

Intercultural Resource Pack

Latin American Perspectives



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**A Resource Pack for developing Intercultural Competence
in the ELT classroom in Latin America.**

This pack represents the outcome of a project proposal started at the Hornby Summer School Brazil 2006. It was funded by the British Council/ELTeCS Scheme and developed by the following ELT professionals:

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Team members.

The Pack

Structure

The project for the production of this Intercultural Resource Pack aimed at developing Intercultural Competence in the ELT classroom in Latin America was carried out by a team of five ELT professionals from Argentina, Brazil and Venezuela who designed a number of activities each within their own teaching contexts. This pack represents the outcome of a project proposal started at the Hornby Summer School Brazil 2006 where we had the opportunity to explore the concept of Intercultural Competence in depth, as well as its implications for the current ELT scenario.

This Resource Pack provides practical activities for teachers to be used in the classroom primarily in Latin America, although these can be adapted to suit other international contexts, as a tool for understanding other cultures and promoting reflection in order to avoid cultural bias and challenge stereotypes. It is intended to promote social awareness in Latin American students and teachers by encouraging social and cultural diversity through ethnographic study, which takes account of communication and interaction while it promotes criti-

cal cultural awareness by engaging students and teachers in critical readings of culture.

The pack is divided in five sections. Section one - *The Learner as Ethnographer*, section two – *Cultural Values and Attitudes*, section three – *Challenging Stereotypes*, section four – *Critical Readings of Culture* and section five – *The Media*. Activities in each section contain a teacher's note page and the activities page and specify a particular target group, level and age. Lessons are based on Latin American ethnographic study which represents an innovation to the Latin American ELT field. They provide for engaging students in a cross-cultural reflection for the purpose of learning English as a language of international and intercultural communication.

Activities are soon to be available in the British Council ELT pages as well as in our webpage and blog, Intercultural Voices, which will also serve as dissemination and follow-up to this project.

<http://interculturalvoices.googlepages.com/home>

<http://interculturalvoices.wordpress.com/>

The Pack

Why a Latin American Intercultural Resource Pack?

The concept of "English as a Global Language" has brought about significant changes for the ELT context worldwide. Global issues have brought the need for people to be able to communicate effectively in English with more diverse communities of English speakers around the world. Thus, awareness of this cultural diversity and being able to work with such diversity is of vital importance to the development of international communicators of English. As teachers of English, we need to bring this diversity into our classrooms in order to promote intercultural awareness among both teachers and students.

The concepts of intercultural awareness and intercultural competence are not new and have received particular attention in the ELT field worldwide. (See, for example, Byram, 2000, Corbett, 2003, Alptekin, 2002). The 2005 ELT Conference in Berlin Spandau dealt with "Intercultural Learning- towards a shared understanding in Europe" and presented work being done in Germany by Dennis Newson, in the Czech Republic by Simon Gill, in India by Amol Padwad, in Russia by Radislav Millwood and the Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment (Moodle) in Scotland by John Corbett, among others. In Brazil, the Teacher Education SIG, a BrazTesol Regional Chapter in Curitiba (2003) presented the Intercultural Studies Research Project on "Materials for Interculturalism and Citizenship for Brazilian English Teachers" and "Designing and Developing Web-Based ELT Materials for Intercultural Education in State Schools". In Spain,

Lindsay Clandfield, a regular author for Onestopenglish and editor of Teacher Trainers' SIG Newsletter for IATEFL, is also a contributor to the concept of Intercultural Competence.

Current materials which work on these lines of study, for instance, are Susan Holden- Portfolio Series, Lindsay Clandfield, Phillip Kerr, Ceri Jones & Jim Scrivener- Straightforward volumes and Simon Greenall -People Like Us by Macmillan and Barry Tomalin, Susan Stempleski & Alan Maley- Cultural Awareness, Michaela Cankova & Alan Maley- Intercultural Activities and Susan Hillyard & Ricardo Sampedro- Global Issues published by Oxford. However, Latin America seems to have so far lacked more detailed, specific and practical classroom activities dealing with issues of interculturality from Latin American countries and within a Latin American perspective. Thus, what this pack proposes is a series of lessons based on ethnographic study and school linking project work in order to promote inter- and intra- cultural awareness primarily for students and teachers in Latin America. The aim? Awareness of self and others based on an understanding of how members of a community construe their own world accounting for competent communicators in a globalized world. The Resource Pack focuses on the promotion of Intercultural Competence and Awareness in the ELT classroom in Latin America, by assisting students and teachers in understanding and learning more about their own cultures as they become aware of those of others, thus, contributing to this growing strand in the ELT field locally and globally.

Andrea Morgado de Matos
Project Leader

"English as a Global Language" a perspective that has introduced changes in the English Language Teaching (ELT) context worldwide. Global communication requires more than sharing a common code. Global trade and traveling made it necessary to develop intercultural competence, a skill associated with an understanding of cultural diversity without losing our own cultural identity.

Intercultural Resource Pack

Introduction

John Corbett
Professor of Applied Language Studies
University of Glasgow

It is a pleasure and a privilege to introduce this resource pack, which has been designed to support teachers and learners of English in their intercultural explorations of language. Intercultural language education is becoming increasingly visible in courses and classrooms around the world, and the materials gathered here demonstrate the excitement and energy of intercultural language learning. But why has language learning 'gone intercultural'?

The globalisation of language, commerce and electronic communications means that practically everyone on the planet now has a stake in English. On the one hand, English-speaking culture is the domain of South Americans – as well as Britons, North Americans and Australians. If you don't believe me, look around the store signs and advertisements in your neighbourhood shopping. On the other hand, not so long ago, South American learners outside the big cities might seldom come into direct contact with speakers of English from elsewhere – but nowadays, in all but the remotest villages, learners can go online and instantly be part of a chat-room discussion with speakers of English worldwide. Electronic communications have eliminated time and space and the world wide web invites us all to share our experiences of global citizenship. This resource pack links, for example, to Intercultural Voices, a website where teachers and learners can share their experiences of the resource with others around the country, around the continent, and around the world [<http://interculturalvoices.googlepages.com/home>].

The pervasiveness of global English and the immediacy of contact with English users worldwide are two reasons why intercultural language learners must first of all become ethnographers. That is, language learners must become systematic, critical observers and describers of cultural behaviours and the attitudes and beliefs that motivate these behaviours. To become intercultural ethnographers, language learners must first explore and understand their own culture and be prepared to explain it to those whose experience of life and formations of belief are often very different from their own.

Thus the focus of many of the materials in this resource pack are characteristically South American: some Sections cover New Year festivals, common cultural points of reference like Canaima, Ipanema and forro, contemporary forms of behaviour (such as the Brazilian way

of 'going out'), and so on. The stereotypes are viewed critically and deconstructed, as the underlying systems of belief are made explicit and critiqued. Other Sections focus on the impact of globalisation – learners, for example, consider the opposing forces of consumerism and environmentalism in South America today. And there is always space to consider the universal and eternal issues of poverty, diversity and social justice.

A further feature of globalisation is the mass media, and the Sections explore the response to the American series *Desperate Housewives* in both Brazil and Argentina, two countries famous for their own telenovelas. How does popular culture in the USA, Brazil, Argentina and Venezuela construct gender roles and stereotypes? How do these programmes translate from one country to another? Do concepts of beauty travel intact across national, ethnic and cultural boundaries?

The intercultural agenda revolutionises the language curriculum by placing such issues at the heart of the learning experience. Intercultural knowledge and skills combine with language knowledge and skills to investigate topics such as:

- how we construct our notions of the Self and the Other
- how we interact through speech and writing in different contexts
- how we respond politically to globalised language, commerce and media
- how we might relate the behaviour of others to their attitudes and beliefs
- how we can empathise with, respect and value the beliefs of others

Earlier formulations of the ultimate objectives of language learning tended to focus, explicitly or implicitly, on the mythical goal of 'native speaker competence'. The intercultural curriculum focuses on the goal of intercultural exploration, description, mediation and empathy – goals which are attainable and which learners can begin to achieve today. This resource pack is an excellent place to start.

John Corbett is the author of *An Intercultural Approach to English Language Teaching* (Multilingual Matters, 2003), and he is the editor of the journal *Language and Intercultural Communication*.



The Learner as ethnographer

Ethnography brings a new perspective to our ELT classrooms, an intercultural perspective. Through the observation of everyday ordinary phenomena our students engage themselves in the exploration of particular cultural frames of reference. The aim of this section is to provide tools for learners to become mediators between different cultural realities so as to promote communicative competence within the most diverse cultural scenarios.



English for Tourism

Target groups: Adults in Business or General English contexts.

Level: Intermediate and Upper Intermediate.

AIMS

- to encourage students to analyse a country's self image and the implicit view of tourists as expressed through brochures, as suggested in Corbett (2003).
- to help them analyse their own texts in terms of audience design by asking them to rewrite a text for different audiences in cultural terms.

Procedure

1. Students are encouraged to use both realia and web sites to explore views of tourists as target audiences (what will they expect from the country visited/ what would be appealing to them?) and advertising techniques. They also analyse the language used, and resort to some proverbs/ metaphors to illustrate this.
2. After students read the text, the teacher asks them what they knew about Ushuaia before reading the text. How is the place displayed to foreigners? What is highlighted and downplayed?
3. Finally, they rewrite the text in groups in three versions. What differences do they need to introduce so that the texts are efficient? As a final task, they are asked to read the texts aloud to the other groups and other students have to say which version it is. How did they know?

EXERCISES

1. Collect some brochures in your language and English showing your city/ places in your country. Carry out an Internet search of local travel agents sites and compare their versions in English and Spanish. Based on these resources answer the following questions:

- a) **How do the brochures/ Internet sites display your home for tourists? Is their depiction realistic/ stereotypical/ romantic?**
- b) **What are the characteristics of the language they use? Is it mainly descriptive? Do the descriptions depict values through word choice?**
- c) **If you had to think of two local proverbs/ metaphors to describe what the brochures/ sites show, which ones would they be?**

2. Read the following example:

Ushuaia. Tierra del Fuego. Argentina.

In the southern end of the Republic of Argentina, on the Isla Grande de Tierra del Fuego, there lies Ushuaia, the southernmost city in the world. Located on the Beagle Channel, it takes its name -which means "bay overlooking the West"- from the yámana tongue.

The Tierra del Fuego National Park, with typical animal and vegetable species and important testimonies from the first settlers of the area, protects Lakes Fagnano and Roca, the channel and the southernmost subantarctic forests.

Lured by the particular mysticism of its geography and its natural environment, tourists from all round the world visit Ushuaia every year, thus making it one of the most preferred destinations for unique vacations.

Check below our main offers for accommodation and activities in this area.

<http://www.tangol.com/eng/ushuaia.asp>

3. Rewrite the brochure in different versions:

- a) **For a local traveller.**
- b) **For a global traveller.**
- c) **For an international traveller really eager to learn about differences between the two cultures.**

Boys and Girls from Ipanema

Home ethnography: observing Ipanema beach culture, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Target groups: Young adults and adults / General English contexts.

Level: Pre-Intermediate to upper-intermediate.

AIMS

- to explore ordinary phenomena for cultural insights
- to train learners on ethnographic skills
- to explore cultural practices of a subculture in order to promote reflection upon socially constructed identities

Procedure

This activity was a home ethnography project done by pre-intermediate students from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil who observed an ordinary phenomenon of the Carioca's (people from Rio de Janeiro) life – Ipanema beach on a sunny Sunday. The project proposed that students observed a subculture to explore its cultural practices in order to promote some reflection upon their own beach culture and if and how identities /organized behaviour could be observed to have been socially constructed. While observing, they asked themselves questions in order to promote such reflection.

1. Get students to brainstorm around Ipanema beach, on a sheet of paper, they should write any associated concepts they may have. Give them a few minutes and ask them to call out what they wrote, and as they do it you can write it on the board. As a group, you can start discussing around these 'items' – why did they write that, how do they know of that, experience, been to Ipanema before, read about it, etc.

2. Give the activity handout to the students and look at part one before they read the text. This part 1 proposes that you start bridging the gap between the concepts of Ipanema they've brainstormed and 'an observed Ipanema', so moving from 'global' to 'local' Ipanema. Explain to them what this text represents and get them to predict, in pairs, what kind of things they believe are going to be mentioned in the text. Ideas can be compared as a group.

3. You can ask two volunteers to read the texts in part 2 then move to part 3 for discussion. This proposes some exploration of typical features of this beach culture, how typical is this beach, can this be compared to any other beach around the world, can any organized behaviour be perceived from locals or tourists, how can Ipanema beach be different to Brazilian visitors and foreigners, etc.

4. Here are some of the questions students asked themselves when observing this ordinary phenomenon.

- Why kind of people go there; locals, tourists?
- What do they do?
- How are they dressed?- How do they talk?
- Do they eat/drink/read at the beach?
- Do they play any sports?-Do they get chairs and shades from the kiosks?
- How typical of beaches is the one being observed?
- Actions and reactions

(Corbett:2003, chapter 5)

Intended Outcomes

You can use this activity to raise your student's awareness of how the observation of ordinary phenomena can lead to cultural insights, though not from my student's perspectives as observers, but from your own perspective at our beach culture. This intends to help your students in recognizing and understanding cultural differences, so that intercultural experiences can be more comfortable experiences.

Further research

Set up a home ethnography project for your students, based on ordinary phenomena from your own region. Divide your students into groups and make sure each group observes one particular aspect. Students should present their work to the class in a Powerpoint format.

(Corbett, J. 2003 An Intercultural Approach to ELT. Multilingual Matters)

Boys and Girls from Ipanema

A day out at the beach or a social gathering?

EXERCISES

1. The text below represents the observation, by some students, of a sunny Sunday at Ipanema Beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Before you read the text discuss, in pairs, the following question, and then compare your ideas as a group.

What kind of things do you believe are going to be mentioned?



Boys and Girls from Ipanema

A day out at the beach or a social gathering?

2. Read the text below and discuss on the questions.

"It's Sunday the 15th of April 2007. We arrived at Ipanema beach "Posto 9" (*) at 1pm. Ipanema is divided in some different social groups. The surfers go to the beginning of the beach, which is actually Arpoador, not Ipanema but thought of as Ipanema. Then, the next area is the gay point, in front of Farne de Amoedo Street and there's a point for "patricinhas" (rich, snobbish girls) and "mauricinhos" (rich, snobbish boys) in front of the country club. There is also an area for hippies and alternative people in front of Joana Angelica Street. We prefer to stay in front of Vinicius de Moraes Street, a "neutral zone" with all kind of people and we see quite a few familiar faces.

It's a beautiful sunny day.

There are a lot of people at the beach, the majority locals but there are many tourists too. They're in groups, with friends and family.

People are enjoying the sun, talking very loud, drinking beer and water, and playing sports like football, volleyball and a mix of the two, the typical carioca's "futevolei". There are some people swimming and diving too, the water is great today!

There are a lot of people selling sunglasses, "cangas" (sarongs), craft earrings and necklaces, some natural sandwiches, ice creams, "açai" (a fruit from Brazil which is often made into juice, very energetic, caloric and drunk by a lot of 'the healthy ones'), "globo biscuits" and some drinks like beer, "mate", caipivodka (caipirinha made with vodka instead of cachaça), water and other soft drinks.

There are some guys playing percussion instruments, the rhythm could be something like afro funk. At first it is very nice to listen to that sound but after 3 hours with the same beat, it becomes very annoying; but they seem to be fine, they carry on.

People are sitting down in chairs and lying down in "cangas". They're wearing bikinis, trunks, shorts, hats and sunglasses. Everybody is wearing "havaianas", even the tourists! All the tourists have at least something with the Brazilian flag on.

Most of the people use sun block.

The environment in the beach is very cool. People look happy, they're relaxing; some of them are sleeping, others are reading magazines and newspapers.

It is 4pm; people start to listen to the football game in their radios and cell phones. It is one of the final games for the Rio's football Cup. The beach is still full of people but we are leaving. There's an acoustic rock show for free next to the beach and we're going to check it out! "

(*) "Postos" are small lifeguard's fixed stations, with toilet facilities and shower, that you can see along the whole of the beach. They are numbered and every two to three blocks there's a "Posto". Brazilians tend to say they're going to "Posto 9" or "Posto 10", for instance, when they are meeting someone at the beach.

(This home ethnography project was done by Tatiane Pasquali and Vanessa Bianco, students from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)

Discussion:

1. How do your ideas from Ipanema Beach relate to the "observed Ipanema" from the text?
2. How typical do you believe Ipanema Beach is? Can you compare Ipanema Beach to another beach around the world?
3. Are there any particular features of this sub-culture which may give you an insight about Brazilian culture?
4. Is this a sunny day out at the beach or a social gathering?

Boys and Girls from Ipanema

A day out at the beach or a social gathering?

EXERCISES

3. The Girl from Ipanema – Lyrics (Antonio Carlos Jobim, Vinicius de Moraes and Norman Gimbel ,1962)

Tall and tan and young and lovely
 The girl from Ipanema goes walking
 And when she passes, each one she passes goes "a-a-ah!"
 When she walks she's like a samba that
 Swings so cool and sways so gentle,
 That when she passes, each one she passes goes "a-a-ah!"
 Oh, but I watch her so sadly
 How can I tell her I love her?
 Yes, I would give my heart gladly
 But each day when she walks to the sea
 She looks straight ahead not at me
 Tall and tan and young and lovely
 The girl from Ipanema goes walking
 And when she passes I smile, but she doesn't see
 She just doesn't see
 No she doesn't see

www.jobim.com.br

Can you identify any socially constructed identities by comparing the two; the ethnographic research which resulted in the first text and the lyrics from the song?

Attitudes to consumerism

Exploring culture through interviews

Target groups: Young adults and adults / General and Business English contexts.

Level: Pre-Intermediate to advanced.

AIMS

- to engage students in ethnographic projects for exploration of consumer cultures and behaviours
- to promote a link between language development and cultural learning through this exploration
- to foster intercultural awareness by comparing and contrasting information from this exploration, across cultures

Procedure

1. Give your students a few minutes to do the brainstorming activity individually and then lead a discussion on students associations with CONSUMERISM as well as the question which follows.

Some possible metaphors:

- Summer price meltdown
- Total burn of stock
- Zero 1st payment

2. INTERVIEW

You can set two or three weeks for this project. Make sure students do it in groups of three or four and present their results to the whole class in a PowerPoint presentation. You can create a blog to keep students' work as an insight into your own consumer culture and behaviour. This can promote a link between language development and cultural learning and can be developed even further if you engage students in an information exchange project through this blog. If you do not have access to computer facilities you can ask your students to produce a poster presentation and, if possible, keep the work visible to other classes in your institution.

Intended Outcomes

"What ethnographic research seeks is the 'telling' examples rather than the 'typical' example".

(cf. Mitchell, 1984:239 in Corbett:2003: 135).

Thus, it is important to be careful not to promote stereotypical ideas but rather to explore particularities of consumerism in order to foster awareness of differences and similarities by the exchange of information. Interviews can aid understanding of assumptions and attitudes in home and target cultures. Face to face interviews can explore language patterns by analyzing the cultural frames of reference of interviewers and interviewees. It can also be a good activity to motivate students in their learning process and promote learners autonomy.

Further research

As proposed in number 2.

Attitudes to Consumerism

EXERCISES

1. Brainstorm around CONSUMERISM and then discuss your associations and the question below as a group.

Can you identify any metaphors associated with consumerism in your own or any other country?

2. INTERVIEW This is a project which can be done in groups of three or four. It intends to speculate consumer culture and behaviour by comparing and contrasting individual attitudes to consumerism from two chosen countries.

For this activity you are requested to interview 10 people from your own country and 10 people from a country where English is the first language. Interviews can be conducted in your first language in your country but will need to be translated and presented in English. As for the other country you choose, you can conduct the interview face-2-face, if you have the opportunity to do so, or virtually. This can be done by email, chat rooms or Moodle if you have access to this virtual learning environment. You should classify your interviewees in age groups, gender, professional position and social background. You should present your findings to the class in a Powerpoint format – you can include pictures, illustrations, sound, etc.

Questions:

- a) How often do you buy 'things' ? Are these purchases done based on necessity, desire, a mix of these, etc?
- b) What kind of products do you buy the most? (e.g. electronic, beauty, food, household, services, etc.)
- c) What is your motivation to purchase a particular product? What is your criteria, if any, for choosing one product over another?
- d) When you purchase a product, what is your preferred method of payment? Why?
- e) What kind of credit payments are offered by your local markets? Are there installment options without interest rates?
- f) Do you know about your country's attitude to consumer's protection? Does your country have a consumer's law?
- g) Does your country have a 'return goods policy'? If you decide to return goods, are you entitled a refund?

h) What is your idea of the relation between advertisements and consumerism?

i) What is your idea of the relation between advertising and cultural values?

j) What is the relation between corporations and customers in your country?

k) Can you summarize your attitude to consumerism in one sentence?

3. What did you learn by doing this activity, in terms of language development and cultural awareness?

Food for thought

A Brazilian TV programme called Fantástico has recently presented some news on the type of consumers Brazilians are. It was reported that Brazilians are very fond of installments, as a payment option. The anthropologist Livia Barbosa pointed out that the experience of purchasing for Brazilians is very pleasurable and not frustrating, and that Brazilians think in terms of cash-flow, that is why they love installments. (www.fantastico.globo.com)

New Year's Resolutions

and the Start of the Year

Target groups: Young adults and adults / General and Business English contexts.

Level: Pre-Intermediate.

AIMS

- to engage students in ethnographic projects for information exchange
- to explore cultural frames of reference for an insight of cultural values and attitudes

Procedure

This activity is the result of the start of an ethnographic project based on interviewing done by some Brazilian students from Rio de Janeiro; questions were asked virtually.

Questions asked:

When does the Year start? Why?

Do you usually make New Year's Resolutions? If so, which ones?

Do they work? Do you follow them?

Have you ever made any resolution more than once?

This activity presents 14 answers from 8 people from Brazil, Peru, the US and Ireland.

It is important to note here that considering the size of those countries and the little number of individuals who answered these questions, we cannot account for data collection, rather, we are trying to look at some patterns in responses or some cultural frames of reference which might tell us about interviewees' assumptions, attitudes and the construction of their own realities.

1. In pairs or groups students can discuss questions a to e, and then you can turn it into a group discussion for the question in bold.

2. This part 2 you can use the table as per the activity's sheet or separate answers in cards and give one or two cards per student. Following the table's order we have:

Peru – female from Lima

Brazil – female

Brazil – female

Peru – Peruvian female living in Rio, Brazil for 11 years

Brazil – male

Brazil – male

Ireland – male

The US – male

Brazil – male

Brazil – male

Peru – Peruvian female living in Rio, Brazil for 11 years

Brazil – female

Brazil – female

The US – male

Ireland – male

Intended Outcomes

Information exchange can be achieved through interviews and can be an interesting and valuable way for engaging students in language and culture projects. This activity proposes the exploration of some cultural frames of reference regarding New Year's Resolutions and the Start of the Year as a bridge for insights of Brazilians, in particular, cultural values, attitudes, assumptions and construction of their own realities.

Why do Brazilians associate the start of the year with the carnival? In some contexts, ordinary things don't seem to be taken too seriously from January up to carnival.

Brazilians can perhaps construct the ordinary person as knowing the year only starts after carnival as observed in "after carnival of course..be serious..come on...."

How do other cultures relate to this concept? How valuable can this cultural knowledge be for foreigners considering ordinary intercultural interactions?

Further research

You can set up an ethnographic project based on interviews for your students on a particular aspect of their own or the target culture's ordinary life in order to explore cultural frames based on information exchange.

New Year's Resolutions and the Start of new Year

EXERCISES

1. Discuss the following questions with a partner.

- When does the Year start? Why?
- Do you usually make New Year's Resolutions? If so, which ones?
- Do they work? Do you follow them?
- Have you ever made any resolution more than once?
- Do resolutions make any sense to you? What do they represent?

How different or similar do you believe people from other parts of the world would answer these questions? Do you know or can you think of any particular reasons why?

2. The table below presents some answers from people of four different countries: Brazil, Peru, the US and Ireland.

Can you guess the nationality and, perhaps, the gender and age group of the speaker?

"The year starts on January the 1st at 00:00 when December the 31st finishes. I don't have an specific answer but that's the way I see it."

" After carnival, of course...come on..be serious! People can only concentrate after carnival, before they can only think about holidays, having fun and planning carnival, sure."

" A year is only a relatively small time in measuring a life-time of repeated experiences. Why is a year so relevant? After all, 365 days is only an arbitrary number."

" The year starts WITH the carnival. I don't know why but this is the time when the first important things of the year always happen...it's a good way to start the year."

" After carnival of course...before carnival is only party."

" Before working at my current job, the year started after carnival but now I have to say that it starts on January the 2nd, when I'm back to work."

" After carnival because where I'm working, all stops before carnival...nothing happens."

" Generally speaking the year always starts in January for me (although the month of September seems like start of work year."

"I don't make New Year's Resolutions because I don't promise anything I know I won't do."

" I do make New Year's Resolutions. They help me to make and track goals and accomplishments during the year. They do work. Don't remember ever making the same one twice."

" Never! I don't know why but I don't believe that's something important."

" No, I don't believe that it works...but I respect people who make New Year's Resolutions....each one believes in what they want."

" Yes, sometimes. Because these promises or 'resolutions' renew the hope for the next year" .

" Sometimes I make 2/3 resolutions for my year and I try to follow them, but I believe in casualities....maybe I can't follow them" .

" I didn't used to but these past few years I have..they do work but only IF you succeed" .

There seems to be some systematicity on the year starts after carnival. Can that tell us anything about interviewees' assumptions, attitudes and the way they construct their own realities?

3. Does that give us any cultural frames of reference? Can this be useful cultural knowledge for foreigners considering ordinary intercultural interactions?

Consider some language used, for instance, " After carnival, of course...come on, be serious", "After carnival of course", "...before carnival nothing happens" . What is the assumption and attitude of the speaker towards the interviewer? Does this speaker constructs the ordinary person as engaging on his/her own attitudes and beliefs?

What is your own concept of the new, the beginning, a start?

Intercultural Games

Target groups: Teens and adults / General contexts.

Level: Pre-Intermediate to advanced.

AIMS

- to reflect on universals and particulars as regards games of different sorts.
- To produce a home ethnography and compare it with other ethnographies
- To encourage students to become mediators between different cultures

Procedure

1. Ask students to carry out a brainstorm of different kinds of games they played as children/ they play now. If they are adults who have children, encourage them to compare the games they played and the ones their children play now.

Assist them with the language they need to describe the games.

2. Students are now asked to match the names of some Argentine games with their descriptions. Ask them if the same games exist in their culture, in other cultures they know.

3. At this point they will contrast their intuitions with the results of an Internet search. Could they summarise their findings in a mini presentation to other members of the class?

4. Finally, they write a short text, in the shape of a short reflective essay, on games and cultures. And they play one of the games!

Intended Outcomes

The results could be surprising. It is also expected that there will be some emotional resonance to much of what is done in the class as most of us like talking about what we did as children. Reflection on universals and particulars as regards culture could lead to interesting conclusions.

Further research

<http://wilderdom.com/games/MulticulturalExperientialActivities.html>

<http://www.estcomp.ro/~cfg/games.html>

I thank Alejandra Graiver de Galeano and Maria Marta Bibiloni for the inspiration for this activity, as they reported to me on a workshop on this topic they carried out in a local state school (Centro de Educación de Adultos 726, Distrito de La Plata) with Adult illiterate students. The results they got were absolutely inspiring; with connections found between games played in different provinces in Argentina and within aboriginal populations. The name of the workshop, planned and delivered by Maria Marta in Alejandra's class, was "Memory in Childhood".

Intercultural games

EXERCISES

1. In pairs/ groups of three, brainstorm names of games you used to play as a child/ (board) games you play now.

Think of:

- games in general
- board games
- card games
- word games

Do you know if any of these games are played in other countries in the world? Can you describe them in the way you would to someone who has never played them?

2. Match the following names of Argentinian games with their descriptions below:

- A. Mancha
- B. Truco
- C. Payana
- D. Veo veo
- E. Escondida

1. A game where the player tells someone else they see something of a given colour; the interlocutor needs to find out what the thing is through guessing.

2. A game where everybody hides while one person counts with their face against a wall. Then this player has to go in search of the hiding players and find them.

3. A game where one player has to chase others around till they manage to touch part of one person's body. When they do, the victim is said to have been "infected" and so will have to run after others him/herself and try to touch someone else, too.

4. A game where players toss five stones into the air according to different rules and patterns. The player who manages to do the most patterns without dropping the stones is the winner.

5. A game of cards where players have to lie in a way that does not seem evident and show their skill in playing "tricks" at opponents.

3. Carry an Internet search and find equivalents of these games in other cultures.

Do they exist? If something similar exists, does it have the same rules?

4. In small groups, write a short text trying to explain the following:

- a) if the same games exist in other cultures, why this could be the case.
- b) If they do not, whether you would like to play the games you do not know.

5. Choose one of the games and play it! (it could be a game in another culture, one in yours, one that is shared!)

People in my diverse community

Ethnography Project

Target groups: preteens and teens. General English contexts.

Level: Beginners (adapting the interview questions)/Low intermediate.

AIMS

- to engage students in ethnographic projects for exploration of their community
- to foster intercultural awareness by finding similarities with other cultures and their own.

Procedure:

1. As an introduction to the topic, tell students about your or any community you know where you can find immigrants from different nationalities. It could also be about a person in that community that you know enough so as to tell students about this person and her/his background.
2. Have students discuss about this issue in their community.
3. As a project, students (in groups) are assigned to interview people from different nationalities in their communities (shops, offices, etc). You set the time for them to bring it to class, allow a weekend to do this.
4. Have students do some search in the web about this person's country, and find photos, flags to stick on their poster/graffiti.
5. Prepare paper posters/graffitis containing information about the different people they interviewed.
6. Students present their finding to the rest of the class. Promote a discussion about the contributions and benefits these people bring to their community.
7. Hang or exhibit them around the school.

Interview questions:

1. What's your name?
2. Where are you from?
3. What do you do?
4. What do you miss from your homeland?
5. Which costumes, celebrations from your country do you practice here ?
6. What would you like people from the community to know about you and your country?
7. What do you like from this country?
8. What do you find in common between this and your country?

People in my diverse community

Ethnography Project

EXERCISES

In every community, there are many people that contribute to improve her/his neighbour's quality of life. Think of a person who comes from another country and works in your community.

1. What do you know about this person? Write a profile with the information you may have:

- Name:
- Profession:
- Job:
- Country of origin:
- Personality characteristics you have observed:
- Any celebration they do in public:
- Any curiosity you may have about this person:

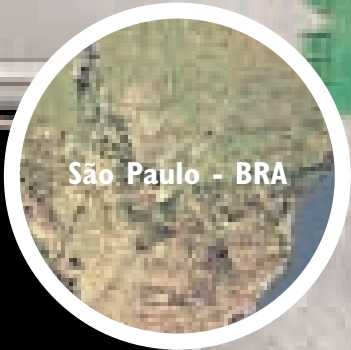
2. Discuss with your partners and teacher about the role or job these persons have in the community.

3. Visit and interview this person. Ask these questions or any other you may like:

1. What's your name?
2. Where are you from?
3. What do you do?
4. What do you miss from your homeland?
5. Which costumes, celebrations from your country do you practice here ?
6. What would you like people from the community to know about you and your country?
7. What do you like from this country?
8. What do you find in common between this and your country?
9. What's your contribution to our community?

4. Google about this person's country

5. Prepare a poster or a graffiti, and be ready to discuss your findings and opinion about your project.



São Paulo - BRA



Cultural Values and Attitudes

Each culture possesses its own particular traditions, values and ideals. The people in Latin America live in a multicultural society. On the one hand it gives them awareness of different lifestyles and cultures, on the other hand it brings the problems of integrating all this knowledge. The aim of this section is to examine our beliefs about cultural similarities and differences on other cultures and our own cultural values.



Brazil Is Satisfying Its Fuel Needs

Target groups: Adults. General and Business English contexts.

Level: Advanced.

AIMS

- Students will examine the economic and environmental problems of a fuel that can substitute petrol.
- to promote environmental and social awareness locally and globally

Procedure

1. Have students read Larry Roather's article. As they read, ask them to notice which of the potential economic problems the students identified are faced by the people of Brazil and the rest of the world (Price fluctuations and environmental problems.). Have students underline the evidence in the text. When they have finished, discuss their conclusions. What other economic problems seem to occur as a result of a new kind of fuel? [Seasonal employment, since most workers are required only for the harvest; overcrowding and unsanitary living conditions at harvest time. Students may predict health problems as a result; remind them that health problems have many economic costs. What will the other countries feel with a new form of fuel? What will happen to the grazing areas in Brazil that will be substitute by sugar cane plantations?
2. Ask students to name the kinds of businesses that employ people in their town or city. List as many as possible on the board.
3. Ask students the kind of fuel that is used in their countries and if the country has a project to substitute fossil fuels.
4. What projects did their countries actually undertake to improve the environment?

Intended Outcomes

You can raise your students' attention to the problem of fossil fuel all over the world and new forms of fuel that can happen to change the scenery in the world. But ask them what can happen if we have only one crop culture: - Environmental damage, such as soil depletion; crop diseases; you might remind them of the Irish potato famine and the fact that at least a million Irish people starved to death in the 1840s as a result.

Further research

Extensive information about Brazil is available on website. Try to find information about the climate, economy, government and culture, photographs of Brazil and its people, and links to related resources.

With Big Boost From Sugar Cane, Brazil Is Satisfying Its Fuel Needs

EXERCISES



Lalo de Almeida for The New York Times

A man headed to work at a sugar plantation in Orlandia in São Paulo State, which accounts for 60 percent of the sugar production in Brazil.

By LARRY ROHTER
Published: April 10, 2006

PIRACICABA, Brazil — At the dawn of the automobile age, Henry Ford predicted that "ethyl alcohol is the fuel of the future." With petroleum about \$65 a barrel, President Bush has now embraced that view, too. But Brazil is already there.

Ethanol, or alcool, is popular at a São Paulo station and across Brazil because it costs less than gas.

This country expects to become energy self-sufficient this year, meeting its growing demand for fuel by increasing production from petroleum and ethanol. Already the use of ethanol, derived in Brazil from sugar cane, is so widespread that some gas stations have two sets of pumps, marked A for alcohol and G for gas.

In his State of the Union address in January, Mr. Bush backed financing for "cutting-edge methods of producing ethanol, not just from corn but wood chips and stalks or switch grass" with the goal of making ethanol competitive in six years.

But Brazil's path has taken 30 years of effort, required several billion dollars in incentives and involved many missteps. While not always easy, it provides clues to the real challenges facing the United States' ambitions.

Brazilian officials and scientists say that, in their country at least, the main barriers to the broader use of ethanol today come from outside. Brazil's ethanol yields nearly eight times as much energy as corn-based options, according to scientific data. Yet heavy import duties on the Brazilian product have limited its entry into the United States and Europe.

Brazilian officials and scientists say sugar cane yields are likely to increase because of recent research.

"Renewable fuel has been a fantastic solution for us," Brazil's minister of agriculture, Roberto Rodrigues, said in a recent interview in São Paulo, the capital of São Paulo State, which accounts for 60 percent of sugar production in Brazil. "And it offers a way out of the fossil fuel trap for others as well."

Here, where Brazil has cultivated sugar cane since the 16th century, green fields of cane, stalks rippling gently in the tropical breeze, stretch to the horizon, producing a crop that is destined to be consumed not just as candy and soft drinks but also in the tanks of millions of cars.

The use of ethanol in Brazil was greatly accelerated in the last three years with the introduction of "flex fuel" engines, designed to run on ethanol, gasoline or any mixture of the two. (The gasoline sold in Brazil contains about 25 percent alcohol, a practice that has accelerated Brazil's shift from imported oil.)

But Brazilian officials and business executives say the ethanol industry would develop even faster if the United States did not levy a tax of 54 cents a gallon on all imports of Brazilian cane-based ethanol.

With demand for ethanol soaring in Brazil, sugar producers recognize that it is unrealistic to think of exports to the United States now. But Brazilian leaders complain that Washington's restrictions have inhibited foreign investment, particularly by Americans.

As a result, ethanol development has been led by Brazilian companies with limited capital. But with oil prices soaring, the four international giants that control much of the world's agribusiness — Archer Daniels Midland, Bunge and Born, Cargill and Louis Dreyfuss — have recently begun showing interest.

Brazil says those and other outsiders are welcome. Aware that the United States and other industrialized countries are reluctant to trade their longstanding dependence on oil for a new dependence on renewable fuels, government and industry officials say they are



willing to share technology with those interested in following Brazil's example.

"We are not interested in becoming the Saudi Arabia of ethanol," said Eduardo Carvalho, director of the National Sugarcane Agro-Industry Union, a producer's group. "It's not our strategy because it doesn't produce results. As a large producer and user, I need to have other big buyers and sellers in the international market if ethanol is to become a commodity, which is our real goal."

The ethanol boom in Brazil, which took off at the start of the decade after a long slump, is not the first. The government introduced its original "Pro-Alcohol" program in 1975, after the first global energy crisis, and by the mid-1980's, more than three quarters of the 800,000 cars made in Brazil each year could run on cane-based ethanol.

But when sugar prices rose sharply in 1989, mill owners stopped making cane available for processing into alcohol, preferring to profit from the hard currency that premium international markets were paying.

Brazilian motorists were left in the lurch, as were the automakers who had retooled their production lines to make alcohol-powered cars. Ethanol fell into discredit, for economic rather than technical reasons.

Consumers' suspicions remained high through the 1990's and were overcome only in 2003, when automakers, beginning with Volkswagen, introduced the "flex fuel" motor in Brazil. Those engines gave consumers the autonomy to buy the cheapest fuel, freeing them from any potential shortages in ethanol's supply. Also,

ethanol-only engines can be slower to start when cold, a problem the flex fuel owners can bypass.

"Motorists liked the flex-fuel system from the start because it permits them free choice and puts them in control," said Vicente Lourenço, technical director at General Motors do Brasil.

Today, less than three years after the technology was introduced, more than 70 percent of the automobiles sold in Brazil, expected to reach 1.1 million this year, have flex fuel engines, which have entered the market generally without price increases.

"The rate at which this technology has been adopted is remarkable, the fastest I have ever seen in the motor sector, faster even than the airbag, automatic transmission or electric windows," said Barry Engle, president of Ford do Brasil. "From the consumer standpoint, it's wonderful, because you get flexibility and you don't have to pay for it."

Yet the ethanol boom has also brought the prospect of distortions that may not be as easy to resolve. The expansion of sugar production, for example, has come largely at the expense of pasture land, leading to worries that the grazing of cattle, another booming export product, could be shifted to the Amazon, encouraging greater deforestation.

Industry and government officials say such concerns are unwarranted. Sugar cane's expanding frontier is, they argue, an environmental plus, because it is putting largely abandoned or degraded pasture land back into production. And of course, ethanol burns far cleaner than fossil fuels.

With Big Boost From Sugar Cane, Brazil Is Satisfying Its Fuel Needs

Human rights and worker advocacy groups also complain that the boom has led to more hardships for the peasants who cut sugar cane.

"You used to have to cut 4 tons a day, but now they want 8 or 10, and if you can't make the quota, you'll be fired," said Silvio Donizetti Palvequeres, president of the farmworkers union in Ribeirão Preto, an important cane area north of here. "We have to work a lot harder than we did 10 years ago, and the working conditions continue to be tough."

Producers say that problem will be eliminated in the next decade by greater mechanization. A much more serious long-term worry, they say, is Brazil's lack of infrastructure, particularly its limited and poorly maintained highways.

Ethanol can be made through the fermentation of many natural substances, but sugar cane offers advantages over others, like corn. For each unit of energy expended to turn cane into ethanol, 8.3 times as much energy is created, compared with a maximum of 1.3 times for corn, according to scientists at the Center for Sugarcane Technology here and other Brazilian research institutes.

"There's no reason why we shouldn't be able to improve that ratio to 10 to 1," said Suani Teixeira Coelho, director of the National Center for Biomass at the University of São Paulo. "It's no miracle. Our energy balance is so favorable not just because we have high yields, but also because we don't use any fossil fuels to process the cane, which is not the case with corn."

Brazilian producers estimate that they have an edge over gasoline as long as oil prices do not drop below \$30 a barrel. But they have already embarked on technical improvements that promise to lift yields and cut costs even more.

In the past, the residue left when cane stalks are compressed to squeeze out juice was discarded. Today, Brazilian sugar mills use that residue to generate the electricity to process cane into ethanol, and use other byproducts to fertilize the fields where cane is planted.

Some mills are now producing so much electricity that they sell their excess to the national grid. In addition, Brazilian scientists, with money from São Paulo State, have mapped the sugar cane genome. That opens the prospect of planting genetically modified sugar, if the government allows, that could be made into ethanol even more efficiently.

"There is so much biological potential yet to be developed, including varieties of cane that are resistant to pesticides and pests and even drought," said Tadeu Andrade, director of the Center for Sugarcane Technology. "We've already had several qualitative leaps without that, and we are convinced there is no ceiling on productivity, at least theoretically."

1. Which potential economic problems have you identified?

2. Which of these problems do you believe are faced by the people of Brazil and the rest of the world?

3. What other economic problems seem to occur as a result of a new kind of fuel?

4. What kind of fuel does your country use?

5. Are you aware of any projects to substitute fossil fuels in your country?

6. What projects has your country undertaken to improve the environment?



Indigenous Traditions

Target groups: teenagers and young adults. / General English Context.

Level: Pre-Intermediate.

AIMS

- to understand South American (Venezuelan) aborigines' celebrations are not so different from those in other cultures.

In class procedure

1. Find a photo about Halloween.

Ask students:

- Which celebration is it?
- Where does it happen?
- What do they celebrate?
- What do people wear?
- What do children do?

Key words

Celebrations, dead

2. Show photos included here, and ask students.

These photos can be enlarged to be used as flashcard, and everybody can see them. They can be prepared for an OHP or a PPP. You may prefer to copy them in the students' handouts, and print them in color.

- What can you see?
- Is it in a city? Where do you think it is?
- Who are these people?
- What are they doing in picture 1?
- What are they doing in picture 2?
- What are they doing in picture 3?

3. For the reading, write the word "Akaatampo" in the center of the board

4. Ask students:

- Do you know this word? Is it a word in (your language)? Which one (mention others)?

5. Give the handout to the students.

6. Have students discuss these questions in pairs before checking with the whole group.

7. Follow up: Have students write a short paragraph regarding this celebration as preparation for a poster in groups:

Information about this celebration in Mexico:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Day_of_the_Dead



Picture 1 - Kariña people visiting.



Picture 2 - Kariña women dancing



Picture 3 - Kariña children singing

Indigenous Traditions

EXERCISES
Reading
Akaatempo

Kariñas /karinias/ are one of many aboriginal tribes who live in the center and southern part of Venezuela. The Kariña Indians celebrate the Akaatempo, to honor their dead ancestors who come to visit their relatives. There they dance and sing with musical instruments-ankle jinglers and maracas-made with seeds and other natural elements. They conserve among their traditions the party of the Akaatempo, a ritual in memory to the deceased. They believe that on the 2nd and 3rd of November their ancestors' spirits return to visit to their family who prepare meetings with music, songs and dances to receive them. Participants accompanied by cuatros (4-string instrument smaller than guitars) and guitars, dance intertwined by the waist, with turns and movements toward before and back. The children and adults go around the village, singing and dancing, and pay a visit to the houses where they receive food, and drinks. They wear special clothes that day

Post-reading questions:

- **Who are the Kariñas?**
- **What celebrations is this reading about?**
- **When does it happen?**
- **What do Kariñas remember these days?**
- **What do they do?**
- **How does it compare to Halloween?**
- **Do you have a similar celebration in your country?**
- **Who does it? When is it held?**
- **What happens during the celebration?**

In groups:

- **Prepare a poster regarding this celebration in which you show the similarities in the 3 cultures.**



Cuatro



Maracas

Two Natural Wonders Of Brazil

Target groups: teenagers / adults. General English contexts.

Level: Intermediate to Advanced.

AIMS

- Students will learn about two places that are well-known by their geographical aspects and natural beauty .
- Intercultural experience should include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments, so that the learner can: construct and use mental maps of locales, regions, and the world that demonstrate understanding of relative location, direction, and distinguish various representations of the earth.

Procedure

Activate students' prior knowledge of Brazil's regions. Have any students read about or travelled to Brazil? On the board, list things that the students know about Brazil, mainly touristy places and after class discussion add any other place that were not mentioned. Inform students that they will be learning about two places that people can visit and appreciate in Brazil due to the natural beauty. After today's lesson, they will know some general information about these places.

Students are to choose other destinations of their choice. They are to write a one week itinerary for where they will go and how long they will be there. The brochure should be colourful and informative with a narrative portion that describes the journey. A map of the world should also be included with a star on each of the destinations visited.

Intended Outcomes

Students will gain skills in the following: descriptive writing, narrative writing.

- They will recognize words related to geography.
- Students will gain an understanding/appreciation of geography.

Further research

The students should prepare maps of Brazil. The themes include: climate, natural resources, population and physical regions. The students can explore other natural wonders that Brazil has like The Iguazu Falls, Amazon Rainforest, the city of Bonito, The Pantanal Region.

Two Natural Wonders Of Brazil

EXERCISES

Have you ever thought about taking a trip across Brazil? Well, here is your chance!

Chapada dos Veadeiros

If you enjoy ecotourism and trekking, don't miss Chapada dos Veadeiros in Goiás, Brazil. Over 200 km from Brasília, the capital of Brazil, the region has the largest concentration of quartz crystal in the world and also a wonderful landscape, including high waterfalls, natural swimming pools (with chilly waters, around 17°C) and hot spring water. You may spot emus, toucans, woodpecks, wolves and if you're lucky, leopards and deers. Inns and restaurants are simple but pretty decent. The main town that gives access to most of the private properties in which the waterfalls are located is Alto Paraíso de Goiás (5,000 inh.). Near the National Park is São Jorge, a small village (600 inh.) which is loved by alternative tribes.

(<http://projectplatpus2.blogspot.com:80/>)



Chapada Diamantina

A billion years ago, when the sea still flooded the Brazilian Northeast, Chapada Diamantina, located 285 miles from Salvador, Brazil, saw the climatic variations of its landscape universe. In more recent times, its lands have produced gold, diamonds and tourmalines, which enriched the Portuguese crown. A scene of touching ecological originality, composed by tall structural slopes, besides the rich flora and fauna, emerges from the twisted and monochromatic scrub savanna of Bahia's inlands. Through Chapada's paths appear environments full of surprises: rivers that run over the rocks and form natural pools with colorful water, waterfalls, but nature's masterpiece there is the Enchanted Well: a 655-foot descent into the cave takes us to this deep well with rainbow colors.

(TAM magazine – year 4 n° 38 April 2007)



Discuss in pairs.

What kind of expectations do you believe tourists from different parts of the globe would have about Chapada dos Veadeiros and Chapada Diamantina?

What are the most-visited attractions in your country (natural or man-made)? Are they being damaged by tourism? Is anything being done to preserve them?

Answer the questions.

1. The two places use the word Chapada. Can you infer the meaning of this word?
2. Look at the map of Brazil and find the places where Chapada Diamantina and dos Veadeiros are.
3. What are the differences between the two descriptions?
4. There are some words related to environment. Match the word with its meaning.

Flora	ground that has a natural incline, as the side of a hill
Fauna	A steep fall or flow of water in a watercourse from a height.
Slope	low trees or shrubs collectively.
Waterfall	the plants of a particular region or period,
Savanna	the animals of a given region or period considered as a whole
scrub	grassland region with scattered trees, grading into either open plain or woodland, usually in subtropical or tropical regions.

Going out: the Brazilian way

Exploring Critical Incidents: Cultural misunderstandings

Target groups: Young adults and adults / General English contexts.

Level: this activity can be adapted to suit all levels.

AIMS

- to “decentre learners from their everyday habits of thought” (Corbett:2003:113)
- to engage learners in exploring social and cultural differences and similarities; attitudes and opinions

Procedure

Elicit any vocabulary from the text your students may not be familiar with.

This activity explores cultural values and attitudes through role-play. It presents an everyday situation in the lives of Brazilians, going out. It intends to get learners to reflect upon the ordinary by putting themselves into someone else’s shoes in order to explore possible opinions and values, thus, “decentring learners from their everyday habits of thought” (Corbett:2003:113)

1. Students read the text first and, then, you can start a discussion with the two questions which follow the text. Once you believe you can move into role-play, you can let students know if they are going to be student A or student B. Do a second role-play and have student A be student B this time and vice-versa.

Intended Outcomes

The discussion on the first two questions which follow the text should lead to the idea of misunderstandings, incidents and how often do students believe this kind of situation happens with the most ordinary situations. Also, what is the relation between these incidents and language, interactional conversations, for instance. Is it important to engage on cultural background knowledge in our globalized world? What are student’s opinions about this incident? How can they value the opinions of others?

The role-play:

Stefan wouldn’t have known that Brazilians may arrange a meeting for 9 p.m. and arrive at 11 p.m. believing this is ok – it is a common practice – avoiding misunderstandings and hard feelings Brazilians should have been aware that they were dealing with a student who may not share ‘Brazilian’s time’. So they should have kept to the time they’ve arranged the meeting or explained to Stefan that he could arrive any time he wished, the important thing was that they’d meet at some point during the night.

Further research

Set up a ‘critical incident’ project with your students. They should come up with the text and some possible questions.

Going out: the Brazilian way

EXERCISES

1. Read the text below on your own, then discuss the questions, in pairs or groups. Your teacher is going to tell you if you are student A or student B.

Stefan has moved to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, for six months as part of an undergraduate exchange programme between his university and a Brazilian university. He has started this week, the first week of semester 2, but his class has been together for the whole of the first semester already. They all know each other quite well but Stefan feels a bit like a fish out of water. It is the first time he is abroad for that length of time, not mentioning he is at the other side of the world from his home town. His classmates gave him a very warm welcome to the group, told him if he had any problems or if he wanted any tips of Rio, just let them know. The Brazilian students decided to arrange a social gathering at a bar so that Stefan could get to know everybody better over a few beers, so to make this 'academic encounter' easier and pleasant for him. Stefan felt quite surprised, stunned in fact. The meeting, then, was to take place at a particular bar between 8 and 9pm and everybody confirmed they were going.

Stefan arrived at the bar 8:15pm and there was no one from the group there. He decided to sit down at the bar and have a drink while he waited but the waiter soon took the stalls from the bar and asked him to get a table. So, he did. He started his second beer at around 9pm, still on his own. By 9:30pm two of the girls showed up, he felt a bit better but asked – "Where's everybody?" One of the girls replied – "They must be on their way." By 9:50pm Ana, one of the girls, receives a text message from Marco saying – HEY ANA WILL BE THERE SOON, MYSELF AND PAULO JUST CAME BY TO JOANA'S PARTY. Ana showed Stefan the message but he couldn't understand what was going on, after all they arranged to go out together.

It is 11:30pm, no one has arrived and Stefan, very upset, decides to leave. Ana and Paula, then, decide to go somewhere else – "This bar is a bit boring, isn't it?" says Ana.

Next day at university Marco, Paulo and some others ask Stefan – "What happened to you man? We got there and we couldn't see you?". Stefan, quite annoyed, replied – "What happened to YOU?"



What happened here?

What is your opinion about this situation?

STUDENT A

You are the exchange student. How could you explain the Brazilians' behaviour?

STUDENT B

You are one of the Brazilian students. How could you explain the exchange student's behaviour?

Forró Dance

Target groups: Teenagers / Adults. General English Context.

Level: Pre-Intermediate to Advanced.

AIMS

- Students will learn about and appreciate the history, characteristics, and significance of a specific dance style
- Students will get in contact to some of the features of other culture..

Procedure

Teachers will have to do this activity in a computer lab or in a room with internet, because we will need to watch some videos showing how forró dance is danced.

Ask students to read the text, watch at least one of the videos and do the activities.

Ask students to do a research essay on different dance styles. Collect information, photos and videos focussing on the dance style's history, characteristics, and significance to society.

Display the essays, or have students present them to the class so that the class can get some exposure to information on a variety of forms of dance.

Encourage students to teach their dance styles to the rest of the class.

Intended Outcomes

- Students will recognize develop qualities of co-operation and respect for others through knowledge and understanding of dance in world cultures.
- Students will appreciate the role of dance in the community.
- Students will recognize and develop qualities of co-operation and respect for others through knowledge and understanding of dance in world cultures.
- Students will appreciate the aesthetic inherent in dance.
- Students will express themselves through dance from reading and interpreting a song.

Further research

Students can get some videos at <http://www.youtube.com>, with lessons on how to dance forró, or they can only watch people dancing.

Forró Dance

TEXT

Forró Dance

Forró is a kind of popular Northeastern Brazilian dance, as well as a type of music which accompanies the dance. Both are much in evidence during the annual Festa Junina (June Festival).

Origin of the term

One theory popularly held in the region is that the word forró is a derivative of the English expression "for all" and that it originated in the early 1900s. English engineers on the Great Western Railroad would throw balls on weekends and classify them as either only for railroad personnel or for the general populace ("for all"). This belief was somewhat reinforced by a similar practice by USAF personnel stationed at the Natal Air Force Base during World War II. Most Brazilians, when interviewed, state that they view this theory as the truth.

The second theory puts forró as a derivative of forrobodó, meaning "great party" or "commotion". Forrobodó is believed to come from the word forbodó (itself a corruption of fauxbourdon), which was used in the Portuguese court to define a dull party.

There is a third theory that it also comes from the number of the engine that the English engineers used as they roamed the tracks of the railroad supervising the construction, "40" or "Four-oh" that was corrupted by the Brazilians into "Forró".

Forró is the most popular genre in Brazil's Northeast. It has evolved into a number of subgenres. Traditional forró, played with only three instruments (accordion, zabumba and a metal triangle), is now known as forró pé-de-serra. This traditional forró was created by Luiz Gonzaga, who transformed the baião (a word originated from baiano and assigned a warm-up for artists to search for inspiration before playing) into a more sophisticated rhythm. In later years, forró achieved popularity throughout Brazil, in the form of a slower genre known as xote.

Styles of forró

There are three rhythms of forró, xote (a slower-paced rhythm), baião (the original forró) and arrasta-pé (the fastest of the three), and amongst these, many styles of dancing, which varies from region to region, and may be known by different names according to the location. "Forró is danced in partners, usually man and woman, close together. The man's right leg is between the woman's legs and her right leg is between his. His right arm wraps around her waist and he holds her right hand with his left hand off to his left side. Dancers move in sync with one another. One step is as follows: for the man (opposite for the woman) are simply right-left-right,(hold), left-right-left, (hold) and repeat. Another basic step is two steps to the left and two steps to the right, while varying direction each time, to dance in a circle. There are also many more complex steps. Often, as in much of South American dancing, the woman is spun in various ways by the man. One can learn by watching a couple dancing and paying attention to the hips. They are key."

Other styles may require to stay partially away, or in a considerable distance, only holding their hands up the

shoulders. Influences from salsa and other Caribbean dances has given mobility to forró, with the woman - and occasionally the man - being spun in various ways, although it's not mandatory to spin at all, and more complex movements may prove impossible to be executed in the usually crowded dancing area of forrós.

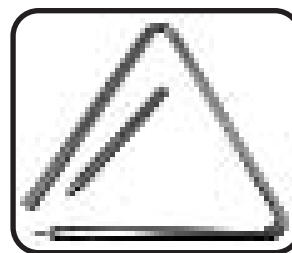
Forró lyrics are usually about love and romance, passion, jealousy, or reminiscing about an ex-lover. They often are about Northeastern themes and the longing or homesickness (saudades) that was often experienced during migrations in search of work. An example of this are the lyrics to perhaps the most beloved song by Luiz Gonzaga "Asa branca" (White Wing) in which the singer says he will return home when the rains fall again on the dry, barren land. They will know he is coming when they see the certain white winged bird of the savanna that only arrives when it rains.

(source: <http://www.wikipedia.org>)

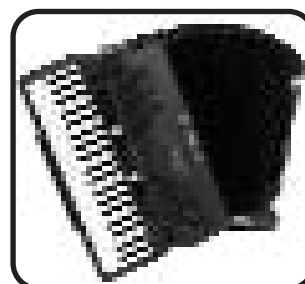
Musical instruments used to play forró



zabumba



metal triangle



accordion

Forró Dance

EXERCISES

Activities:

1. Read the song White Wing.
2. Discuss the significance of each line of the song.

White Wings - Asa Branca – Luiz Gonzaga
 When I stare the ground of
 My land
 Burning loose as dancing flames
 I asked man there upon
 The heavens
 If I deserve me this kind of pain
 I asked the man there upon
 The heavens
 If I deserve me this kind of pain
 Everywhere the ground is so dry
 There's no trees, no green, just red
 I lost my cattle, my apaloosa
 For lack of water some took away
 I lost my cattle, my apaloosa
 For lack of water some took away
 Even white winged birds flew away
 Flew away from my land sight
 It was when i said goodbye
 Sweet rosie
 Keep in to your heart, this heart
 Of mine
 It was when i said goodbye
 Sweet rosie
 Keep in to your heart, this heart
 Of mine
 Many thousands miles away, now
 Feeling lonely, lost and blue
 I keep on waiting rain falls again there
 So I'll be back thou home again
 I keep on waiting rain falls again there
 So I'll be back thou home again
 When the glow green of your eyes
 Flows again all over land
 I can assure you, so don't
 You cry, no
 'cause i'll be back, see
 To you again!!
 I can assure you, so don't
 You cry, no
 'cause i'll be back, see
 To you again!!

Ask:

1. **What is your interpretation of the song?**
2. **How does it make you feel?**
3. **What does the author mean when he says:
 "If I deserve me this kind of pain"**

3. **Choreograph a dance based on your interpretation of the song . It can be any style of dance.
 You may use music to perform the dance.**

Pan American Games

Target groups: children (from 8 to 11 years old). General English contexts.

Level: Pre-Intermediate to Advanced.

AIMS

- to think about the event that happens every four years and brings together people from the Americas.
- to examine vocabulary.

Procedure

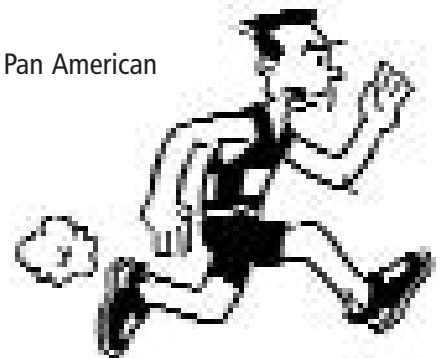
Before giving the handout to the class, ask students to list some sports they might know of, that is normally played in their countries, or to any other countries they know. Write the name of the sports on the board and check if they know the nationalities and the flags related to each nationality.

Intended Outcomes

To raise students and teachers awareness of this event that occurs in the Americas and learn more about sports and nationalities. -

Further research

Ask students to research about the participation of their country on the Pan American Games and which sport they won more medals.

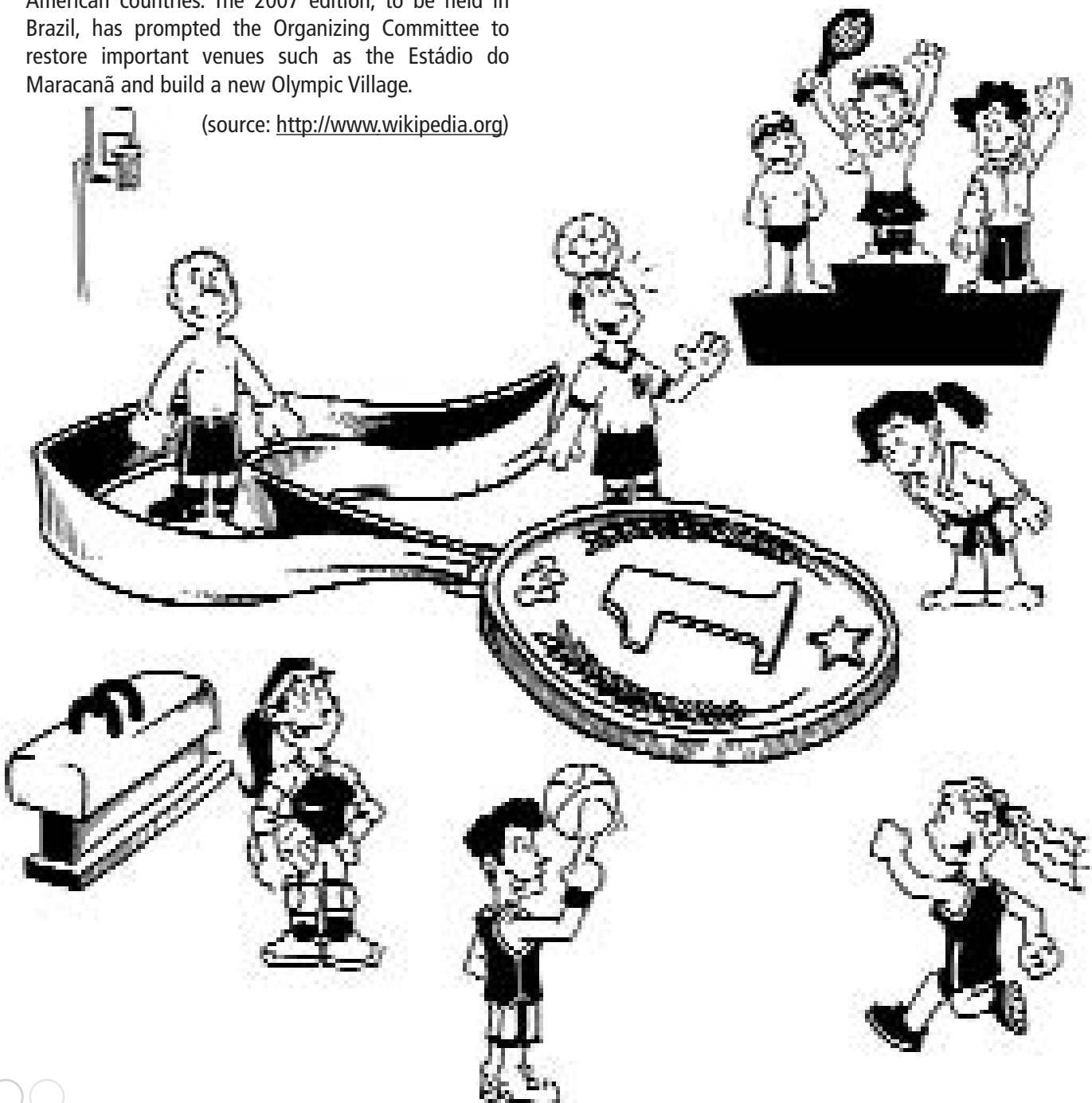


Pan American Games

THE PAN AMERICAN GAMES

The Pan American Games are a multi-sport event, held every four years between competitors from all nations of the Americas. The first Games were scheduled to be staged in Buenos Aires in 1943, but World War II caused them to be postponed until 1951. Since then, the Games have been held every four years, with participation at the most recent event at over 5,000 athletes from 42 countries. Generally, the Pan American Games receive plenty of attention in most Latin American countries. The 2007 edition, to be held in Brazil, has prompted the Organizing Committee to restore important venues such as the Estádio do Maracanã and build a new Olympic Village.

(source: <http://www.wikipedia.org>)



















Pan American Games

EXERCISES
I – Answer the questions:

- How often do the Pan American Games happen?
- Where were the first Games?
- Where is it going to be in 2007?
- Do you think it is important for a country to host Pan American Games? Write the advantages and disadvantages.

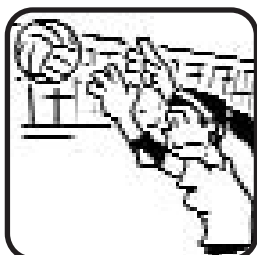
II – Look at the flags and write the name of the country where the Pan American Games were and will be held:
PAN AMERICAN GAMES

Year	Games	Host City	Country	Flag
1951	I	Buenos Aires	_____	
1955	II	Mexico City	_____	
1959	III	Chicago	_____	
1963	IV	São Paulo	_____	
1967	V	Winnipeg	_____	
1971	VI	Cali	_____	
1975	VII	Mexico City	_____	
1979	VIII	San Juan	_____	
1983	IX	Caracas	_____	
1987	X	Indianapolis	_____	
1991	XI	Havana	_____	
1995	XII	Mar del Plata	_____	
1999	XIII	Winnipeg	_____	
2003	XIV	Santo Domingo	_____	
2007	XV	Rio de Janeiro	_____	
2011	XVI	Guadalajara	_____	

(source: wikipedia.org)

Pan American Games

III – Write the words under the pictures with the names of the sports:

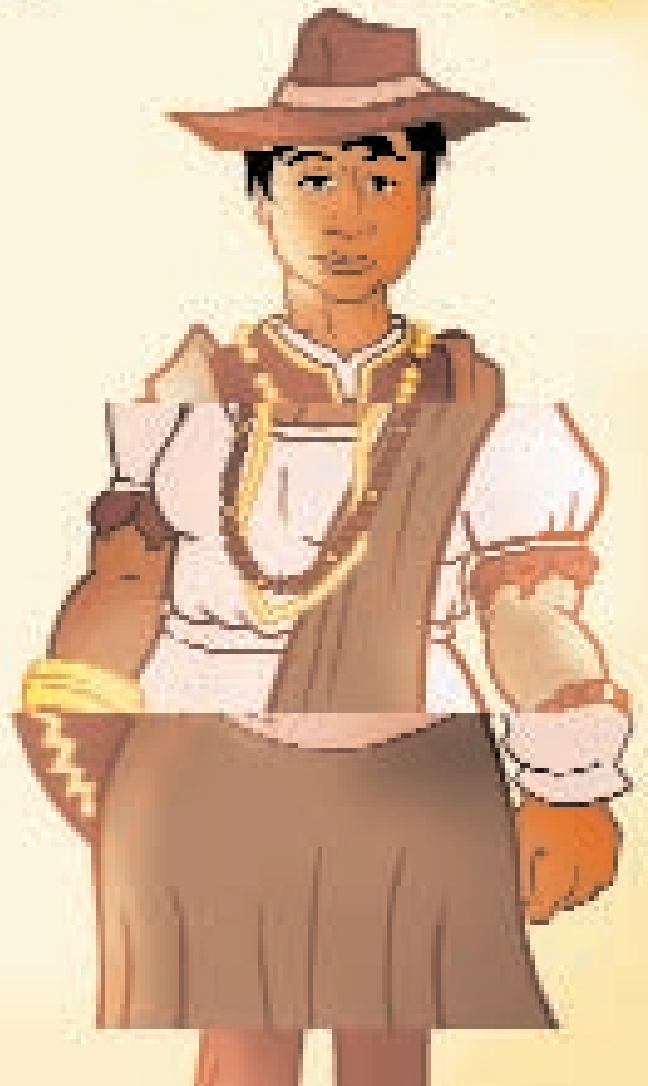


IV – Look at the letters in the wordsearch and write the names of 10 sports.

SPORT

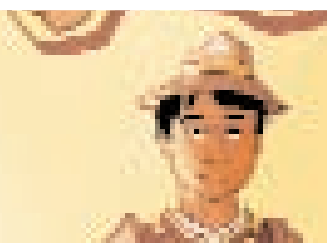
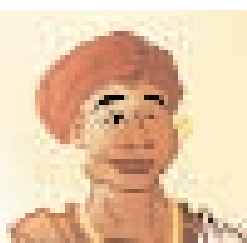
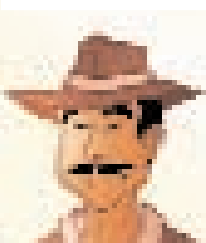
C	W	I	M	M	I	N	G	B	S	L	W	O	B
Y	R	U	B	B	Y	F	L	O	R	A	D	U	A
C	T	O	Y	S	M	P	U	X	C	N	S	R	D
L	S	S	K	U	A	S	H	I	N	T	C	I	M
I	R	T	C	U	R	R	I	N	G	H	E	T	I
N	O	S	G	M	E	O	M	G	E	H	R	Y	N
G	T	F	L	O	G	T	L	R	S	I	D	L	T
R	U	N	N	I	N	G	Y	O	P	X	A	U	O
V	O	L	L	E	Y	B	A	L	L	A	R	A	N
O	S	I	C	N	R	T	E	N	N	I	S	V	S
S	I	M	O	N	O	J	E	A	O	O	S	L	T
S	H	O	T	P	U	T	I	N	J	L	L	O	A
O	D	U	J	M	T	L	L	A	B	T	O	O	F
F	O	S	P	E	E	D	W	A	Y	Y	O	P	E

- ARCHERY;
- BADMINTON;
- BOWLS;
- BOXING;
- CYCLING;
- FOOTBALL;
- RUNNING;
- JUDO;
- TENNIS;
- VOLLEYBALL.



Challenging Stereotypes

Whenever we talk about culture there are two stereotypes to break: the one that culture could be Culture and the stereotype of each nationality that we carry in our minds, either consciously or unconsciously. This section makes us reflect on such stereotypes and even laugh at ourselves as we produce them.



Negative Etiquette

Target groups: Teenagers and adults. General English Contexts.

Level: Pre Intermediate to Advanced.

AIMS

- to help learners reflect on stereotypes about their own national culture and how it is seen from other countries.
- to make them produce advice for visitors to their country that they can use in order to avoid critical incidents.

1. First students work in groups to discuss sets of behaviour that they would consider inappropriate in a visitor. Ask them to grade the behaviour, from completely unacceptable, to acceptable but dispreferred (5 being unacceptable, 0 acceptable to dispreferred).

2. The drawing activity aims at making them reflect on the views (even graphic) that others may have of different people in their country and to see whether these are generalisations.

3. Finally, using the text about Scotland as a source, they are asked to produce a Negative Etiquette for visitors to their own country. Reference to work such as George Mikes' book about England may provide some further humorous input and inspiration!

Mikes, George, 1946 How to Be an Alien: A Handbook for Beginners and More Advanced Pupils

Negative Etiquette

EXERCISES

1. What sets of behaviour would you consider unacceptable from a foreigner visiting your country?

Is it an idiosyncratic feeling or do you think other people your age would feel the same way? What about someone your parents' age?

Make a list, as comprehensive as possible, of possible "blunders".

2. Challenging stereotypes

- Which of the blunders you mentioned would be related to stereotypes of your own nationality other people may have?
 - How do you think foreigners see people from your country?
 - Draw the following stereotypical people from your country, the way you feel they are seen by foreigners, according to the following parameters. Add some relevant key words to your drawings:

- a) an upper class person from your capital city
- b) a middle class person from a smaller town
- c) a working class person / a rural worker
- d) a typical young person from your country (choose any social sector)
- e) a typical TV/ sports personality from your country. Who would be representative?

Show your pictures to other groups in the class and account for them.

3. As Corbett (2003: 110) says:

(...) in a textbook about Scotland, targeted at EFL learners, David Maule includes the following list of "seven ways to annoy the Scots" (Maule 1989: 26-7):

1. Use England instead of Britain, or English instead of British.
2. Use British instead of Scottish.
3. Use Scotch to refer to people.
4. Pretend never to have heard of Robert Burns.
5. Say it would be better if the UK had one football team instead of four.
6. Talk about men wearing skirts.
7. Imitate the local accent.

Now write your own "seven ways" in order to produce a negative etiquette of your own nationality. Try to make it sound as funny as possible!

Greeting Manners

Global Greetings

Target groups: teens, young adults. Business and General English Contexts.

Level: Intermediate.

AIMS

- To explore global ways of greetings
- To be aware about Global greeting styles

Procedure

1. Introduce the concepts of manners when meeting somebody for the first time.
2. Start a discussion on rude and polite manners in your country (it depends in your context, if it is a multilingual class, you can group students by common language: Spanish, French, etc, even if they come from different countries and they speak the same language they can find differences and similarities in this aspect)
3. Set the students to work in pairs. Cut the numbered paragraphs from the page named "Global greetings" that is separated by countries, and give each pair a country paragraph.
4. Have pairs act out the different ways expressed in the paragraphs, and encourage the rest of the class guess where that greeting is from.
5. Set up a discussion on the different greeting styles.
6. Elicit how they would react in an international context if they do not know how to greet in that context, and have groups act out an "Introducing each other" role-play.
7. Ask learners to produce a class code of "Introductions" catalogue.

Note: No handout is necessary for this activity

Greeting Manners

Global Greetings

EXERCISES

Italy

Italians greet friends with two light kisses on the cheek, first the right and then the left. Even if you are merely acquaintances, this form of greeting is usual, both on arrival and on departure. When groups are splitting up, expect big delays as everyone kisses everyone else. When being introduced a handshake is usual, although not necessarily the firm businesslike shake other nationalities may be used to.

Finland

When greeting, the parties shake hands and make eye contact. A full bow denotes special respect — in normal circumstances, a nod of the head is enough. A Finnish handshake is brief and firm, and involves no supporting gestures such as touching the shoulder or upper arm. Embracing people when greeting them is rare in Finland. A man greeting someone in the street should raise his hat; in the cold of winter, a touch of the hand to the brim of the hat is enough.

Canada

In Canada when introduced to another person for the first time, it is common to be offered a firm handshake. Greetings go along with a smile and eye contact throughout the course of the introduction and conversation. Canadians are generally an informal culture with respect to forms of address. First names are typically preferred to last names.

Germany

German culture can be quite formal and hierarchical, so titles, honorifics, and last names are commonly used in introductions. Germans offer a firm, but brief, handshake as a greeting. Handshakes between a man and a woman or between two women will likely be less robust. It is customary for people to also shake hands upon departing from one another. Eye contact is generally expected during the course of the introduction and conversation.

France

The French culture is a formal culture. This applies to the language spoken and greeting styles. The usual French greeting is a quick, lightly gripped handshake. An overly firm handshake may be considered impolite. When leaving, a handshake is repeated to say goodbye. Proper etiquette dictates that visitors should greet and shake hands upon arrival and departure with everyone, including children. Friends and family will often exchange a quick kiss on both cheeks.

Brazil

Brazilians are typically a friendly and informal culture. Smiles and other pleasantries accompany most introductions. The "social" kiss consists of a kiss on each cheek. Men and women greet each other with a kiss and women greet one another with a kiss. Men do not tend to kiss; rather, they shake hands while giving a pat on the shoulder with the other hand.

Argentina

Argentineans are known to be politely formal when first greeting one another. A handshake accompanied by a slight nod of the head is a respectful greeting at first introduction. Men and women usually greet each other with a handshake. Many Argentinean women use both hands in handshaking. Often, this is accompanied by a kiss on the cheek.

Venezuela

A firm handshake is a common greeting among acquaintances and strangers. Venezuelans use their hands to communicate or emphasize a point. It is polite to maintain eye contact throughout a conversation. In less formal settings, men and women and woman and woman usually kiss each other's cheek, men shake hands and pat their shoulders.

Japan

Bowing, a gesture of respect, is probably the feature of Japanese etiquette that is best known outside Japan. When dealing with non-Japanese people, many Japanese will shake hands. Greetings are considered to be of extreme importance in Japanese culture, a lazy greeting is regarded with the type of disdain that would accompany a limp handshake in parts of the West.

China

Shaking hands is more popular and appropriate on some formal occasions. Bowing is a way to convey respect, however, at present Chinese youngsters tend to nod as a greeting. China is a relatively non-physically expressive country; however, in today's China, the greeting of a handshake has become commonplace. It is gentle, may last as long as 10 seconds, and is usually combined with a slight bow of the head while the eyes may be lowered to express respect or to avoid confrontation. This is a sign of respect and deference. Staring deeply into the eyes of a Chinese person is inappropriate.

India

The *namaste* is the traditional greeting in India among Hindus. Interpreted literally, the *namaste* is a greeting that recognizes the holiness in each person, as it suggests, "I salute the god in you." A *namaste* is conducted by placing the hands together in a prayer-like fashion, holding them close to the chest and bowing the head slightly, while saying "namaste." The eyes are also lowered as a gesture of humility and trust. The handshake is also used quite frequently, either as an addition to the *namaste* or as an alternative to it. The handshake will likely be quite soft. A loose-grip handshake is more a reflection of a need to appear modest rather than a sign of insincerity.

'Samba de Roda'

Exploring musical genres

Target groups: Young adults and adults. General English contexts.

Level: Pre-Intermediate to Advanced.

AIMS

- to investigate a particular musical style of Brazil, and its relation to other Brazilian and or Latin American genres
- to reflect on particular cultural identities/behaviour present in each musical style
- to examine possible stereotypes related to musical styles

Procedure

1. Before giving the handout to the class, ask students to list some typical musical styles they might know of, that can be musical styles related to their own countries, related to a particular region of their own countries or to any other countries they know. Give them a few minutes to brainstorm this on a piece of paper. Once this is done, ask your class to swap papers around and to read aloud their colleagues work. You can now, lead a discussion on the musical styles presented by your students asking them if they have ever heard of this particular musical style before, if they think this represents the culture of that particular country or region somehow and why/why not, what kind of musical instruments is that particular style related to and what kind of people they believe would listen to or be interested in that particular musical style.

2. Give the activity handout to the class and work on ex.1. Here, it should be interesting to note if students bring out any stereotypical ideas about Samba. For instance, Samba is often associated with carnival and Rio de Janeiro but this can be challenged once you move to ex.2. Work on ex.2 and see if any of your students know of Samba de Roda and its relation to Samba. Samba de Roda is the first variant of samba, born in the state of Bahia in Brazil and said to be the foundation basis for the samba as a musical style on its own, samba from Rio de Janeiro, for instance, and the school of samba (institutionalized samba/carnival samba). Samba de Roda is played with the use of pandeiro and cavaquinho (small 4 string instrument of the guitar family) and it's associated with capoeira dance.

Wikipedia. Moura, R. (2005). *No Principio era a Roda - um estudo sobre samba, partido alto e outros pagodes.*

3. To reflect on particular cultural identities/behaviour present in each. After students match the countries to the musical style, you can start this reflection by leading a discussion on, for instance, how is the dance presented E.g. close, sensual, distant, etc. Brazil – Bossa Nova(softer variation of samba)/ Samba/ Samba de Roda/Samba-Cancao(romantic slower version of samba)Chile – Cueca/ Andean MusicCuba – Salsa/ RumbaColombia – CumbiaArgentina – Tango/ MilongaVenezuela – Llanera/ Gurrufio/ MerengueMexico – MariachiDominican Republic – MerenguePeru – Criolla/Andean MusicHere, it might be interesting to look at the two distinct merengue styles from Venezuela, with the use of drums, and Dominican Republic, played with horns and accordion. Also, Samba cancao is said to present a similar style to Tango.

Intended Outcomes

To raise students and teachers awareness of Latin America's musical genres, particular cultural identities present in each, how natives and non-natives relate to each particular style as well as challenging some possible stereotypes in this context.

Further research

www.bahia-online.net/TheMusicandDanceScene.htm

www.caravanmusic.com/GuideLatinMusic.htm

Propose a research project with your group on some of the genres mentioned or any other aiming for a reflection on particular cultural identities and behaviour expressed through musical genres.

'Samba de Roda'

Exploring musical genres

EXERCISES

Latin America presents a wide range of musical genres. Some styles may be particular to one country or region while others may be associated to more than one area. Musical genres may inherent or present characteristics from one another or even be considered as the foundation base for the birth of yet other styles. Some musical styles are, also, often associated with distinctive social stratas and/or urban cultures, and this can sometimes, project a stereotypical idea about them.

1. Have you ever heard of Samba? Have you ever listened to a Samba song?

Brainstorm around the word Samba. Write down any concepts you can associate Samba with.

2. Have you ever heard of Samba de Roda? Have you ever listened to a Samba de Roda song? Are these two musical genres related in any way? How?

3. Match the musical styles to the country(ies) you believe they are related to.

Salsa	Cuba	Andean Music
Cueca	Chile	Criolla
Bossa nova	Brazil	Merengue
Tango	Colombia	Cumbia
Samba-canção	Venezuela	Mariachi
Samba	Argentina	Llanera
Rumba	Peru	Samba de Roda
Milonga	Dominican Republic	Samba de Roda
	Mexico	

Are there any similarities among the above musical genres? (e.g. instruments, dance, clothes, rhythm, etc)

4. Reflect on the dance style associated with each musical genre.

Do they tell you anything about the 'general mood' of people in each country?

If so, do you believe such representation could lead to stereotypes?

Masquerade

Target groups: Preteens and teens. General English contexts.

Level: Beginners and Lower intermediate.

AIMS

- To foster intercultural awareness among groups or subcultures in a country.
- To overcome prejudices that separate them from others.
- To gain knowledge on different subcultures.

Procedure

1. Start by asking learners about the different groups they can see in their country (skaters, homeless, elderly, people with tattoos and piercings, ska band fans, rastas, etc). Write each name they give on top of the board as the head of a category.
2. Have students choose one, and draw this person.
3. Ask students to show their drawing and to tell partners why they drew it that way.
4. Ask students to tell you characteristics of these groups and write them under the corresponding category.

Prejudice: <http://www.m-w.com/dictionary/>

2 a (1) : preconceived judgment or opinion (2) : an adverse opinion or leaning formed without just grounds or before sufficient knowledge b : an instance of such judgment or opinion c : an irrational attitude of hostility directed against an individual, a group, a race, or their supposed characteristics

Stereotype:

2 : something conforming to a fixed or general pattern; especially : a standardized mental picture that is held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or uncritical judgment

5. Discuss with students the meaning of the words Prejudice and Stereotype.
 - a) What's prejudice? Stereotype?
 - b) Why does it exist? Lack of knowledge?
 - c) Are we sure these characteristics we wrote belong to these groups? How do you know?
 - d) Is there a person/group you are prejudiced from? What do you know about them?
6. Assign the following project for another class session.

Project: (Instructions for the students)

1. Choose a person from a subculture in your country that you don't know well.
2. Search about this subculture.
3. Draw a mask with an image that represents the culture and/or disguise in a costume that represents it.
4. Tell your class why you chose it and what it represents for you, how you felt and what you learned.

- Outline a large map of your country and stick it to a wall in your classroom.
- When students finish speaking about their person have them glue the masks on the map as a collage.
- Ask them what this action means.
- Elicit a title for the map (e.g we are different, but we belong and compose this nation).

Note: No handout is necessary for this activity. You may give out the instructions for the project on page 2.

Masquerade

EXERCISES**Project: (Instructions for the students)**

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Rio de Janeiro - BRA

Critical Readings Of Culture

Looking at the world through an intercultural perspective inevitably proposes looking at it critically. When we focus on identity and difference, we focus on right and privilege and on alternative readings –never only one- of a given phenomenon. This section aims at opening the scope by making us enhance the ability to produce such readings.

4

Social Diversity, a cultural contrast

Exploring realities: looking up at Rio's slums

Target groups: Young adults and adults / all contexts.

Level: this activity can be adapted to suit all levels.

AIMS

- to promote critical cultural awareness through critical readings of culture
- to explore different social realities in order to promote reflection upon cultural values and attitudes
- to challenge stereotypes

Procedure

This activity requires the use of the internet. If you do not have access to the internet in the classroom, you can do part 1 of this activity in class, then get your students to do parts 2 and 3 at home and bring in some reflections to your next meeting so you can carry on the discussion.

1. Part 1 can be done in pairs or small groups. Encourage your students to answer these questions and comment on them in a quite detailed manner.

2. In part 2 you can basically talk about anything in relation to Rio's slums. It's important you let this be quite spontaneous so that you don't lead a discussion towards any particular issues, e.g. crime, poverty, etc. You can do this as a general exchange of information or as a brainstorm type of activity.

3. You could find part 3 to be a little sensitive or distressing to some, so if you are watching this as a group it could be interesting to observe students reactions, little comments to colleagues, body language, etc. Alternatively, if students watch this on their own, you might expect some strong opinions coming up in the class or even some not turning up. We all have different actions and reactions, so it's important to make sure students feel they are in a safe space to express their feelings and views about this video. You can lead the discussion with the first question at the end of the worksheet or leave it open for students to start manifesting themselves first.

Some data:

- By 1930 there were 12 slums in Rio
- The name favela came about around 1920s
- Slums have a culture of their own; social and political
- Some slums developed into neighbourhoods
- Some projects created in Rio the concept of favela-bairro , neighbourhood slum

Intended Outcomes

This activity intends to raise students and teachers intra and intercultural awareness by exploring different social realities and reflecting upon cultural identities and behaviour. It attempts to engage students in critical readings of cultures by encouraging critical cultural awareness in order to avoid cultural bias and challenge stereotypes. Rio's slums can be often associated with crime and poverty but also reveals its beauty through the works of thousands of residents in art, education and health projects. A successful discussion will explore, for instance, differences and similarities between Latin American slums, between Rio's slums and world slums, can look at styles of social and cultural interaction , the attitude of locals and foreigners towards guided tours inside Rocinha and the relationship between slum and city.

Rocinha was classified as a neighbourhood in 1993 and now is said to have around 250.000 residents.

Further research

If there's interest in carrying on some research into Rio's slums, you can use the sites below. They contain a lot of information about the lives, organizations, education and projects of Rocinha. Through the videos and comic strips you can also explore the social functions of language. You can access all comics in English from the site.

Comic strip and video used for this activity are available to anyone through the sites below.

www.cambito.com.br

www.vivafavela.com.br

Silva, Maria Lais Pereira da, 2005. Favelas Cariocas-1930-1964. RJ. Contraponto. *Favela Five Times*, the film.

Social Diversity, a cultural contrast

Exploring realities: looking up at Rio's slums

EXERCISES

1. Have you ever been to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil?
If your answer is yes, then move to questions in box A.
If your answer is no, then move to questions in box B.
You can work in pairs or small groups for this activity.

BOX A	BOX B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What was the purpose of your visit? (Holiday, business, etc.) - Which places did you visit? Why did you choose to visit these sites? Did you like it? Why? Why not? - What did you think of Rio de Janeiro? - Would you visit Rio again? Why? Why not? - Would you live in Rio? Why? Why not? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is Rio a place you would visit? Why? Why not? In which context (holidays, business trip, etc)? - Which places do you believe you would like or wouldn't like to visit in Rio? Why? Why not? - Is Rio a city you would consider living in? Why? Why not?

Looking up at Rio's slums

2. Look at the comic strip 9 at www.cambito.com.br/comicstrip/?tirinha=9
What do you know about Rio's slums, 'favelas'?

3. You are going to watch a short animation which portrays some aspects of the life of Rio's slum – Rocinha – the largest hillside slum of Latin America with 250,000 inhabitants. This video was created as part of a site called Cambitolândia, which in turn is part of a web site, www.vivafavela.com.br, a project developed by the NGO Viva Rio, aiming to promote digital inclusion in the slums, information democratization and a reduction of social inequality, thus, challenging favela stereotypes.

To access the animation please refer to www.cambito.com.br/comicstrip/filmes

And click on the film REFLEX.

- The boy in the animation is Cambito who lives in Rocinha. (Creation of Otavio Rios, 2003- copyright by Viva Rio).
You can read more about him as well as all other characters at www.cambito.com.br/comicstrip/personas.htm

Discussion:

- a) What does this animation represent?**
- b) How important do you believe it is to promote this intra and inter cultural awareness? In which contexts and for whom?**
- c) Do you believe to be possible for stereotypes to be challenged by exploring and reflecting on particular cultural identities and behaviour?**

Our World Heritage

Target groups: Pre-teens / Teens. General English contexts.

Level: Pre-Intermediate.

Brainstorming

- On the board, write the word UNESCO or show their logo.
 - Elicit vocabulary from students related to the work they do around the world regarding children, education, etc
 - FYI (For Your Information)
 - UNESCO in Wikipedia - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UNESCO>
 - UNESCO Portal - <http://tinyurl.com/ykzn2w>
- Ask students these questions:
 - What do the letters stand for? United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
 - What do you know about this organization? Lead the discussion on World Heritage.
- Show students the World Heritage logo
 - Lead this activity to discuss their global work on preserving cultural and natural sites by declaring them World Heritage sites.
 - FYI (for your information) - <http://whc.unesco.org/en/about/>
- Show students a photo of the Grand Canyon #1 (If you want to change the site, you can check their list <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list> At this point use any other country but not yours. If you do so, take into account you will have to change the first reading)
- Brainstorm words related to the pictures and any in the reading your students may not know
- Ask the students comprehension questions you would like to check comprehension regarding the reading, and these:
 - Who does it belong to?
 - Why, according to your viewpoint, did the UNESCO declare this monument as World Heritage?
- Show students photo #2 , and ask:
 - What can you see in this photo?
 - Do you know where it is?
- Pre-teach any vocabulary from the text your students may not know.
- Ask students any comprehension questions regarding the reading, and have them in pairs discuss those in the handouts.
- Set the students in groups, and have them discuss and prepare a nomination to World Heritage for any place they have mentioned in the previous activity, and have them publish it online (blogs) and/or in colourful posters in the school.

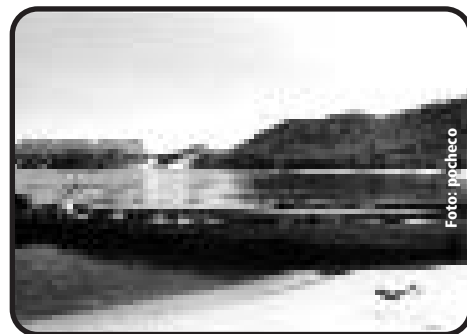
For the nomination

Ask them to write one paragraph describing the place, location, age, population, and another paragraph giving arguments to favor the declaration of this site as a World Heritage Site. Have them include pictures or drawings of the place.

AIMS

- to share geographical similarities among countries, and understand the importance of preserving natural places for the future

Note: You can show the photos with an OHP, or a PPP.





1. What do you know about UNESCO World Heritage program?

Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona

Carved out by the Colorado River, the Grand Canyon (nearly 1,500 m deep) is the most spectacular gorge in the world. Located in the state of Arizona, it cuts across the Grand Canyon National Park. Its horizontal strata retrace the geological history of the past 2 billion years. There are also prehistoric traces of human adaptation to a particularly harsh environment. Humans have been part of Grand Canyon's history for almost 12,000 years. The beauty that draws people to the canyon today also brought American Indians. The Grand Canyon we visit today is a gift from past generations, and we understand what this great gap passes to us—a sense of humility born in the interconnections of all that is and a willingness to care for this land. We have the responsibility to ensure that future generations have the opportunity to form their own connections with Grand Canyon.

Canaima National Park

Canaima National Park is spread over 3 million ha. (the size of Belgium) in south-eastern Venezuela along the border between Guyana and Brazil. Roughly 65% of the park is covered by table mountain (tepui) formations. The tepuis constitute a unique biogeological entity and are of great geological interest. The sheer cliffs and waterfalls, including the world's highest (1,000 m), form a spectacular landscape. On the 12 June 1962 became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1994 because of the Tepuis (table-top mountains) that are characteristic of this area. The most famous Tepuis in the park are Monte Roraima, the tallest and easiest to climb, and Auyantepui, from which fall the Angel Falls, the highest waterfall in the world. The Tepuis are sandstone and date back to a time when South America and Africa were part of a super-continent. The park is home to the indigenous Pemon Indians, part of the Carib linguistic group, which are in fact made up of three groups spread over such a large area. The Pemon have an intimate relationship with the Tepuis, and believe they are the home of the 'mawari' spirits.

1. Which similarities can you find between this place and the first one?

2. Is it important to preserve them? Why?

3. What can you do to save them?

4. How many World heritage sites are there in your country, natural or cultural?

5. Do you have a natural place in your country you would like to preserve for future generations?

6. How would this site connect you with your national identity?

In groups, prepare posters to propose different sites to be a World Heritage site, and show them in your school.

A common heritage for all people, and a responsibility for each and every one

World heritage is the collective property of humanity and not only that of the country where the sites are located. Even if the nation is its rightful owner, the responsibility for its protection is international.

This responsibility lies with all citizens of the world, all fully indebted to the present and to the future. We are all responsible: the people who live at the sites, tourists who visit them, specialists who study them, the media which speaks of them, the States who manage them and the States Parties to the World Heritage Convention. The concept of universality is our common concern, as only collective action can protect our heritage.

Wide recognition of a site contributes to its survival: it will benefit from the care of those who are directly responsible for its management; it will be better protected if, unfortunately, a conflict should arise; it will have greater protection from acts of destruction committed in the name of fanatical ideology. Responsibility lies with each young person to be acquainted with and to make know the sites of his/her country, thus investing them with a sacred and inviolable character.

Environmental Issues

Target groups: teenagers /adults. General and Business English contexts.

Level: Pre-Intermediate to Advanced.

AIMS

- to think about the ways in which their environment has been changed by people and the ways their lives are affected by the environment.

Procedure

Bring in pictures of different aspects of rainforests and brainstorm on the board what a rainforest is, what is the importance of rainforests, the reasons for deforestation of the rain forests. Discuss this with the class. Next, brainstorm reasons why we should save the rain forests. Discuss with the class why a rainforest is so important, the disadvantages to destroying the rain forest, who they are being destroyed by and why they are being destroyed and talk about how the inhabitants might feel.

After that read the texts and discuss the ideas proposed on them. Do the activities.

Intended Outcomes

Students will learn to appreciate the importance of the environment for the maintenance of a good life in our planet.

Students will gain a deeper appreciation for the problems that have been affecting the world related to climatic changes.

Students will recognize the importance of the rain forest to other cultures.

Rain forests are important to people all over the world. Students most know what is happening to the Amazon rainforest.

Students will become aware of the importance of saving the rain forest.

Environmental Issues

TEXT
Text 1
The Amazon Forest

The Amazon rainforest, also known as Amazonia, is one of the world's greatest natural resources. Because its vegetation continuously recycles carbon dioxide into oxygen, it has been described as the "Lungs of our Planet". About 20% of earth's oxygen is produced by the Amazon rainforest.

The Amazon rainforest gets its name from the Amazon River, the life force of the rainforest. The Amazon River begins in the Peruvian Andes, and winds its way east over the northern half of South America. It meets the Atlantic Ocean at Belem, Brazil. The main river is about 4,080 miles long. Its drainage basin covers 2,722,000 million square miles, and lies in the countries of Brazil, Columbia, Peru, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, and the three Guyanas.

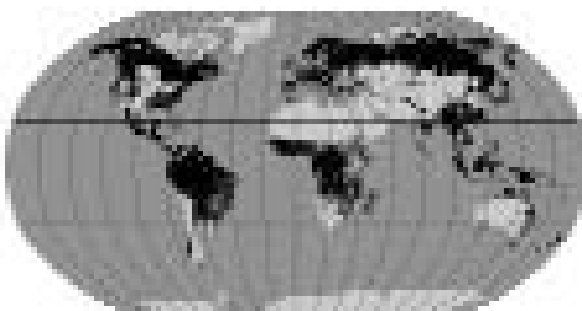
The world's largest tropical rainforest, Amazonia covers more than half of Brazil. The canopy of Amazonia is less studied than the ocean floor. Scientists believe that the canopy may contain half of the world's species. Over 500 mammals, 175 lizards and over 300 other reptiles species, and one third of the world's birds live in Amazonia.

Native peoples of the Amazon rainforest have used different plants for centuries as cures and potions for their health and survival. Scientists are now discovering that many of the plants are sources for new drugs for AIDS, cancer, diabetes, arthritis, and Alzheimer's. Quinine, muscle relaxants, steroids, and cancer drugs have already been discovered. Today 121 prescription drugs sold around the world come from plant-derived sources. Although 25% of all drugs are derived from rainforest ingredients, scientists have tested only 1% of tropical plants.

Another concern for Amazonia is the fate of its indigenous people. An estimated 10 million Indians were living in Amazonia about five hundred years ago. Today there are less than 200,000 indigenous peoples left in Amazonia. More than 90 tribes have been destroyed since the 1900's. Most of the shamans and medicine men remaining are 70 years old or more. With them goes a wealth of knowledge of medicinal species of plants and organisms.

(<http://www.blueplanetbiomes.org/amazon.htm>)

1. Look at the map and find where the Amazon Forest is.


Text 2
The Disappearing Rainforests

- We are losing Earth's greatest biological treasures just as we are beginning to appreciate their true value. Rainforests once covered 14% of the earth's land surface; now they cover a mere 6% and experts estimate that the last remaining rainforests could be consumed in less than 40 years.

- One and one-half acres of rainforest are lost every second with tragic consequences for both developing and industrial countries.

- Rainforests are being destroyed because the value of rainforest land is perceived as only the value of its timber by short-sighted governments, multi-national logging companies, and land owners.

- Nearly half of the world's species of plants, animals and microorganisms will be destroyed or severely threatened over the next quarter century due to rainforest deforestation. There were an estimated ten million Indians living in the Amazonian Rainforest five centuries ago. Today there are less than 200,000. In Brazil alone, European colonists have destroyed more than 90 indigenous tribes since the 1900's. With them have gone centuries of accumulated knowledge of the medicinal value of rainforest species. As their homelands continue to be destroyed by deforestation, rainforest peoples are also disappearing.

Text 3
Rainforest Action

- Experts agree that by leaving the rainforests intact and harvesting its many nuts, fruits, oil-producing plants, and medicinal plants, the rainforest has more economic value than if they were cut down to make grazing land for cattle or for timber.

- The latest statistics show that rainforest land converted to cattle operations yields the land owner \$60 per acre and if timber is harvested, the land is worth \$400 per acre. However, if these renewable and sustainable resources are harvested, the land will yield the land owner \$2,400 per acre.

- If managed properly, the rainforest can provide the world's need for these natural resources on a perpetual basis.

- Promoting the use of these sustainable and renewable sources could stop the destruction of the rainforests. By creating a new source of income harvesting the medicinal plants, fruits nuts, oil and other sustainable resources, the rainforests is be more valuable alive than cut and burned.

- Sufficient demand of sustainable and ecologically harvested rainforest products is necessary for preservation efforts to succeed. Purchasing sustainable rainforest products can effect positive change by creating a market for these products while supporting the native people's economy and provides the economic solution and alternative to cutting the forest just for the value of its timber.

The following has been excerpted from the book, *The Healing Power of Rainforest Herbs* (Square One Publishers, Inc. Garden City, NY 11040, © Copyrighted 2004) By Leslie Taylor

Environmental Issues

EXERCISES
Activities
Rainforest Word Chop

1. Directions: The table below contains words that have been chopped in half. Find the pieces that fit together and write them in the answer area below.

Nat	indig	ive	vation
itation	eco	Na	tion
missi	Cult	logy	inable
Medi	onary	cinal	Precip
ural	log	ging	susta
enous	exp	Conser	loit

2. Organize a poster which includes information about the Amazon rainforest and what is being discussed about it all over the world.

Rhea americana

Target groups: from 10 to 12 years old. General English contexts.

Level: Elementary.

AIMS

- to reflect on a particular animal and the problem of extinction
- to recognize words and phrases connected with animals.

Procedure

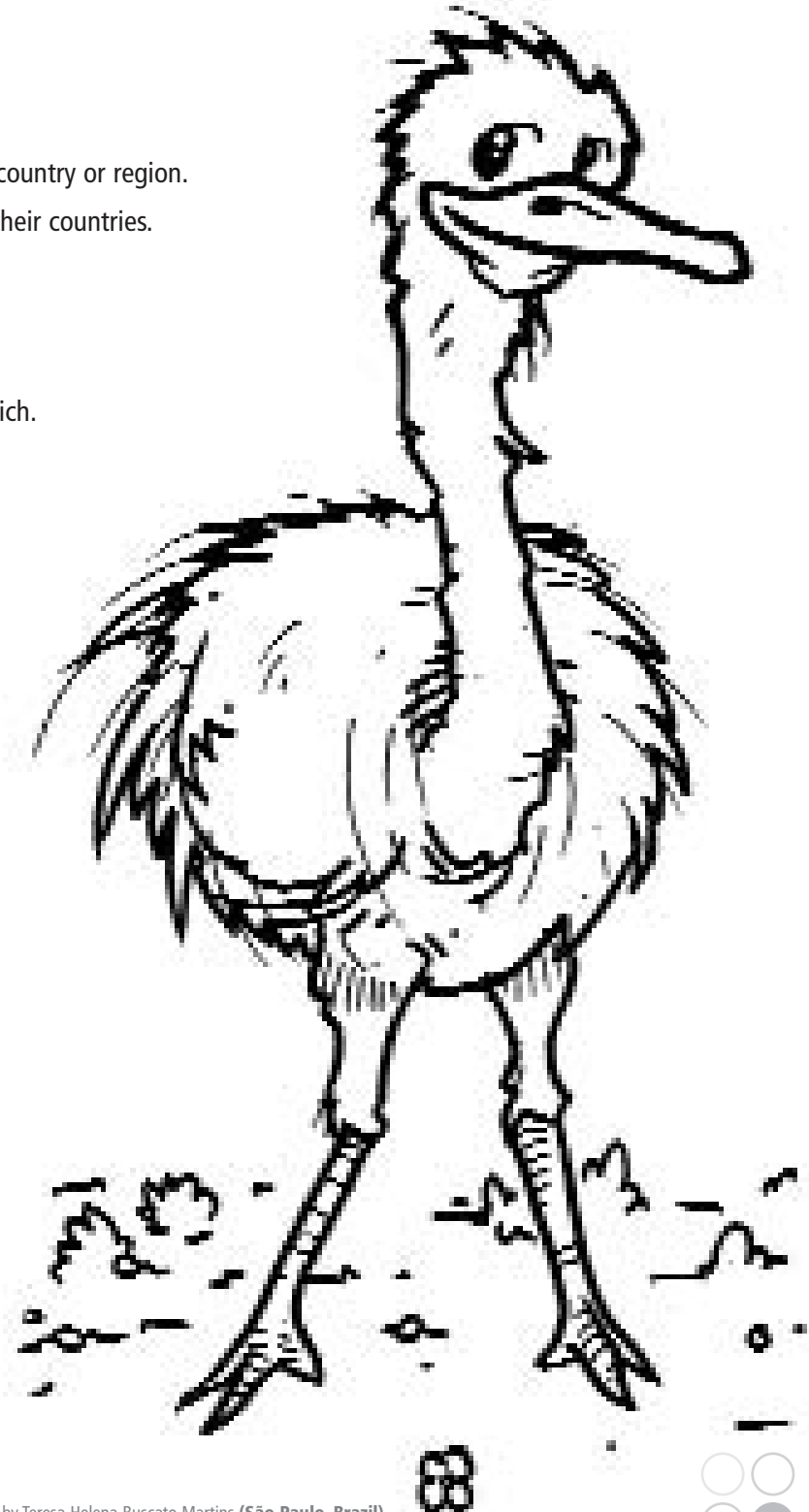
Let the students read the text and elicit the meaning of the words they don't know.

Intended Outcomes

A study of endangered species of their own country or region.
If there's any similar animal like the ema in their countries.

Further research

The differences between an ema and an ostrich.



Rhea americana

The Rhea, (*Rhea americana*) is also known as ñandú in Spanish, or ema in Portuguese and is considered the largest Brazilian bird. Although it has big wings, it can't fly, with adults averaging 25 kilograms (55 lbs) and 129 cm (51 inches) long. Rheas have only three toes. This is an adaptation which allows them to run faster than if they had four like the ostrich. Male rheas are very territorial during breeding season. The infant chicks are highly intolerant of toxins, having high mortality in typical farming situations. Baby chicks under optimum conditions will grow to four feet tall by their fifth month and is being considered an endangered species. Their feeding is composed mainly for leaves, fruits, seeds and insects. They walk and graze searching for small animals to eat and they also eat small stones or pebbles to assist in the trituration of the food. They are important dispersive of plants as they eliminate the seeds in excrements. Emas are prominence in the Brazilian folklore where their feathers are used in the presentation of a popular dance named "bumba-meu-boi" and they are found in pre-historic rupestres drawings in the north-eastern part of Brazil.

I – Reading comprehension:

1. Circle three things that rheas eat.

Turkey leaves popcorn seed lettuce insects



2. What is unusual in their feeding habits?

3. Which is the adaptation that allows rheas to run very fast?

II - Animals Vocabulary Quiz

habitat

the act or process of becoming or making extinct, or of being ended or putting an end to.

conservation

an animal that feeds on plants.

carnivore

the act of preserving and protecting from loss, destruction, or waste.

extinction

the natural environment of a plant or animal.

herbivore

to feed on growing grass and pasturage, as do cattle, sheep.

graze

a flesh-eating animal, esp. a meat-eating mammal.

III – Writing activity

I'd like to be a/an (animal) _____ because _____.

1. Choose an animal you would like to be. Pretend you are this animal.

2. What do you eat?

3. Where do you live?

4. Describe your natural enemies.

5. Do humans help or hurt you? Why?

EAP writing,

to adapt or not to adapt?

Target groups: EAP students in any context.

Level: Upper Intermediate to Advanced.

AIMS

- to engage students in critical reflection as regards the conventions of Academic writing and genre choices.
- to look at different situations from an empathetic point of view while analysing case studies.

Procedure

1. Students are first asked about their own experience in L1, as researchers, readers and/ or students. Then they are asked to reflect on target culture conventions.
2. Students are now encouraged to carry out genre analysis of some article introductions. Introductions in Spanish for example tend to be longer and show more digression than introductions in English. Students are asked to check whether this assertion holds true in the sample they analyse. They then contrast their findings with the CARS model¹ in order to see the function of each section of the introduction.
3. Now students are asked to think critically and discuss the questions. They will do this by using OSDE Methodology².
4. Finally, they will analyse the case study (following Casanave's "Virginia" case study, cited in Corbett, 2003) in groups and try to reach a conclusion as to different options and solutions to the student's problem.

¹ Swales, J. 1990. Genre Analysis English in academic and research settings. Cambridge: CUP.

Swales, J. 2004. Research Genres: Exploration and Applications. Cambridge: CUP.

² <http://www.osdemethodology.org.uk/>
I was introduced to this wonderful methodology by Vanessa Andreotti (University of Nottingham) during Hornby Summer School Brazil 2006 and Critical Literacy Winter School 2006.

EAP writing, to adapt or not to adapt?

EXERCISES

1. Are you aware of any conventions about Academic writing in your own language that are specific to your culture? And to the culture of Anglophone countries?

2. Genre analysis: paper introductions.

a) **Choose a set of journals in your own language in a given discipline. Collect ten introductions of papers. Compare their structures. Can you identify any "moves" they share?**

b) **Now go into Google Scholar and conduct a search for articles in English in a similar topic from different international journals. Choose 10 articles and analyse them. Can you identify the same moves?**

c) **In terms of Swales (1990) CARS model, do you think introductions in both languages adjust to it? Are researchers trying to find their own space as the model suggests?**

3. Answer about you:

a) **Do you think it is necessary for international students and researchers to adjust to anglophone academic culture in terms of conventions?**

b) **Do you think it is necessary to learn those conventions in order to become a researcher?**

4. Case study:

Discuss the following case study in pairs:

You are an English teacher. A student of yours who is a researcher, tells you that s/he has written an article for an international journal but feels unsure about the introduction s/he has written. S/he knows it is too long, and digressive but somehow cannot make it shorter and to the point. It is not within her rhetorical tradition. What would you advise her/ him to do? Write down a set of suggestions to be issued in the tutorial.



The Media

Culture is mediated and constructed through the Media, reinforcing everyday social construction and producing a complex interaction of discourses. This section aims at looking at the media as a mirror and a producer of culture.



The Beauty and the Media

Target groups: Young adults, and Adults. General English contexts.

Level: Intermediate.

AIMS

- To explore how the media influence on forming opinions.
- To challenge media stereotypes about women.

1. Show students the photos from this site <http://www.patriciavelasquez.com/welcome.html>
2. Tell them this lady is a Venezuelan model, and her name is Patricia Velásquez.
3. Ask students to describe her.
4. In pairs, have students make up a biography for her: background, profession, job, hobbies, etc. (For instructor information: read the information given below about her)
5. Have students read or tell the others about their texts, and write on the board, as a list the main points they mention.
6. Brainstorm vocabulary related to the text below your students might not know.
7. Have students read the text.
8. Ask any questions related to reading comprehension, and:
 - a) How different is your made up biography and the real one?
 - b) Do you think that what you have read in magazines about models influenced your viewpoint regarding the biography you wrote for Patricia?
9. Start a discussion on how the media lead to set stereotypes about pretty women.
10. Set a homework-research in which students choose a famous movie star, singer or model (not necessarily from their own country) and find out their life behind scenes.

Patricia's foundation site:

<http://www.wayuutaya.org/about.htm>

The Beauty and the Media

EXERCISES

1. What do you know about famous people's lives? Talk to the class about your views.
2. Look at the photos your teacher will show you. In pairs, make up a biography for her, and discuss it with your teacher and partners.
3. Read the following text:

Patricia was born in Guajira, one of the poorest regions in Venezuela, on January 31, 1971. From a modest background, with schoolteacher parents, not to mention the fifth child of six, Patricia's life was far from luxurious or glamorous. Patricia had planned to work in the oil industry when, by chance she was spotted by a model scout and launched into a modelling career because of her exotic looks. She left for Milan in pursuit of a modeling career. Up until that point, the closest Patricia came to a modeling experience was her participation in beauty pageants in her native Venezuela, which didn't affect her upcoming modeling. She then turned to films "The Jaguar", "The Mummy", "The Return of the Mummy", and took advantage of her success to become involved in humanitarian projects. She founded the "Wayuu Taya Foundation" in 2003 to help the indigenous people of her region, to whom she is related through her mother.

As she explains her Foundation has succeeded. "Our goal," she goes on, "is to develop educational programs focused on nutrition, health care and basic job training."

Discuss with your teacher and partners.

- **Does this text confirm what you wrote about Patricia?**
- **How different is your made-up biography and the real one?**
- **Do you think that what you have read in magazines about models influenced your viewpoint regarding the biography you wrote for Patricia?**

4. Choose a woman artist/model/singer that you don't know very well, and research about her life. Share your finding with your partners.

Gender issues

Target groups: Adults in any context.

Level: Pre Intermediate to advanced.

AIMS

- to make students reflect on the state of affairs as regards gender issues in their own culture and compare this with the situation in other cultures.
- to encourage them to use the media (films, cartoons, TV shows) as a source for analysis.

Procedure

1. First students are asked to spend some minutes thinking of this topic and write some sentences, short ones if possible, about gender issues in their country. It will be evident that it is very difficult to generalise and it will be necessary to reflect on sub-cultural differences.

2. Students should read their sentences aloud one a time, around the class, and another student should give their opinion about what the sentence said. This student is appointed by the reader. It should be a brief statement of opinion, as general discussion will happen later in the class.

This activity should be fast and leave a lot unanswered.

3. Students work in groups discussing examples in the media. They prepare a short questionnaire and the teacher helps them upload it onto a blog. A weeks later, they will be reading comments in the blog and this should happen for three weeks, for a few minutes at the end of a class.

4. Finally, they prepare a poster for the rest of the school, reporting on the blog, citing its URL and describing the experience.

EXERCISES

1. Take some minutes to reflect on your culture in silence.

What are the attitudes there as regards men and women and their roles in society?

Make some notes, in the shape of three sentences, that you think express descriptions of the situation as regards this theme in your country today.

2. Cut your sentences into slips of paper. Pass them around. One of your classmates should read a sentence aloud and express their opinion as regards this.

Were many sentences in your class similar?

3. Gender issues in the media:

Think of cartoons, TV shows and films that show gender issues in different cultures. (e.g. Sex and the City, Desperate Housewives, Pride and Prejudice/ Bridget Jones's Diary; Maitena's cartoon in Argentina).

To what extent do you think they are representative of the situations in different countries?

In which social classes/ geographic areas?

Prepare a short questionnaire for students from other countries in order to see how gender issues are displayed in the media in their countries. Make a blog where you will post your questionnaires for people in other countries to answer.

4. After some weeks, prepare a poster for your school noticeboard reporting on the blog and the project.

What were the findings?

Desperate Housewives

Target groups: trainee teachers of English as a Foreign Language.

Procedure and intended outcomes:

1. First students are asked to predict possible similarities and differences between the different versions of the show and explore whether they all like them. Here, it would be relevant to investigate some web sites/ newspaper articles on the restrictions the producers imposed on the adaptation of the show to local contexts the activity could compare other versions other than the Argentinian one, either of this show or others that have been adapted to other contexts.

2. After this they formulate questions on possible differences. It is expected that in doing so they will be exploring cultural differences that they take for granted and possibly express some stereotypes.

3. The watching section:

a) The first part is a note taking activity which engages listening comprehension subskills and a vocabulary focus in relation to cultural issues. The teacher copies all phrases on the board and discusses translations with students. What do they show about the relationship between culture and language? Does our culture shape language or our culture shape our language? What about the degree of formality used? With *fiel*, *tenor* and *mode* being presumably held the same, what is it that is different? (In the websites cited below there is a video trailer and a summary of the first season of the Argentine version for students to watch on the net).

b) Characters. Place. Sets of behaviour. This should lead to some debate on the American way of Life as seen from Argentine/ Latin American eyes, social classes in different countries and subcultures within them.

4. The questionnaire

The questionnaire engages learners as researchers, asking people in general about their views on the different versions. The results should be organised into a mini presentation in which they report on the process of interviewing the people and the product.

5. Finally, students are asked to reflect on their future roles as teachers and how a lesson plan according to two approaches would address the task of using the show as a resource.

Further research

Are there any other sitcoms/ shows that have been adapted in this way? Were they sought to be adapted as closely as this one? Were there any cultural differences that had to be addressed? What about reality shows such as Big Brother?

Relevant websites

<http://www.canal13.com.ar/amasdecasa.asp>

<http://weblogs.clarin.com/amas/>

http://weblogs.clarin.com/amas/archives/2006/09/el_proyecto_un_gran_desafio_1.html

<http://www.clarin.com/diario/2006/02/25/espectaculos/c-01055.htm>

<http://tvdramas.about.com/b/a/246732.htm>

AIMS

-to encourage students to reflect on cultural differences as expressed in different versions of a TV show.

- to engage students in critical analysis of a subculture within their culture and a target subculture.

-to enable students to be mediators between the target culture and their own culture.

-to reflect on cultural differences as expressed in language use

Desperate Housewives

EXERCISES

Are the Latin American Desperate Housewives as desperate as the North American ones?

1. Answer the following questions in pairs:

1. Have you ever watched the American show Desperate Housewives? Do you like it? How many seasons have you watched?
2. Have you watched the Argentine version? Did you like it? Have you watched / do you have any information about any of the other versions?

2. Check some websites the teacher will give you.

3. Watching.

Watch a scene of the first season in two versions and carry out the following tasks.

1. In pairs, formulate a series of questions that you would like to answer by watching the two versions. What differences are you expecting to find (in clothes, mannerisms, language use, sets of behaviour, others)?
2. Now watch the episodes and do the following.
 - a) Transcribe any phrases that are noticeably different from a literal translation.
 - b) Focus on the use of discourse markers, interjections, idioms. Are they very different in the two versions? Do they belong in the same register (think of *field*, *tone* and *mode*, for each instance)?
 - c) Are the characters' traits very similar, different?
 - d) Do the actresses look similar or different? If they are different, who do you feel more identified with, the local versions or the American versions?
 - e) Do the place they live in represent the same kind of social class / values in both places?
 - f) Does the way they live seem to be typical of the way they live in both countries? Why/ why not?

3. Now do some research:

- a) Devise a questionnaire for people in the street about the two versions of the series.
- b) Go out and interview five people. Find out whether they agree with your perceptions or not.
- c) Write a short report on answers to your questionnaire.

4. For next class, prepare a short presentation on the differences you have found between the series based on your analysis and people's perceptions.

5. How would a lesson plan for Intermediate students using the clip incorporate the differences you have found in:

- a) a lesson following the Communicative Approach
- b) a lesson following the Intercultural Approach (Corbett, 2003)

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