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Explorador Project
Spanish 2
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Pablo Picasso

I decided to do my exploration project on Pablo Picasso because he is a very famous artist and public figure. Pablo Picasso stood up for what he believed in and painted his pictures to represent much of what his beliefs were. Picasso protested bombings and other acts of war during the Spanish Civil War. His paintings showed anger and despair because of his anti-war feelings. Later on during World War II, Pablo joined the Communist Party because he believed they did a better job at fighting the Nazis. I admire Picasso for his positive attitude and independence. He did not go along with "peer pressure." Many Spanish people also agreed in his beliefs and followed him. Not only did his paintings leave an impact on Spanish culture, but his freedom and beliefs did as well. I first decided to do my project on Picasso because I like his art. Many art critics in his lifetime did not like his style of art and could not understand it. His popularity grew as he got older and older. After he died, his paintings sky-rocketed in their value and popularity.

I did not know that Pablo Picasso was such a strong and independent person. I pictured him as a quiet, old man who kept to himself. I also did not know that many of his paintings represented his thoughts about war and fighting. During Picasso's Blue Period, his paintings were all done in shades of blue to show themes of loneliness and despair that Spain felt.

After deciding that I was going to do my project on Picasso, I began researching. I found out that Pablo Picasso was born in Malaga, Spain in 1881. I searched on the internet because that was the most readily available source I had at the time. I found many legitimate websites that were full of information and pictures of his paintings. I printed out the information from the websites so I could read and compare them. The requirements for this project state that I can only use two internet websites for sources, but I used four because of the pictures of paintings that I wanted to use. I downloaded many pictures from those websites. I believe the pictures of Picasso's paintings contribute a lot to this project because they present a sort of visual story of Picasso and the culture of Spain.

The next thing I did for my Explorador project is search in the World Book Encyclopedia. I found a great article about Picasso's life and contributions to the art industry and culture of Spain. I cited that article about Pablo Picasso in my pictoral essay. I then read the bibliography from the Encyclopedia article and found that there was a story about Pablo Picasso in a 1980 version of Time Magazine. The article had some useful information but was more of a history story of Picasso. I gathered all of my information and began to write.

My pictoral essay was fairly easy to write after I had gathered all that information. I was very careful to not plagiarize. I carefully read the articles, found what I needed, wrote in my own words, and cited sentences that could not be rewritten. I looked at different types of Picasso's work and finally chose a picture of a person showing large features and bright, contrasting colors. I then did my own version of one of his paintings, and I have included a copy of it with mine in this project. I used markers instead of paints because it was what I had available to use. I then scanned my original into the computer and cleaned it up some and printed a copy. Then, I could compare my original with the computer copy I made and also with a copy of Picasso's painting.

Jacob Larimore
Explorador Project
Spanish 1
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The Tango

The research and decision of my topic was almost the majority of the project, my artifact, of course, taking the longest. The main reason it took so long is that there are many topics to choose from when exploring a country as large as Argentina, and when you want to pick a topic that is unique to the country it is often difficult to find sufficient amounts of information concerning it. The information that was hard to find for my topic was lessons on how to dance the Tango because for lesson you had to either order a book, go to a seminar, or pay using a credit card, which I do not have.

At the turn-of-the-century, Argentina began to acquire many immigrants from Europe and Africa, many of them poor. They were like a social outcast, only with a culture more rich than most. These groups of people over time formed a new social class called the "portenos." Using their homeland roots along with that of Argentina's the group began to form their own type of music called the Tango and from that came the Tango dance, the Tango is a dance of passion, elegance, and skill.

The people who dance the Tango used it as a tool to lash out against society, specifically against prostitution. The music had no lyrics and was mostly impulsive, and was looked upon in disgust by society. Over time however, society became more accepting of the music, understanding the deeper meaning of the music and dance, and it became popular. Also over time, the music itself changed, for example, most songs now have lyrics. Slowly, Tango swept the world, today you can take Tango classes almost everywhere and everyone can recognize the music.

My artifact is the Tango dance itself. The dance is very elegant and powerful, somebody once said "Tango is something else than a soft wave turned into music, it is the deepest dance in the world." The dance is very complicated, takes years to learn and perfect, but even longer to understand. The dance is an expression, it is years of history packed into an elegant, and passionate dance.

I didn't make an artifact; I learned an artifact which I believe is more accommodating to learning the material. To learn the dance I found lessons on the internet, downloaded them and watched and listened carefully. Often the moves are very fast so I watched repeatedly until I mastered some of the moves. The dance gets very complicated, there are twenty lessons and because they are so complicated and take so long to learn I only made it through lesson 3. However, I believe that what I have learned is a sufficient amount to understand what the dance is like.

Some of my strengths and weaknesses of the project might be that I was weak to start when I did, which was much too late, and which I regret. However, I had some good strengths as well, such as a broad research range because I didn't have a clue what I wanted to do my project on. My biggest strength would have to be my artifact because of the time and effort that was put into learning such a complicated dance. I also hope it will help people to understand the passion of the dance.

If I had to rate myself I would give an 8.5 to a 9 because I believe my research was strong because I explored many different aspects of Argentina before deciding on one. I also believe my artifact is very strong, the strongest part of my project. I think the dance provides visual aid to help the people in the class understand the cultural meanings of the dance. I am also proud that I was able to teach myself such an incredible dance.

Lauren Hendrickson
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Guatemalan Textiles

As I first began to explore the country of Guatemala, I decided to focus on something that would spark my interest as well as the rest of the class's interests. Finding information that was out of the ordinary was challenging, so I went along with a traded good and highly common hobby of many women. In Guatemala, many of the women find embroidering and hand-crafting textiles to be a worthwhile pastime.

Researching the subject was actually easier than I expected. I found quite a bit of information on the internet. The internet had a bunch of information on what exactly was made. These hand woven textiles have many different patterns and designs. Simple designs would include strips of different colors woven together, and the complex designs would consist of animals or shapes. Their colors range from black and white, to bright colors like yellow and orange. Some textiles are of such great quality that they have been studied by scholars at various museums and universities. The women of the indigenous backstrap loom are the creators of such beautiful creations.

Textiles have been traded in Guatemalan cities for centuries. These textiles have other purposes as well; they have been used for clothing for centuries. Although they were once a part of the traditional dress, it is slowly becoming a dying art. You would rarely see men walking down the streets of Guatemala in traditional clothing. However, there are a good percentage of the indigenous people that still wear their traditional attire, but styles of that age are fading.

These textiles are very important to the Guatemalan population. The practice of hand-crafting these wonderful creations have been a part of their history forever. Trading them has made them well known and important parts of our country as well. The bright colors and interesting designs and shapes reflect the Guatemalans culture and tell us that they have a positive outlook on their lives.

For my cultural artifact, I chose to re-create a Guatemalan textile. To start, I began by buying felt for the main section of the textile, and then used household ribbon for the other parts of it. Since the pictures I had seen of the textiles from Guatemala had vibrant colors and unique designs, I used vibrant colors as well and put a little twist on things. The one I made was also quite smaller than the original textiles. This artifact took quite a while to make considering all of the sewing and cutting that was involved; I can only imagine how long it would take the women of Guatemala to make an entire blanket or a piece of clothing. But in the end it turned out really well and made a resemblance to the original item.

Overall I think I did a good job on this project. Once you get into it, it seems really easy and entertaining. I think that my topic was interesting and fun to research. I actually enjoyed making the textile itself, even though it was very time consuming and took a lot of effort to make it nice and orderly. This project was fairly easy, but it does take some time to make it look good.

The Quena

When I started my Explorador Project I had music in mind because I have always loved music. So I signed up for the country Peru and started looking for the musical side of Peru. Justin Erickson came to me and said he had found something interesting. The thing he found was called a quena, a flute used in Peru and other parts of South America. So we found out we needed some bamboo to make the flute, or animal bone which we really didn't want to put our mouths on bones. So, I remembered that at the house we moved into this summer, there is about an acre of woods on the property. In the woods, the previous owner had planted bamboo, and it was very big. The plant we got our flutes from was around 20 to 25 feet tall.

Justin found out that before we made the actual instrument, we had to dry it out a little bit. So we chopped down the bamboo in about mid-September. The bamboo was finally sufficiently dry enough to make the instrument in about mid-November. So this means it took about two months after being chopped down to be dry enough to make an instrument out of, even though it would be better if the bamboo was drier.

So to make the quena, after it was dry enough, Justin and I got together at his house. We first used a saw to cut the bamboo to the correct size. Then we used a drill press, saw, and dremel to make a notch at the top to work as a mouth piece. Since it was kind of hard to get sand paper into the notch, we used a dremel to sand it all out nice and smooth. Then, the drill press was used to make the holes and we used an electric tuner or pitch-finder thing, whatever it is called, to make sure the instrument was at the right pitch. I put five holes in mine so I could play six notes, C, D, E, F, G, and A. I have never made an instrument before so it was a good learning experience.

The quenas, once done, continued to dry. The problem is that mine cracked in about five or six different places. So it ended up not working to well. Since Justin and I both had a quena, we decided to do our research on different parts of the Peruvian culture that used the quena. I did my research on the history of the different cultures in Peru that used the quena. I found there were three main ancient cultures that used the quena. The cultures were the Paracas, Chincha, and Incas. Some general history of the quena is that it was used before Columbus discovered America and is still used today. The materials used to make the quena was bamboo, most used, animal bones, and sometimes clay. The quena can be many different lengths and be made to work on any scale.

The Paracas were around between 750 BC and 100 AD. Not too much is known about the Paracas except what we have learned from their different necropolises, or however you say the plural form of necropolis. A necropolis is a huge underground burial area where the Paracas buried their dead. Here is only a little bit of proof that shows that the Paracas used quenas, but the tiny bit of proof is there. Another culture was called the Chincha. The Chincha were around from 11th Century AD and were conquered by the Incas in the 1400's AD. Like the Paracas, little is known about the Chincha. One thing that is evident is that the Chincha were very war like and believed in a jaguar god. This is because they believed that jaguars gave them their war like qualities. They were also excellent farmers. They used dead birds and guano for fertilizer. Guano is bird, bat, and seal droppings. The Guano industry today is worth more than \$1.4 billion.

The last culture that there is proof of quena usage is the Incas. The Incan Empire was around from 1200 AD to when the Spanish conquistadors conquered them in 1572 AD. The Incas were the biggest empire in the Americas before Columbus's discovery of America in 1492, and for some time after his discovery. Again, like the Paracas and the Chincha, there is not much proof that the Incas used quenas, but there is some proof. Mostly the Incas used other instruments like the pan pipe. Most of the Incas conquering happened in the 1440's while being led by Pachacutec, whose translated name means earth-shaker.

I think I did a good job on this project of not procrastinating. The project cost zero dollars because I used my own bamboo that was already planted instead of buying some from a store. I think one way I could have better done this project was if I followed the procedures to make sure my flute did not crack so I could still have the instrument make the correct noise. Overall, on a scale of 1-10, I think I deserve a 9 because I didn't procrastinate and it was a lot of work to make the quena.