would then calculate the mean, mode, range, and median for their group as a whole.

Extensions: Find the whole class average or continue the use of the baleros into our next unit on probability.

Assessment: Students will continue to use the Spanish numbers in day to day activities as well as take a written test.



Lesson # 5 - Studying the family with Esperanza Rising



Objective: Students will complete a character study of the family in Esperanza Rising, while learning the Spanish words for family members.

Background: Character studies an important part of our Fictional Narrative unit in 5th grade. Esperanza Rising is an award winning novel that chronicles a Mexican family both in Aguascalientes and America.

Procedure: While reading Esperanza Rising, students will keep a log in their notebook of any Spanish words they learn to describe the family.

Vocabulary:

An Example Log might look like:

Spanish	English	Page # where it word was found
Padre	Father	11
Madre	Mother	4
Hermana	Sister	33
Hermano	Brother	33
Tío	Uncle	16
Tía	Aunt	17
Abuela	Grandmother	5
Primo	Cousin	22
Abuelo	Grandfather	5

In their book talks (discussion groups), students would refer to the characters in Spanish and as well as in their *Character Study* essay.

Evaluation: Students would create a family tree of their own family to present to the class. Students would use their new Spanish vocabulary to describe each family member.