



EXPLORADOR

This year, you have the opportunity to travel beyond the Spanish language and explore the rich cultures of the people who speak it! You will:

- **Explore.** Look into Hispanic culture in general. When you find something that piques your curiosity, follow it.
- **Examine.** Narrow your focus; find out as much as you can about it and its development, how it became a cultural phenomenon.
- **Reflect.** Think about why it is significant to its people.
- **Create.** Make a cultural artifact—a physical object that exemplifies what you have learned.
- **Present.** Explain the artifact's cultural significance and what you learned in the process of researching and creating it.

Be prepared to present your artifact, relevant information, and all documentation on:

DATE

Frequently Asked Questions

What is culture, anyway?

Culture is: 1) civilization; 2) customs, traditions; 3) refinement. In other words, culture is the way people live, the practices that reflect their needs, wants, beliefs and values, their aspirations and artistry, their style.

How do I begin?

Look for information about people that live in Spanish-speaking countries. This is available in books, magazines, newspapers, television, radio, film, personal interviews, special events, museums, the internet, etc. The more sources you use, the better! Gradually narrow your focus until you have found a specific culture and aspect of it you would like to know more about.

Is there anything I should avoid?

Avoid superficial or mis-information and stereotype. The best way to assure that your information is reliable is to gather it from a variety of sources, then compare them. You should have at least three separate sources, with a maximum of two from the internet.

What are some examples of cultural artifacts?

A cultural artifact is a physical object used by a group of people that represents a common belief, value, or practice. Clothing, dishes, decorations, foods, tools, crafts, paintings, dances, models, etc. are all cultural artifacts students have made or performed in the past. CDs, collages, PowerPoints, and other such collections are mere compilations of items created by someone else and do not qualify as cultural artifacts for this project.

For example: if you explored the ancient Incan civilization of Perú and discovered that they used the pan flute in their folk music, you might try to make a pan flute to present to your class. You would want to find out as much as possible about the object and the culture that used it in order to answer any questions classmates might have about it.

What do I have to turn in?

On the day of your presentation, you must provide a typed explanation (2-3 pages, paragraphed, double-spaced, 10-12 pt. font) of how you proceeded through your exploration, research, reflection and ultimately, the creation of your artifact. Detail what you learned about the place and people among whom it originated. Finally, assess your project's strengths and weaknesses.

For this last step, rate your overall effort 1-10 and explain how you arrived at that conclusion. Be sure to attach any additional evidence of your labor, such as notes, a works cited page, copies of information, time logs, receipts, ticket stubs, pictures, diagrams, etc. Although these are optional, they show your effort and can improve your score.

What should I do during my presentation, step-by-step?

Before your presentation, the teacher will hand you a card with the following direction for your reference.

1. Introduce yourself and the focus of your research.
2. Explain your research process and what you learned about the culture.
3. Show your artifact, explain its significance and detail how you made it.
4. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of your project and rate your effort, on a scale of 1-10.
5. Thank your audience for listening and ask if there are any questions.

How will my project be scored?

Your overall project grade will depend upon the following:

- the depth/breadth of what you learned, evident in your presentation
- presentational skills and performance during Q&A
- the apparent quality of and effort invested in your cultural artifact
- how organized, thorough, and neat your written report is

Most of the points are based on your presentation. The more you know about your topic, however, the more confident you will be and the less you will have to worry about distractions.

Do not just read your notes or report during the presentation! This kind of delivery is rarely smooth and tends to be monotonous. Rehearse, but do not try to memorize it. You get hung up on unimportant details you can't remember, lose your place, then botch the presentation. Focus on learning and let the information come to you during your presentation. Do not worry—it will come.

Do not worry about specific names, dates, or pronunciation of foreign words. Avoid interrupting the flow of your presentation by asking the teacher how to pronounce something or apologizing to the audience for shortcomings.

Before you present, spend some time thinking about what you have learned. How does it differ from your own experience and reality? Imagine how it is important to someone in the target culture or how it would affect you if it were a part of your life.

Once you have finished your cultural artifact, consider what went well or poorly during on your project. What would you do differently if you had the chance to try again? Envision a successful in-class presentation. Use the project checklist to assure you meet all of the requirements.

Most important: do not procrastinate! Start early, ask a lot of questions, and you will do well. ¡Suerte!

EXPLORADOR PROJECT

VLNTR ASSIST	/	NO.	TOT.	TOPIC	START	STOP	TOTAL		
E G F P				BODY	AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT				
				Posture	loose, rigid, sulky, grips, leans, sways				
				Hands & Feet	fidgets, grooms, pockets, freezes, shifts				
				Eye Contact	evasive, downcast, beyond, riveted				
				Demeanor	agitated, detached, indifferent, reluctant				
E G F P				VOICE					
				Clarity	stutters, mumbles, mispronounces				
				Volume	too loud-quiet, fades in-out, blurts				
				Expression	forced, monotone, not enunciated				
				Pace	protracted, rushed, choppy, pauses				
				Verbal Pauses	and, um, like, so, y'know, other:				
E G F P				LANGUAGE					
				Grammar	inaccurate, misused, repetitive, simplistic				
				Vocabulary	too technical, casual, unsuitable				
E G F P				KNOWLEDGE					
				Information	inaccurate, irrelevant, read, superficial				
				Understanding	states obvious, lacks reflection				
E G F P				ARTIFACT					
				Craftsmanship	undetailed, undecorated, unfinished				
				Authenticity	function, role, significance, relevance				
				Effort	too easy, minimal time, unoriginal				
E G F P				REPORT					
				Format	font, layout, organization, neatness				
				Content	incomplete, insubstantial, plagiarized				
				Research	amount, variety, focus, usage, cited				
				Assessment	missing, brief, insincere, defensive				
TOTALS				COUNTRY• CULTURE:					
				Ex5					
				Gx4					
				Fx3					
				Px2					
				EC					
				DED					
				TOT					
				EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	EXTRA-CREDIT	DEDUCTIONS
				COURTESY					

EXPLORADOR STARTER QUESTIONS

Include this paper in your project; you will not receive a grade without it.

QUÉ	What is the object or topic of your study?
CUÁNDO	When was it first introduced and accepted as a part of the culture? Explain.
DÓNDE	Where was or is it used, practiced, or observed?
POR QUÉ	Why is it important to the culture?
QUIÉN	Who is most heavily affected or involved in its use, practice, or observation?
CUÁNTOS	Discuss the most important and impressive numbers or quantities related to your study.
CÓMO	How was or is it used, practiced, or observed? How has it (or how people think of it) changed over time? How does it reflect the lifestyle, beliefs, or values of the culture?
CUÁL	Which aspect of it most interests or appeals to you?

EXPLORADOR PROJECT CHECKLIST

This year, you will do an individual cultural research or "EXPLORADOR" project. You will research a particular Spanish-speaking people, create a cultural artifact, and present the experience to your teacher and classmates. You may select a topic on your own, but should "know your stuff" when the due date arrives. Your artifact and presentation will reflect the quality of your personal investment in the process.

This project is not the standard "country report" or a matter of memorizing factoids. It should focus on what you have learned about the culture of the country you have chosen and how you conducted your exploration. Refer to the project guidelines often, as you work. Read over the sample written reports. If you're having a hard time finding an interesting topic, ask peers what they are doing, see your teacher, a librarian, or ask your parents for ideas.

Often, students overlook some of the finer details. Run down the checklist below, well before the due date, to make sure you are fully prepared.

Have you done enough exploration? Is your information reliable? You should collect at least three sources of information, with no more than two from the Internet.

Have you selected a unique topic? It's not easy to present information on a topic that has already been done by a classmate.

Have you made a cultural artifact that is your own, original creation? Items like music cd's, collages, and PowerPoint presentations are off-limits because they are only compilations of others' work.

Can you make a clear tie between the artifact and the culture? You should be able to explain how it reflects the people's beliefs, values, and way of life.

Have you prepared a typewritten summary of your project and attached other evidence of your exploration? The summary should be in your own words, explain what you learned, identify the project's particular weaknesses and strengths, and rate your efforts overall.

Have you reviewed the project rubric to make sure that you are entirely prepared and can earn all available points?

Have you rehearsed your presentation? You will lose points if you just read from your notes, so you should make an effort to be something of an expert on your topic and be able to speak about it confidently and naturally. Notes are usually not allowed until the question and answer period after your presentation.

Have you planned to finish your project early so you can get a good night's sleep before presenting it in class? Rest makes all the difference in how you look and feel during your presentation.

Finally, please let me know if you need direction; I am happy to help! Just don't wait until the week before it's due, or there won't be much even I can do to help you!

Good luck and enjoy your project!

Explorador Paragraph Translation

Simplify your writing, so you will be able to deliver your presentation with confidence and so the audience will easily understand. Remember: simplicity is the essence of beauty. Here is an example of how to simplify your presentation:

ENGLISH SAMPLE

My first step in this entire process was choosing Venezuela as my country to research and report on. In all honesty, I chose Venezuela at random without a clear idea of what I wanted to accomplish. My first task was to research a food solely connected to the country itself and how it was connected to its' culture. Trying to find a food artifact took an incredible amount of time and proved to be very difficult, so I was dissuaded from that area of research.

I began general research over Venezuela and began to become more enlightened with their ways and customs. I researched into the geography, people, politics, and religion before deciding to narrow my research into something that I could connect with, the arts. Venezuela has such a huge amount of support for all the different art forms throughout its entirety, it was very interesting to learn about all the various art forms present. One industry I explored was that of the Beauty Pageants, Venezuela has racked up numerous wins as Miss Universe and Miss World with its women.

Although it was very informing to understand how serious they take their appearance and how important beauty is, I decided I wanted to focus on something else. Venezuelans are known for their loud, outgoing nature so it was no surprise to find how important music was throughout the country. Besides producing one of the world's leading salsa bands and having starlet Mariah Carey's father come from Venezuelan influence, they also produced a financed symphony in Caracas. Despite the musical achievements, I kept pushing and researched the variety of museums present, how advanced the literature was and how it was focused on national identity, until I finally came across what my true topic was, the dancing.

TRANSLATION

Mi primer paso en este proceso largo fue escoger Venezuela, un país en que podía buscar información y hacer un reportaje. Honestamente, escogí Venezuela al azar, sin idea clara de qué quería lograr. Mi primera tarea fue buscar información sobre alguna comida únicamente conectada al mismo país y llegar a entender su significado cultural. Este intento me requiso una cantidad de tiempo increíble y me fue muy difícil, así que decidí no enfocarme en ese aspecto de la cultura.

Empecé una búsqueda de información muy general sobre Venezuela y poco a poco sus maneras de vivir y costumbres me iluminaron. Investigué su geografía, gente, política y religión antes de entender que, más bien, debí enfocarme en algo relacionado a las bellas artes. Venezuela apoya tanto las muchísimas formas de arte distintas y fue muy interesante aprender acerca de todas. Una industria que exploré fue la de los concursos de belleza. Las mujeres de Venezuela han ganado varios premios incluyendo los títulos de Miss Universe y Miss World.

Aunque fue iluminante la oportunidad de aprender qué serios son los venezolanos tocante al aspecto físico y la hermosura en general, por fin decidí enfocarme en otra cosa. Los venezolanos se conocen por su naturaleza gregaria. No me sorprendió que la música les importa tanto, a todos, por todas partes del país. Además de tener una de las bandas de salsa más dichosa y de ser el país que le influye tanto al padre de Mariah Carey, también ha producido una sinfonía pública en Caracas. A pesar de esos logros en la música, seguí adelante, enterrándome de la variedad de museos que hay, del avance de la literatura, y de la identidad y orgullo nacional—y, por fin, descubrí el tema perfecto para mí: el baile.

SIMPLIFICATION

English

First, I chose Venezuela for my report. Venezuela is an interesting country. Honestly, I chose Venezuela without an idea of what I wanted to do. I had to look for information about food and learn about its cultural significance. I spent a lot of time and it was hard. Finally, I decided not to study the food.

I looked through really general information about Venezuela. I learned about its customs, geography, people, politics, and religion. I decided to focus on the arts. Venezuela has a lot of different art forms and it was interesting to learn about all of them. One interesting topic was its beauty contests. The women in Venezuela have won a lot of prizes which included Miss Universe and Miss World.

I liked learning about this, but I decided to focus on something else. The Venezuelans are very open and happy people. Music is important to them all over the country. They have a famous salsa band that influenced Mariah Carey's father, for example. They have a public symphony in Caracas. I researched the variety of museums they have, their literature, and more. Venezuelans take a lot of pride in their culture. After looking for a long time, I discovered the perfect topic for me: dance.

Spanish

Primero, yo escogí Venezuela para mi reportaje. Venezuela es un país interesante. Honestamente, escogí Venezuela sin idea de qué yo quería hacer. Yo tenía que buscar información de la comida y aprender de su importancia cultural. Yo pasé mucho tiempo y fue muy difícil. Finalmente, decidí no estudiar la comida.

Busqué información muy general sobre Venezuela. Aprendí de las costumbres, geografía, gente, política y religión. Decidí enfocarme en las bellas artes. Venezuela tiene muchas distintas formas de arte y fue interesante aprender de todas. Un tema interesante es los concursos de belleza. Las mujeres de Venezuela han ganado varios premios que incluyen Miss Universe y Miss World.

Me gustó aprender de esto, pero decidí enfocarme en otra cosa. Los venezolanos son personas muy abiertas y felices. La música es importante para ellos, en todas partes del país. Tienen una banda de salsa muy famosa que influyó el padre de Mariah Carey. Tienen una sinfonía pública en Caracas. Investigué la variedad de museos que tienen, la literatura, y más. Los venezolanos tienen mucho orgullo en su cultura. Después de buscar muchas horas, descubrí el tema perfecto: el baile.