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¿A Comer! An In-Depth Investigation of Eating in Spain

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HNRS 4990

Honors Project

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World Language Learning Expedition Planning Document (Burke, 2007)

Approximately 15 weeks

EXPEDITION TOPIC: ¡A España!

GUIDING QUESTIONS: What customs and traditions are integral to daily life in Spain? What is valued, enjoyed, and celebrated in Spanish culture?

LEARNING GOALS: Students will understand the value of family, food, religion, pastimes, and tradition in Spanish culture, and also what differentiates these traditions from those in the United States.

OUTLINE:

In-Depth Investigation One: ¡A comer! (Eating in Spain)

Days one, two, three, four: Students will kick-off this entire expedition by being introduced into a focal aspect of Spanish culture—food. I will begin by pre-assessing their knowledge and then showing them a video for a restaurant in Madrid, in order to effectively differentiate instruction. They will become familiar with concepts such as Menu del dia, and through this, begin to have an idea about Spanish lifestyle in general. Through the first learning expedition, students will begin to research authentic Spanish recipes, compiling their own menus, and carrying out a simple recipe on their own. The final product will be the menus, which will combine some of the meals from class with individual research.

Days five, six, seven, eight: During the second learning experience, students will learn about the schedule of eating in Spain, and they will send emails to an e-pal to

interview him/her about their daily schedule. Students will begin to compare this aspect of Spanish culture with American schedules, and create a final product, which showcases their personal skills (music, art, video). They will also read several authentic documents and improve their comprehension skills.

Days nine, ten, eleven, twelve: During this third learning experience, students will understand the relation between food and traditions, specifically in the catholic holidays of Christmas and Easter. They will be responsible for their own learning, as they research for a brief essay and a poster presentation. Students will work together in groups to research and to edit one another's essays. There will be two major products to assess after this learning experience: the essay and the poster.

Days thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen: During this fourth and final learning experience, students will be asked to gather information from the previous three to help them compile cookbooks of Spanish recipes or create a video of them cooking a recipe. After learning a variety of cooking vocabulary and watching a live demo and a video, they will be asked to research on their own and decide which recipes look most valuable, realistic, and/or delicious. Then they must compile them into a book with pictures or choose one to carry out in a video. They will be assessed on recipe authenticity and use of language, whether written or spoken.

Conclusion: Students will showcase all of their products from this IDI in an evening display at the school. Displays will be arranged by type of product, and students will be evaluated on their attendance and professional dress. Also, students will compile a cookbook of their favorite recipes that will be printed, simply bound, and sold at the showcase to raise money for a charity in Spain, on which the students will decide.

In-Depth Investigation Two: ¡A viajar! (Travelling in the regions of Spain)

In-Depth Investigation Three: ¡A celebrar! (Celebrating holidays and traditions in Spain)

In-Depth Investigation Four: ¡A disfrutar! (Enjoying entertainment and sports in Spain)

In-Depth Investigation Five: ¡A ver/eschuchar! (Appreciating music and art in Spain)

DESCRIPTION:

The term “Learning Expedition” is rooted in Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound—a form of education focusing on small groups, hands-on activities, and using teachers as a guide, instead of a focus on traditional teacher lecture (Cousins, 2000). The design for this Learning Expedition originated with a desire to express authentic culture to students in the most up-close and realistic way possible, without actually travelling across the Atlantic. Although it would be ideal for all of the students to end this experience by travelling to Spain, that is a futile dream. However, I designed this experience to give the students a background for life in Spain and to provide practical information and resources that will help them use the language in the classroom and beyond (Burke 2007). By using Expeditionary Learning Design (Cousins 2000), this expedition has a great focus on communication and culture, but also integrates the other aspects of the Ohio and National world language standards. The intended audience is most likely an early Spanish 2 classroom, or perhaps could be implemented at the end of a Spanish 1 course, and will probably last around 15 weeks total.

The expedition as a whole focuses on improving cultural and language literacy, through the lens of Spain as a country, the hopes that students will gain a high level of communicative competence (Savignon 1997). Students will investigate topics such as food, music, art, sports, traditions, holidays, regions, and others as they discover other interests. Many of the projects allow students to choose products or topics to suit their

interests, in the hopes that they connect personally with the language and see it as a valuable tool for communicating and gaining unique knowledge.

The first In-Depth Investigation, Eating in Spain, is the one that I have dedicated many weeks in developing for my honor's project. As I lived in Spain for 5 months, I truly realized the vast importance that dining and cuisine has on the Spanish people and their lifestyle, so it seemed a fitting way to kick off the expedition. Through the study of food, students begin to learn about regions, holidays, and traditions, which are topics that will be addressed in a more exhaustive way in other investigations. During this first In-Depth Investigation, students will be asked to communicate in real life with Spanish students through epals, see how food fits into Spanish culture, and actually be able to use their language and cooking skills in a useful manner. If they ever have the privilege to travel to a Spanish-speaking country, they will easily be able to navigate schedules, cultural norms, and menus. The next four In-Depth Investigations will promote similar values of communication and culture, promoting communicative competence in an experiential manner (Burke 2007), but the manner of presenting them will change depending on the topic. After completing the expedition, my hope is that the students have an in-depth understanding of Spanish culture, related to food, holidays and traditions, travelling and regions, sports and entertainment, and music and art.

In order to accomplish this, a variety of fieldwork, experts, and resources will be used. During IDI 1, students will establish relationships with epals as experts, and complete several cooking tasks as fieldwork. I will provide the students with many authentic reading sources (see Learning Experience documents) from textbooks or the

Internet. I will also make use of Burke's (2009) documents about Reader's Workshop and Writer's workshop, to improve the literacy of the students.

Students will be expected to communicate with individuals in and outside of the classroom, through a variety of communication methods. They will collaborate with each other on a variety of artistic and academic work, such as videos, posters, and presentation. They will be assessed based on these products, and often are given a choice of theme or type of project. At the end of each investigation, there will be a closure assessment that combines the ideas from the previous products. For the first IDI, students will set up a show case for their family and friends of all of their products about food and dining in Spain. As the teacher, I will be helping the students with the research and brainstorming of ideas, scaffolding my support so that eventually the students do not rely so much on my help. I will provide some direct instruction at the beginning of the Learning Experiences, but allow the students to investigate more and more on their own as the Learning Experience progresses.

As a closure for the entire experience, I would like students to take one more week to compile a video of interviews, pictures, and products from the Learning Experiences that truly represents Spanish culture to them. Tasks will be delegated based on students' interests in the different topics, and on their skills (acting, editing, recording, music, etc.). The video will be shown to the entire school as a final product and celebration of this learning experience.

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- Savignon, S. (1997). *Communicative competence: Theory and classroom practice*. New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.