

The VFOA Blog

By Voices from Our America™

Sponsored by the Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS)
Vanderbilt University
Nashville, TN

Translations by Andrea Taylor, Melanie Taylor and WVG

December 2011

<http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/>





The VFOA Blog

The VFOA Blog, sponsored by the Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS), was created to give educators in Panama, the US and beyond direct access to lesson plans and other resources that integrate Voices from Our America primary sources of information gathered over 3 years of research in Panama between 2007 and 2010.

Educators got the opportunity to share their experiences integrating Afro Panamanian and Afro Diasporic themes in their curricula through the VFOA Blog.

This publication compiles lessons, book reviews, articles about Creole, and articles about West Indian cooking that were posted from January to December 2011 in the VFOA Blog.

Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS)

The Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS) at Vanderbilt has been designated a National Resource Center on Latin America with Title VI funds from the Department of Education. CLAS's innovative model integrates teaching, research, and K-12 outreach missions through substantive collaborations across all VU colleges and professional schools.



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Background

Voices from Our America: Panamanians of West Indian Descent

“Voices from Our America: Panamanians of West Indian Descent” seeks to collect, compile, and disseminate narratives of Panamanian-West Indian life to provide insight into the significance of this community that blurs so many of the boundaries of ethnicity, race, and culture that have for so long been held dear in both the U.S. and Latin America.

On August 15, 1914, the Panama Canal, the engineering feat connecting the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, the man-made waterway that changed the international shipping industry forever, opened. The canal was the result of the death-defying labor of hundreds of thousands of Black British West Indian men, recruited from their home islands with both true and false promises about the presumably golden opportunity building the canal represented for them. In addition to suffering the indignity of U.S. style Jim Crow segregation (eg. getting less pay than white workers even though they were doing the same job), they had to work with the constant possibility of instantaneous death from accidental explosions of the dynamite being used to blow through the mountains to make room for the canal. Official histories of the canal often ignore their pivotal role. As a counter to this silence, the horrors and pleasures of the death and life they found in the malarial rain forests of the isthmus have begun to be documented by scholars such as George Westerman (*Los Inmigrantes Antillanos de Panama*, 1980) and creative writers such as Melva Lowe de Goodin (*De/From Barbados a/to Panama*, 1999). Documentary filmmaker Roman Foster (*Diggers*, 1985) actually managed to capture a number of canal workers’ narrations of their own histories on film before the passing of the last of that generation’s members in the 1980s. The Panamanian government has even recently begun to take steps toward acknowledging the importance of these workers’ sacrifices, developing a West Indian section of its *Mi Pueblito* exhibition that celebrates the ostensible “three roots” of Panamanian culture—European, Indigenous, and African/West Indian. In addition, the government has added the Afro-Antillean Museum to its list of official museums, and placed it under the jurisdiction of the National Institute of Arts and Culture.

Although progress has been made, much work remains to be done. Scholars, creative writers, and others have worked to document not only this beautiful-ugly (to echo Paule Marshall’s terminology) history, but also the continuing discrimination suffered by the contemporary descendants of the workers (Priestley and Barrow, *Piel Oscura Panama*, 2003) and Carlos Guillermo Wilson, *Chombo*, 1981; *Cuentos del Negro Cubena*, 1977). In addition, a persistent concern among the older generations is that the youth have no interest in learning the history and have chosen to be Panamanian to the exclusion of claiming or connecting in any way to their West Indian ancestry. “Voices from Our America: Panamanians of West Indian Descent” seeks to build on this work and address this concern by capturing the beautiful and ugly experiences of the workers’ descendants in their own words.



Voices from Our America

The Voices from Our America project has collected over 100 oral narratives in the provinces of Panama, Colon and Bocas del Toro between 2007 and 2009. In its current phase, the project is preparing educational and research materials based on these narratives for students, teachers, researchers and the public at large.



Voices from Our America in Education

The Voices from Our America Project is committed to education, generating a growing network of teachers and students in Panama and abroad, committed to preserving the oral histories of Panamanians of West Indian descent.

Some of our previous educational initiatives include:

- January 2007 and February, 2008 – Children’s Corner at the SAMAAP Fair, West Indian Museum of Panama, in El Marañon, Panama
- January 2008 – Oral History Workshop for community leaders at Centro de Jubilados y Pensionados, in Almirante Bocas del Toro
- April-May 2008 – Oral History Project and Student Competition with Prof. Felicia Morgan’s 12th grade students at Instituto Episcopal de Panama, in Panama, Panama
- May 2008 – Curriculum Development workshop with Prof. Veronica Forte, English Department, University of Panama
- May 2008 – Essay Contest with Prof. Veronica Forte, English Department, University of Panama
- November 2008 – Mini Oral History Fair with Prof. Veronica Forte’s English class at the University of Panama, in Panama, Panama
- May 2009 – Oral History Workshop for middle school students at Parroquia San Jose, in Colon, Colon
- July 2009 – VFOA Seminar for youth at Centro de Jubilados y Pensionados, in Almirante, Bocas del Toro
- February 2009 – Children’s Corner at the SAMAAP Fair, West Indian Museum of Panama, in El Marañon, Panama
- February 2010 – Children’s Corner at the SAMAAP Fair, West Indian Museum of Panama, in El Marañon, Panama
- March 2011 – Children’s Corner at the SAMAAP Fair, ATLAPA, in Panama City, Panama

The project has also participated in local educational conferences:

- May 2007 and 2008 – Conference “Presencia e Influencia Africana en Panama”
- September 2007 and 2008 – Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Congress
- January 2008 – TESOL Summer Institute
- January 2011 – TESOL Summer Institute

We are excited to continue the work we have started with our existing network of teachers and educational institutions in Panama and abroad. We also look forward to collaborations with new educators and educational institutions interested in promoting the preservation of Afro Panamanian oral history.



VFOA Blog Contributors

Haydeé Beckles. Representante para Inclusión Panamá y la Asociación Nacional de Personas con Discapacidad (ANPEDIS).

Nedelka Campbell. Accountant and freelance photographer.

Verónica Forte. English Professor. University of Panama.

Griselda Franco. Profesora de Estudios Panameños de 9º grado en la Escuela Internacional de Panamá.

Melva Goodin. Retired university profesor from the English Department at the University of Panama.

Anita Griffiths. 6th Grade Social Studies Teacher at the International School of Panama.

Verónica Hidalgo. Coordinadora Técnica de Salud para el Proyecto de Protección en Salud para Poblaciones Vulnerables (PSPV) - Panamá Oeste, Colón, Coclé. Organización: Fomento e Inversión Social Panamá (FIS).

Jannette Hoo. Docente en el Colegio Secundario León Antonio Soto.

Raul Houlstan. Abogado. Secretaria Técnica de Población y Ambiente, Asamblea Nacional.

Gabriela Mariño. Independent photographer and graphic designer.

Francisco Paz. Profesor de Folklore en el Instituto Episcopal San Cristobal.

Enrique Plato. Docente en el Instituto Episcopal San Cristobal. Materia: folklore, 3er a 5to grado.

Ines Sealy. Retired from the Panama Canal Commission. Currently a certified public translator.

Andrea Taylor. Senior Professor and Coordinator in the English Language Program at Florida State University in Panama.

Leticia Thomas. University professor at Brooklyn College and Medgar Evers College, and author of the Dictionary of Panamanian English, a volume that documents the popular vocabulary of Panamanian Creole English.

WVG. Educational curriculum development firm.



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Ana Palencia. Director of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Panama. Promotion of online resources and workshops for teachers.

Warren Griffiths. Technology Integration Specialist. International School of Panama. Technology standards and resources for teachers.

Arnold Walters Foundation. Promotion of VFOA events and online resources.



Voices from Our America

Clip of the Week



Lesson Plan for Using Voices from Our America in the Classroom

Developed by: Anita Griffiths, Social Studies Teacher

School: International School of Panama

Grade Level: 6, with mix of ESL and first-language English speakers

Mixed level groups

Subject: Social Studies

Time: Three in-class periods of 90 minutes

Resources: Voices from Our America (<http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/>), computer with word-processing program (can be substituted with paper)

Purpose

To introduce students in a Grade 6 Social Studies class to concepts of using primary resource materials; learning about first-hand experiences of West Indians living in Panama; and raising awareness of racism and linguistic discrimination, as part of a larger understanding of issues in multi-cultural settings.

Activities

1st Period

Introduce Nyasha Warren, who was involved with research for Voices of Our America. She will discuss how the VOOA project was initiated and why, and give a brief introduction to a history of West Indians living in Panama.

Introduce students to website – guide them through different sections, and focus on video and audio interview portions, photo gallery, and interview sections.

Pair students up according to writing skill level. Higher level with lower level worked well, including ESL with English speaker. Hand out one interview (we used Melva Lowe de Goodin). Read interview with students at:

<http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib.php?record=2>

2nd Period

Assign students the following questions giving them time to re-read sections, write their answers, and then take up answers in class: Why did the families come to Panama? When? What were their challenges? What was education and health care like? What barriers did they face when integrating into Panamanian culture?

Introduce reflection assignment using Reflective Response at the end of this document. In this assignment, students will be asked to give two reflections, one on the interview question regarding racism and perceptions of Blacks in Panama; one on the interview question regarding the



perceptions of English speakers, whether white or black, in Panama. Allow students time to start writing.

3rd Period

In this writing period, the teacher should remind students of instructions on how to write an effective, meaningful reflection. During student writing, lower-level students should explain their feelings and ideas, while higher-level writers translate these ideas onto paper.

Reflective Response

With your partner, write TWO reflective responses to the reading about Melva Lowe De Goodin. You will choose the best one, and hand that in, however you are required to complete two responses.

Response #1

Write a response to the question "What do you think are the general perceptions of blacks in Panamanian society?"

Response #2

Write a response to the question "What do you think are the perceptions of English speakers in Panama, whether black or white?"

You may include any part of Melva’s answer in your response, and I encourage you to quote her directly, and then respond. Remember:

A reflective response to a piece of writing must accomplish three things:

- show that you understand what you have read
- show how your own personal experiences are similar or different
- show what you have learned that is new from the reading, and how you will think or feel differently because of the reading

Each response should be ONE page, single-spaced, and will be typed on the computer. There must be three paragraphs, and each partner must give their opinion.

Rubric for Reflective Response

Structure: Follows the structure of a reflective response – 3 paragraphs, quotes, personal responses	/ 4
Understanding: Shows that you clearly understand the answers	/ 4
Relates to Personal Experience: Clearly shows how you feel similar or different to Melva	/ 4
Learning: Clearly shows what you have learned from the reading	/ 4
TOTAL	/ 16



Sample Student Reflections from CH and IO:

CH thinks that it was really bad that people were not allowed to speak English anymore, because everyone should be able to speak their own language. He thinks it was bad that the Panamanian government made a law that English speakers could not become Panamanian citizens. He agrees that now people need English, so it was not good that West Indians stopped teaching their children English. He thinks that people should have taught their kids English because now they have problems getting jobs and doing well in school. IO thinks that Panama would have been an even more developed country if the Panamanian Government would have let English be spoken. He has experienced what Melva mentioned before that people now don't speak English and it is now needed for everything that is the reason why he is at ISP. He thinks it was okay to get concerned about English becoming a popular language but not allowing it to be spoken he thinks is not fair at all. Everyone should speak the language they want to speak IO says.

IO has learned that he shouldn't make people speak a language they are not comfortable talking. He also thinks that no one should have ever done that because now that English is important people don't speak it thanks to the Panamanian government. He now knows that West Indians have gone through a lot in Panama and how much they have suffered. CH learned that people actually knew English in Panama but then the government made Spanish the official language and people stopped speaking English. He also learned that people didn't speak English because then people would laugh at them. He feels that it was really bad for the West Indians to stop speaking English because now they have problems getting jobs.



Voices from Our America in the Classroom

Developed by: Griselda Franco, Social Studies Teacher

School: International School of Panama

Grade: 9

Subject: Social Studies, Political Geography of Panama

What work or project was assigned to students which required the use of the Voices from Our America website?

Taking advantage of the lecture and presentation by Nyasha Warren to the 9th grade political geography class, the website was used to:

Conduct research on Afro-Colonial and Afro-Antilleans in Panama and use a Venn diagram to present and analyze the differences and similarities between them.

Prepare a presentation about the ethnic groups that make up the Panamanian population: their origin, history and reasons for coming to the Isthmus, the difficulties that they faced in incorporating themselves into Panamanian society, their contributions. This was achieved by means of reflecting on life in a heterogeneous society and through a debate on the positive and negative aspects of a multicultural society.

Create a tourism fair with an Afro-Antillean stand (the Internet was used to learn about clothing and typical dishes prepared by this ethnic group).

How were they evaluated?

In their written work and presentations (including the fair), we evaluated the students' sources of data collection, content, mastery of the subject area, accuracy, illustrations, and audiovisual aids.

Why do you recommend the Voices project website for this type of project?

Because it is a window into knowledge, giving students the opportunity to share ideas, materials and experiences, through which they can express their opinions and develop topics using their own initiative, besides being exposed to the thinking and culture of other people and ethnic groups, especially those who form an integral part of our national cultural heritage. This makes us recognize where we came from both individually and collectively, who our ancestors are and those of others, their experiences, struggles, achievements and contributions, acknowledging and accepting them as worthy representatives of mankind.



Calypso-A Celebration of this West-Indian Musical Genre and its Masters

This lesson is dedicated to the memory of Lord Byron Dowman (1931-2011)

Developed by: Andrea Taylor

Subject/Course: English as a Foreign Language

Technology tools: WebQuest

To go to WebQuest lesson go to <http://zunal.com/webquest.php?w=96727>.

Focus

This WebQuest focuses essentially on calypso music, its origins, master singers and the polemic surrounding the music. The WebQuest has been primarily designed for Upper-Intermediate to Advanced English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in Panama so that they can more understand and appreciate the genre and the many ways in which the music has influenced Panamanian culture.

Objectives/Goals

This WebQuest was developed to form part of the teaching materials for the [Voices from our America Blog](#). It is designed for Upper-Intermediate to Advanced EFL Students. At the end of this Webquest students will have:

learnt about calypso music, the history of the music and how it came to Panama

read a variety of articles and performed pre and post reading comprehension and vocabulary review/acquisition exercises in the form of drag and drop matching exercises, crossword puzzles and close exercises.

learnt about male and female Trinidadian and Panamanian Calypsonian greats such as The Mighty Sparrow, Kitchener and Calypso Rose, Lord Byron and Lord Panama

been able to debate the value of calypso music to the general population

created their own modern-day calypso song with lyrics relevant to the Panamanian culture and context

Resources

Web sites, interactive exercises, videos

Prerequisite Skills

Comfort level with the Internet and search engines such as explorer, mozilla etc

Comfort level with engaging in online interactive exercises (although these should be fairly intuitive for students).



Time Required

Ten Hours: Two 2-hour class periods for readings and interactive exercises and two 2-hour class periods for research, debate and presentation of the song and lyrics. However, if there is insufficient time, teachers can feel free to use sections of the WebQuest as whole class activities, or assign many of the tasks to the students for homework.

Technology Needs/Materials Needed

For the individual exercises, students must each have access to a computer terminal and Internet (either in class or remotely). In the event that this is not possible, the teacher may print articles and exercises and students may complete these in groups. For research for the debate and song, since students will be working in groups of 3 to 4, it is not necessary for each student to have access to a computer terminal, but each group must have access to at least one computer. Students should also have access to power point, video and/or podcast equipment in order to prepare their presentation on the calypso song.

Credits

The resources and web links included on this website are external websites relating to calypso and the history of calypso and I would like to thank them for creating such useful and informative Web Sites. Some of the sites have been provided by National Geographic, The Trinidad Guardian, Wikipedia, You Tube and E-How.com as well as various blogs by experts in the history and components of calypso music.



How I Became an Artist

Subject/Course: Language Arts, English, Spanish

Grade Level: Middle school and older

Topic or concept: Identifying and summarizing significant themes in an interview

Technology tools: Word clouds

Time recommended: 2-3 90 min periods

Desired Results

Overarching Understandings

The most significant themes of our personal narratives or oral histories can often be summarized in a few simple words.

Overarching Essential Questions

How can the most important message from an interview be conveyed in a few simple words?

Specific Knowledge or Skills Students Will Acquire

Students will analyze an excerpt from a VFOA interview to get some insight into the experiences of West Indian immigrants in Panama.

Students will carry out a complete interview ensuring appropriate preparation before the interview and reflective post interview processing.

Students will select a significant excerpt from the interview to focus on.

Students will generate a “word cloud report” to highlight the message conveyed in the excerpt they select.

Students will make an oral presentation of their “word cloud report” to their peers.

Evidence of Learning

Detailed Description of Culminating Task

Students will analyze a word cloud that corresponds to an excerpt from an interview by a VFOA respondent. They will seek out the essence of its message using the five largest words in the word cloud. They will compare their deductions with the actual transcript from the original interview.

Students will research local artists with the help of their teacher and select a few artists to interview. They will prepare for the interview in advance by reviewing the VFOA interview, and they will generate three different kinds of questions (for example questions about family background, schooling, relation to community organizations, etc.) that will help elucidate how the artist became a professional in the field.



Voices from Our America

Students will carry out an interview of the artist of their choice with the help of a digital audio recorder. They will listen to the interview and seek out a significant section to focus on.

Students will generate word clouds of the sections they have chosen, and they will prepare a 5 minute oral presentation to the class about the message conveyed through the five largest words in the word cloud, which correspond to the five words that are most repeated in the transcript.



Rubric for Culminating Task

CRITERIA	1- Attempts the standard	2 – Approaches the standard	3 – Meets the standard	4 – Exceeds the standard
Knowledge Gained	Student cannot accurately answer questions about the person who was interviewed.	Student can accurately answer a few questions about the person who was interviewed.	Student can accurately answer a few questions about the person who was interviewed and can tell how this interview relates to the material being studied in class.	Student can accurately answer several questions about the person who was interviewed and can tell how this interview relates to the material being studied in class.
Preparation	The student did not prepare any questions before the interview.	Before the interview, the student prepared several factual questions to ask.	Before the interview, the student prepared a couple of in-depth questions and several factual questions to ask.	Before the interview, the student prepared several in-depth AND factual questions to ask.
Transcript Selection	The student did NOT select an appropriate transcript.	The student selected an appropriate transcript but the selection was not as clear.	The student selected an appropriate transcript and the information was clear.	The student selected an excellent transcript and the information was clear and interesting.
Word Cloud Report	Student generates word cloud from non-relevant interview excerpt	Student generates word cloud from relevant, but incomplete interview excerpt	Student generates word cloud from relevant interview excerpt	Student generates word cloud from relevant and highly engaging interview excerpt
Oral Presentation				
Preparedness	Student does not seem at all prepared to present.	The student is somewhat prepared, but it is clear that rehearsal was lacking.	Student seems pretty prepared but might have needed a couple more rehearsals.	Student is completely prepared and has obviously rehearsed.
Content	Does not seem to understand the topic very well.	Shows a good understanding of parts of the topic.	Shows a good understanding of the topic.	Shows a full understanding of the topic.
Speaks Clearly	Often mumbles or can not be understood OR mispronounces more than one word.	Speaks clearly and distinctly most (94-85%) of the time. Mispronounces no more than one word.	Speaks clearly and distinctly all (100-95%) the time, but mispronounces one word.	Speaks clearly and distinctly all (100-95%) the time, and mispronounces no words.
Stays on Topic	It was hard to tell what the topic was.	Stays on topic some (89%-75%) of the time.	Stays on topic most (99-90%) of the time.	Stays on topic all (100%) of the time.

Rubric created with Rubistar, <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/>.



Materials (continued)

3. Websites:
www.wordle.com
<http://tagcrowd.com/>
<http://www.tagxedo.com/>
4. Digital audio recorder or video recorder
5. Directory listing of local artists available through cultural organizations, university libraries or other relevant resources. You may also interview your art teachers.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

Day 1

Introduction

Read and Analyze. The largest words in the word cloud correspond to the most repeated words in the interview excerpt. If you focus only on the five largest words in the word cloud, what do you think Mr. Boyce is talking about?

Reflect. Now read the transcript from Mr. Boyce's interview. What would you have done if you were Mr. Boyce? What do you think might have happened if Mr. Boyce never learned about the Salvation Army music classes? Do you think many Afro Antilleans got the same opportunity Mr. Boyce got? How do you think the following factors could affect their chances of having such an opportunity: age, race, gender, religion.

Day 2

Main Activity

Teacher Guidance Required. Working in groups of 2 to 3 students, research local artists of interest to you. Contact the artists you are interested in and schedule an interview session with your teacher's help. Use a pre-written script when you contact artists to make sure you remember to explain the objective and final product of the interview project. Invite artists to come to the school for interview sessions to minimize logistical complications. Art teachers at your school can be a good option for this activity. Also consider the difference between interviewing an artist that comes from a family of artists vs. one that comes from a family of non-artists.

Group Work. Working in groups of 2 students, generate three questions that will elicit the most information from your respondent about how he or she became a professional artist. Abstain from questions that elicit yes/no answers. Research information about your artist using local print or online newspapers or other readily available publications.



Interview Day

Introduce yourself and share what you learned about how Mr. Boyce started his path towards becoming a professional artist. Then ask the artist to share how he or she became an artist. Ask the three questions you generated after extensive research about the artist.

Record your interview with a digital audio or video recorder so that you can transcribe your interviewee's words accurately after the interview.

Reflective Post Interview Processing

Once the interview is completed listen to it very carefully. Select a short (less than 2 min) but significant excerpt from the interview to transcribe. This must be an excerpt that you believe conveys the most significant message of the interview.

Once you have transcribed this excerpt, copy and paste it into one of the word cloud websites listed above to generate a word cloud. Print or save your word cloud and underline the five largest words in the word cloud.

Day 3

Conclusion

Make a five minute oral presentation of your word cloud to the rest of the class. Explain why the five largest words in the word cloud highlight the most significant message from the interview.

Going Further

Create a small exhibit of all the word clouds from your class to showcase at your school library, or local library, museum or other cultural center with the title "How I Became an Artist". Use a highlighter to emphasize words or terms that repeated themselves often across different interview word clouds. Invite other students, parents, teachers and the artists interviewed to view the exhibit and share their thoughts about the experiences portrayed through the word clouds.

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A Place for 'Convivencia'

Date: March 9, 2011

Subject/Course: Language Arts, English, Spanish

Grade Level: Middle school and older

Topic or concept: Photo essay, copyright alternatives

Technology tools: Creative Commons

Time recommended: 2-3 90 min periods

Desired Results

Overarching Understandings

'Convivencia', or fellowship, is a community made up of individuals who share a common interest.

Overarching Essential Question

What kind of images portray the best examples of 'convivencia'?

Specific Knowledge or Skills Students Will Acquire.

Students will analyze an excerpt from a VFOA interview to get some insight into the experiences of West Indian immigrants in Panama.

Students will carry out interviews for an oral history project.

Students will learn to identify the different licenses offered through Flickr Creative Commons, and they will compare and contrast them.

Students will create a photo essay on 'convivencia'

Students will make an oral presentation about their photo essays.

Evidence of Learning

Detailed Description of Culminating Task

Students will analyze two excerpts from an interview by a VFOA respondent focusing on fellowship. They will reflect on the value of fellowship for Afro Antilleans who migrated to Panama between the 1800s and 1900s.

Students learn to recognize the different Creative Commons licenses available through Flickr as an alternative to full copyright. They will apply the licenses in their own photo essay projects.

Students will create a photo essay focusing on the concept of 'convivencia', focusing primarily on places that house 'convivencia', rather than images of people.



Students will make an oral presentation about their photo essays for the rest of the class.

Rubric for Culminating Task

CRITERIA	1 – Attempts the standard	2 – Approaches the standard	3 – Meets the standard	4 – Exceeds the standard
Topic ("iAcademy")	The main idea is not clear. There is random collection of information. Little is learned by reading and viewing the photo essay.	Main idea is somewhat clear but there is a need for more supporting information.	Main idea is clear but the supporting information (photo essay) is general. Reader/viewer learns some information about the topic.	There is one clear, well-focused topic. Main idea stands out and is strongly supported by the photo essay. A great deal is learned by reading and viewing the photo essay.
Photograph Impact ("iAcademy")	The viewer can not see a relationship between the essay and the photo	The viewer can see some connection between the photo and the essay. The photo is not particularly creative.	The photo clearly represents the essay. The photo demonstrates some original thinking.	The photo clearly represents the topic of the photo essay. The image brings out emotions in the viewer.
Use of Creative Commons Licenses	Student does not apply licenses.	Student applies licenses sometimes.	Student applies licenses most of the time.	Student applies licenses appropriately 100% of the time
Oral Presentation				
Preparedness	Student does not seem at all prepared to present.	The student is somewhat prepared, but it is clear that rehearsal was lacking.	Student seems pretty prepared but might have needed a couple more rehearsals.	Student is completely prepared and has obviously rehearsed.
Content	Does not seem to understand the topic very well.	Shows a good understanding of parts of the topic.	Shows a good understanding of the topic.	Shows a full understanding of the topic.
Speaks Clearly	Often mumbles or can not be understood OR mispronounces more than one word.	Speaks clearly and distinctly most (94-85%) of the time. Mispronounces no more than one word.	Speaks clearly and distinctly all (100-95%) the time, but mispronounces one word.	Speaks clearly and distinctly all (100-95%) the time, and mispronounces no words.
Stays on Topic	It was hard to tell what the topic was.	Stays on topic some (89%-75%) of the time.	Stays on topic most (99-90%) of the time.	Stays on topic all (100%) of the time.

Rubric created with Rubistar, <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/>.



Instructional Plan

Time Needed: 2-3 90 minute periods

Materials:

1. Ms. Lennan's quotation from VFOA interview on April 11, 2008:
"Dancing is part of our tradition – we love to dance and singing together. My brother sang in the choir and then he would come home and teach us what he learned after choir rehearsal. And then I can remember Uncle Bobby and my dad would stay home every Tuesday because that was family night and he would tell us stories and we would all sit at the dining room table and play card games."
2. Ms. Livingston's quotation from VFOA interview on November 11, 2008:
"Different people come here—that is where I get the inspiration—from them. They come here and they make a....convivencia and I get to see that, I get to like it, to see how different cultures come together..... So, a year after [they] left, like one year after, I say 'You know, I would like to have a dance group like that; I would like to have a dance group [that] dances African music.' So Raoul...called me one day and said to me...'You don't have a dancing group to bring to this feria?,' and things like that, and so I said 'Group I don't have, but I will make one'."
3. Website: Flickr Creative Commons <http://www.flickr.com/creativecommons/>
4. Additional Reading: Read or listen to more oral narratives at: <http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/voices.php>

Step-by-Step Instructions

Day 1

Introduction (45 min)

Read and Analyze. Read both quotations from VFOA interviews with Ms. Lennan and Ms. Livingston. Look up the English meaning of the Spanish word "convivencia". How do Ms. Lennan's and Ms. Livingston's experiences portray examples of "convivencia"? Why do you think that Ms. Livingston uses the word "convivencia" instead of any other word or instead of the English equivalent?

Reflect. Why do you think it was important for immigrant Afro Antillean families to find a time and a place for "convivencia" outside of work? Why do you think this is still important today? How do you engage in "convivencia" with your family? With your peers?

Homework

Research. The Flickr Creative Commons website is a tool that allows users to search photo galleries that contain material that can be used by the public based on a set of established rules. The Creative Commons has different types of licenses that establish how the images in their photo gallery may be used by the public. Go to the Flickr Creative Commons website and compare and



contrast the different licenses listed: attribution, non-commercial, non-derivative and share alike. Note the different symbols used in each license. How are the licenses similar? How are they different? If you were to create a public photo gallery, which license would you use? Why? Click on any of the images in the Attribution section. To know which license this image has, click on "Actions" and then "View all sizes". Finally, click on "Some rights reserved" to get all the information regarding how this photo can be used.

Day 2

Main Activity - Group Work (90 min)

Review homework questions.

Create your own public photo essay focusing on the concept of "convivencia".

Seek out and photograph images of places where "convivencia" takes place in your town or city. It could be your school, home, church, cultural center or any other place where you find good examples of this concept.

Focus on the physical structures that house "convivencia". Note: Do not take pictures of people, unless you make sure to get their permission first, and you explain what the pictures will be used for.

If you don't already have an account, create a free Flickr account and set it up according to the specific Creative Commons license you want. Make sure to include a title and description of your images. Remember that by doing so, you contribute valuable images about your city or town to this growing resource that many others will be able to use.

Day 3

Conclusion - In Class Work (90 min)

Share your gallery with your classmates during a 5 minute oral presentation in front of the class.

Compare and contrast the different examples of "convivencia" that arise within your class.

References

Flickr: Creative Commons." Flickr. Yahoo Inc., 2010. Web. 31 Dec 2010.

<<http://www.flickr.com/creativecommons/>>.

"iAcademy Video and Photography Program." iAcademy. Arizona State University, 2010. Web. 31 Dec 2010. <http://icademy.asu.edu/documents/photoessay_rubric.pdf>.

Lennan, Maiziee. Personal interview. April 11, 2008.

Livingston, Nixsa. Personal interview. November 11, 2008.



Many Panamas

Date: May 11, 2011

Subject/Course: Language Arts, English, Spanish

Grade Level: Middle school and older

Topic or concept: Photo essay about socioeconomic inequality in Panama

Technology tools: VoiceThread

Time recommended: 2-3 90 min periods

Desired Results

Overarching Understandings

“...the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue,
but that they are incomplete.
They make one story become the only story.” (Adichie)

The media often perpetuates stereotypes when it targets different publications towards audiences from different economic sectors. In order to break through the stereotypes we must first identify them, in order to know how to recognize them in the future, and open our minds to a more holistic picture of reality.

Overarching Essential Question.

How are different racial and/or socioeconomic groups targeted by the media to perpetuate the existence of many unequal Panamas?

Specific Knowledge or Skills Students Will Acquire

Students will analyze an excerpt from a VFOA interview to get some insight into the experiences of West Indian immigrants in Panama.

Students will define key terms associated with socioeconomic disparity in the world.

Students will research headlines from multiple print and online newspapers from Panama.

Students will generate an online photo essay of their headlines

Students will make reflective comments about their headlines and that of others.

Evidence of Learning

Detailed Description of Culminating Task

Students will analyze an excerpt from an interview by a VFOA respondent about “many Panamas”. They will look up the definitions of key terms associated with social inequality in the world and relate them to their own reality in Panama.



Students will research online or print Panama newspapers targeted towards audiences from different socioeconomic statuses. They will create a photo essay of the headlines they find within each newspaper they are assigned using VoiceThread. They will cite their sources of information appropriately.

Students will make reflective comments regarding the role of the media perpetuating stereotypes through the messages they convey.

Rubric for Culminating Task

CRITERIA	1 – Attempts the standard	2 – Approaches the standard	3 – Meets the standard	4 – Exceeds the standard
Content	Student selected a headline that was not appropriate.	Student selected a headline that was appropriate but lacks depth.	Student selected a headline that was appropriate.	Student selected a headline that was interesting, appropriate and powerful.
Commentary	Student is not on topic.	Student is on topic some of the time and offers appropriate observations.	Student is on topic and offers appropriate observations.	Student is on topic and offers insightful observations.
References	References are incomplete.	Student cites sources some of the time.	Student practices responsible use of information by citing sources 100% of the time.	Student practices responsible use of information by citing sources 100% of the time, and includes additional sources that add to the overall content.

Instructional Plan

Time Needed: 2-3 90 minute periods

Materials

1. Mr. Williams’ quotation from VFOA interview on March 29, 2007:
 “There are many Panamas. There’s one that is very much a first-world country in certain things, and we’re third-world, and fourth-world, and fifth-world and others. As a Panamanian it’s very hard—if I was just a foreigner, I would just understand it....no, but it can’t be. I know we can do better.”
 (Learn more about Mr. Williams at http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/vfoa_biographies.php#w.)
2. Computer lab, or alternatively, assign computer work as homework
3. Website: www.voicethread.com.
4. Example of VoiceThread slideshow with comments: <http://voicethread.com/share/1353580/>



5. Panamanian newspapers with different target audiences: 1) the poorest sectors and low middle class, 2) middle-middle/high-middle class, 3) tourists, foreign investors and expat retirees. Some examples of Panamanian newspaper websites:

La Critica, <http://www.critica.com.pa/>

La Prensa, www.prensa.com

El Visitante, <http://www.thevisitorpanama.com/>

1. Additional Reading: Read or listen to more oral narratives at:
<http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/voices.php>

Step-by-Step Instructions:

Day 1

Introduction (45 min)

Read and Analyze. Read Mr. Williams quote in the materials section. What does he mean when he says “there are many Panamas”?

Research and Reflect. Search for the definition of the following terms: first world, second world, third world, developing country, developed country. Based on the definitions you looked up, which term(s) best describes the Panama you are most familiar with? Some say that Panama has a façade of a developed nation, but the infrastructure of a developing nation. Do you agree? Why or why not?

Day 2

Main Activity – Individual Work in Computer Lab or At Home (90 min)

Select one of the newspapers in the materials section to focus on (you may also choose from other newspapers available in print or online). Find 3 headlines and select the most attention grabbing one to create a jpeg file. If you are using print newspaper, you may also scan the headlines and save as a jpeg file.

Create an interactive online multimedia slide show of the material gathered by you and your peers in class using VoiceThread (Click [here](#) to view an example). With your teacher’s help, create one free VoiceThread account for the entire class at the website cited above. Once you have registered you will be able to view tutorial video, “1 Minute VoiceThread” for instructions on how to create your slide show.

Give your VoiceThread a title (for example, Many Panama’s Through the Media). Create a new slide by uploading the jpeg file of your headline.

After uploading each jpeg file, add a text comment for each slide that states the following information: 1) student name, 2) name of newspaper, 3) date published, 4) URL, and 5) the answer to the question “In your opinion, who was the target audience for this headline? Why?” This answer could be stated as “In my opinion, the target audience for this headline was... because...”



Each student must upload their own jpeg files for the VoiceThread to be complete.

Day 3

Conclusion – In Class Work (90 min)

Once all students have uploaded their headlines, source information and answers for their own headlines, each student must record an audio, video or text comment answering the question posted for at least 3 different slides created by their classmates.

View the completed VoiceThread as a class after everyone has entered their comments. Discuss as a class how these headlines perpetuate stereotypes that lead to the existence of many unequal Panamas. How many different answers arose for the same headline?

Going Further

Present your VoiceThread project to another class and invite them to add their own comments about each headline in the slide show.

References

Adichie, Chimamanda, Perf. Chimamanda Adichie: The danger of the single story. TED: 2009, Web. 23 Dec 2010.

<http://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.html>.

"VoiceThread. Group Conversations around Images, Documents and Videos." VoiceThread. Voice Thread LLC, 2010. Web. 28 Sep 2010. <<http://voicethread.com/>>.

Williams, Enrique. Personal interview. March 29, 2007.



Oral history in context

Subject/Course: Social Studies

Grade Level: Middle school

Topic or concept: Using timelines and oral histories

Technology tools: Online timeline creators (timetoast.com, Xtimeline.com, capzles.com, etc.)

Time recommended: 3-4 90 min periods

Desired Results

Overarching Understandings

Panama's history has always been intertwined with the development of other nations in the region and around the world. Timelines help us understand and visualize history in context.

Oral histories, such as the narratives of Panamanians of West Indian descent collected by the Voices from Our America project, can help enrich the timelines of the current historical record for Panama and the surrounding region.

Overarching Essential Questions

How can oral histories help enrich the regional or global historical record?

Specific Knowledge or Skills Students Will Acquire.

Students will analyze an excerpt from a VFOA interview to get some insight into the experiences of West Indian immigrants in Panama.

Students will identify important dates in the interviews they analyze and establish start and end dates for their project.

Students will research important events in the history of Panama during the time period they are focusing on in order to contextualize the oral histories they analyzed within the history of Panama.

Students will research important events in the history of two additional countries in the Americas (including the Caribbean) during the time period they are focusing on in order to contextualize the oral histories they analyzed within the history of the region.

Students will generate an online timeline of the life of the person they read about including important dates mentioned in the interviews and from their research on the history of Panama and the rest of the Americas.

Students will share and edit each other's online timelines in order to generate the most complete historical record surrounding the life of the person whose interview they focused on.



Evidence of Learning

Detailed Description of Culminating Task

Students will generate a list of important dates in the life of one individual featured in the Voices from Our America Digital Library, including birth date, date of death (if applicable), education, regional and/or international migration, accomplishments and careers.

Students research news, books and websites about Panamanian history and generate a list of important dates that contextualize the oral narratives they analyzed.

Students research news, books and websites about one or two additional countries in the Americas whose histories are intertwined with Panama's during the time period in question. They will generate a list of important dates that further contextualize the oral narratives they analyzed.

Students will create an online timeline featuring the most important dates from the interview they analyzed, and from their research on the history of Panama and other countries in the America's with strong ties to Panama during the given time period.

Students will enrich each other's online timeline through a peer review process.

Students will present their timelines to the rest of the class.



Rubric for Culminating Task

CATEGORY	1	2	3	4
Content/Facts	Facts were often inaccurate for events reported on the timeline.	Facts were accurate for most (~75%) of the events reported on the timeline.	Facts were accurate for almost all events reported on the timeline.	Facts were accurate for all events reported on the timeline.
Readability	The timeline is difficult to read.	The timeline is relatively readable.	The overall appearance of the timeline is somewhat pleasing and easy to read.	The overall appearance of the timeline is pleasing and easy to read.
Dates	Dates are inaccurate and/or missing for several events.	An accurate date has been included for almost every event.	An accurate, complete date has been included for almost every event.	An accurate, complete date has been included for each event.
Learning of Content	The student cannot use the timeline effectively to describe events nor to compare events.	The student can describe any event on the timeline if allowed to refer to it and can determine which of two events occurred first.	The student can accurately describe 50% of the events on the timeline without referring to it and can quickly determine which of two events occurred first.	The student can accurately describe 75% (or more) of the events on the timeline without referring to it and can quickly determine which of two events occurred first.
Resources	The timeline contained fewer than 5 events.	The timeline contained at least 5 events related to the topic being studied.	The timeline contained at least 6-7 events related to the topic being studied.	The timeline contained at least 8-10 events related to the topic being studied.
Graphics	Several graphics are not effective.	Some graphics are effective and their use is balanced with text use.	All graphics are effective, but there appear to be too few or too many.	All graphics are effective and balanced with text use.

Rubric created with Rubistar, <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/>.



Instructional Plan

Time Needed: 2-3 90 minute periods

Materials:

1. Website: Voices from Our America Digital Library:
<http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib.php>
2. Online timeline generating websites:
XTimeline: <http://xtimeline.com/index.aspx>
Time Toast: <http://www.timetoast.com/>
Capzles: <http://www.capzles.com/> (timelines using audio and video)
1. Websites about Panamanian history and canal construction era:
 - Voices from Our America – Historical Background:
<http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib-hist.php>
 - Voices from Our America – Bibliography:
<http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib-bibliography.php>
 - Library of Congress Federal Research Division – Country Studies – Panama:
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/patoc.html>
 - BBC News Timeline – Panama:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/country_profiles/1229333.stm
 - History.com – Panama Canal Open to Traffic: <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/panama-canal-open-to-traffic>

Step-by-Step Instructions

Day 1

Introduction (45 min)

Read and Analyze. Read the introductory section of the 11 interviews posted in the Digital Library of the Voices from Our America website. What year was each these respondents born? How old would they be today?

Reflect. Pick one individual to focus on. During what years would this individual have been in middle school? What do you think school was like for them when they were your age? To answer this question read the entire interview and pay special attention to the sections about education and schooling. Write a short descriptive paragraph comparing and contrasting school life today and during the time when the respondent you chose was in school.



Day 2-3

Group Work – In Class

Working in groups of 2-3 students, select an individual to focus on for your online timeline project. Re-read the entire interview of the person you chose and generate a list of any important dates mentioned in the interview including birth date, date of death (if applicable), education, regional and/or international migration, accomplishments and careers. Set your start and end date for your timeline.

At Home or In School Library

Research books, online news and other websites about Panamanian history. You may refer to the list of resources listed above. Generate a list of important dates in the history of Panama that fall within your timeline start and end dates. Record your references.

Research books, online news and other websites about one or two countries located in the Americas (including North, Central, South America and the Caribbean) with histories that are intertwined with Panama's history during the time period you are focusing on. (Note: The interviews themselves may mention some countries of interest). Generate a list of important dates in the history of these countries that fall within your timeline start and end dates. Record your references.

In Class or Computer Lab.

Subscribe to one of the online timeline generator websites listed above (Note: capzles.com allows for audio and video entries).

Add Events

Once you have set up an account, give your timeline a title and enter the list of important dates from all of your sources into the timeline generator program:

- The interview
- Panama history
- History of one or two other countries in the Americas
- Each event must have a title, a short description of the event and a sentence explaining how the event affected the respondent (2-3 sentences total).

Review Timeline Events

Once all the information for all the dates has been incorporated into the timelines, review each event to make sure it is relevant to your project. To do this make sure you can answer the following questions for each event:

Did this event affect the life of the respondent I am focusing on?

Did this event affect the life of the society in which the respondent lived?



If this event had not happened, do you believe the respondent's life would have been significantly different?

If you answer YES to any of these questions, then the event is relevant and should be included in your timeline. Be ready to explain how each event affected your respondent's life for your oral presentation to the class.

Illustrate Timeline Events

Illustrate at least half of all the events with images or diagrams. Add audio or video if possible to make your explanations more varied and creative. Record your references for any images you use.

Day 4

Conclusion (90 min)

Peer Review. Before each group presents their timelines, view each timeline online, and suggest one modification (addition or deletion of an event) that you feel would improve each timeline. Note: The suggestions can be made through online comments or on paper depending on what the online timeline program permits.

Oral Presentation. Present your online timelines to the rest of the class explaining how each event in your timeline directly or indirectly affected the life of the respondent you focused on. Make sure to mention the modifications suggested by your peers and why you chose to include them, or not, into your timeline.

Alternative

Integrate important events in the history of Europe or Asia into your timeline. This might give students insight into the effect of World War II and its aftermath on Panama, the canal and its people.

References

- "A Country Study: Panama." Library of Congress Federal Research Division. Capzles, 27 Jul 2010. Web. 19 Jul 2011. <<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/patoc.html>>.
- Capzles Social Storytelling. Capzles, 2011. Web. 19 Jul 2011. <<http://www.capzles.com/>>.
- Ifeoma Nwankwo, Voices from Our America. "Bibliography." Voices from Our America. Ifeoma Nwankwo, 2011. Web. 19 Jul 2011. <<http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib.php>>.
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- "Panama Canal open to traffic – History.com This Day in History August 15, 1914." History.com. A&E Television Networks, LLC, 2011. Web. 19 Jul 2011. <<http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/panama-canal-open-to-traffic>>.
- "Timeline: Panama." BBC News. BBC, 05 Apr 2011. Web. 19 Jul 2011. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/country_profiles/1229333.stm>.
- timetoast. timetoast, 2011. Web. 19 Jul 2011. <<http://www.timetoast.com/>>.
- Xtimeline. Famento, Inc., 2008-2009. Web. 19 Jul 2011. <<http://xtimeline.com/index.aspx>>.



Oral History Projects



Lesson 1

Developed by: Veronica Forte

Subject/Course: English

Time recommended: 2-3, 45 min periods

Materials

Audio or video recorder
Data show projector
Interview clip from Voices from Our America
Computer program to create brochures
Relevant images or photos

Instructions

Define oral history
Project oral history interviews from the Vocies from Our America project for the whole class to see and discuss
Class will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of oral histories in historical research
Class will review how to develop questions and conduct interviews
Students will identify oral history candidates (a person that has done a significant contribution in the medical or scientific area)
Class will develop specific questions to the interviewee and practice doing interviews using audio or video recorder with each other
Students will conduct interviews and summarize them in a report
Students will present report to the class
Students will create a brochure of each oral history

Follow-up Activity

Students can combine oral histories with photographs in a hallway or classroom exhibit in a PowerPoint presentation.

Assessment

Students will be evaluated based on the strength of the interview, the summary report, and presentation.



Lesson 2

Developed by: Veronica Forte

Subject/Course: English

Time recommended: 2-3, 45 min periods

Materials

Music CD's

Song lyrics

Instructions on how to play some games

List of songs and games from the book *Reminiscences*, by Ines Sealey

Learning objectives

To remember specific points from oral accounts

To write simple instructions to play a game

Instructions

Provide the list of the songs and games listed in *Reminiscences*, by Ines Sealey.

Present and discuss examples of history in those songs or games.

The class will investigate information about the song or game they were assigned (each student).

The class will compare the song or game they investigated to the ones they play nowadays (each student).

Students will prepare a lesson plan using the song or the game that they investigated and develop it so that everyone participates in the game.

Students will write their own rules of the games.

Students will present the lesson to the class

Follow-up Activity

Students can identify the songs and games they grew up with and share their own experiences during a class presentation.

Assessment

Students will be evaluated based on the rigor of the investigation, the presentation and the level of creativity.



Lesson 3

Developed by: Veronica Forte

Subject/Course: English

Time recommended: 2-3, 45 min periods

Materials

Camera
Music CD's
Lyrics of Brown Girl in the Ring song
Long stick
Black dolls
West Indian food from Bocas del Toro, Panama
Map of the Caribbean
Our Little West Indian Corner

Learning objectives

To help students identify themselves with their West Indian History
To help students have pride in their heritage

Instructions

Explain the importance of the West Indian contribution in general
Divide students into groups responsible for investigating different aspects of the West Indian contribution
Students will investigate different topics including food, style of dress, housing, etc.
Students will use their creativity to decorate the classroom using the information they investigated
Students will prepare to give an oral presentation about the West Indian contribution to anyone who visits the classroom
Students will motivate visitors to learn more about West Indian History
Students will invite visitors to participate in the activities organized for them: in order to enter the room they have to sing and dance the Limbo Song.

Follow-up Activity

Students can divide the classroom into different sections that they can decorate using information about Panamanians of West Indian descent: 1. Food, 2. West Indian style of dress, 3. Caribbean Islands, 4. A replica of a West Indian House near the beach, 4. Panama Canal contributions, 5. Brown Girl in the Ring lyrics and song (at the entrance of the room).



Assessment

Students will be evaluated based on the topic, the creativity put into the decoration, the oral presentation, and the ability to motivate visitors.



Lesson 4

Developed by: Veronica Forte

Subject/Course: English

Time recommended: 2-3, 45 min periods

Materials

Data show projector

TV / LapTop

Short interview clip from the Voices from Our America Project

Interview transcript

Learning objectives

To help students learn English and History in a new way

To promote oral communication using excerpts of the interviews provided by the Voices from Our America Project

Instruction

Explain the importance of the West Indian contribution in general

Project a Voices from Our America interview clip for the whole class to see and discuss

Give students the opportunity to share their opinion about what they heard in the interview

Students will pose questions and answers as they debate about the information

Students will compare the information they learn about to today's reality

Students will get into groups of 2-3 students and prepare a written report where they will share all the new things they have learned

Students will present their reports to the class

Follow-up Activity

Students can investigate more about the topic presented in the interview and then share the information they found with the rest of the class. Students can compare the information they investigated with the information provided in the interview.

Assessment

Students will be evaluated based on the topic, their listening and comprehension skills and their oral communication skills.



Telling Stories through Art

African Art Appreciation Workshop

Developed by: Gabriela Mariño

Age range: 7-12 years old

Materials:

African art work examples

Tempera paint

Paint brushes

Cloth 10" x 12"

Workshop Background

Art is the process or product of deliberately arranging elements in a way that appeals to the senses or emotions. It encompasses a diverse range of human activities, creations, and modes of expression, including music, literature, film, sculpture and paintings. When it comes to art, Africans often tell stories about everyday life, culture, religion and family in their compositions.

In African visual art, beauty comes over a different perspective in comparison with occidental and European: a swell or big belly might seem non esthetic in a female figure for an occidental artist, but for an African artist this might mean fertility; sink in eyes might mean illness or sorrow, this might also mean wisdom; a human figure on its knee might symbolize submission but it might also mean rest.

Objective

The main objective of this workshop is to introduce kids to visual art appreciation using African paintings as a platform from where they will be able to establish differences between Western and African art in terms of texture, color styles and composition.

After describing the main elements that characterize African paintings and making a demonstration of various African artist paintings and photographs, participants will be encouraged to make their own artistic representation using the previously mentioned design principles and the material provided by us.

African Art Appreciation Workshop - Focus on Color

Color has to do specifically with the tones, shades and texture. African paintings are characterized for having schematic black figures in contrast with the background. They are also characterized by the use of hot colors such as red, yellow and orange. Black and earth colors also stand out.



“Aprendí que los afro antillanos en sus pinturas relatan historias, además utilizan colores calidos, llamativos y negros y también utilizan formas. (‘I learned that West Indians tell stories in their paintings, and they use hot colors that grab your attention, and black and they also use forms’)” Carla participated in the VFOA African Art Appreciation workshop instructed by Gabriela Mariño at the 2011 Great West Indian Fair in Panama City, Panama

Step 1. Begin by showing images of African paintings. Lead participants into an observation process and give them the following list of elements to focus on:

Hot colors
Black figures
Earth colors

Step 2. Give participants some note paper to jot down 1-3 sentences about what they learned. Make sure they remember to include the previously mentioned elements which characterize African artwork.

Step 3. Give participants materials to paint: tempera, paintbrush, cloth. Participants will create a painting about an everyday life activity of their choice. Encourage them to remember the previously mentioned elements which characterize African artwork. Give participants enough time to finish their work.

Step 4. Ask participants to present and explain their artwork pointing out the elements they identified in the examples they analyzed before.

African Art Appreciation Workshop - Focus on Form

Form refers to the graphic and visual elements use to define the representation. In African paintings, arm and legs are usually long thin straight lines. The decorations and figures are made with geometric shapes such as squares, rectangles, triangles and circles. Another important aspect of African artwork is the nonlinear scaling which gives viewers the sensation of admiring a wide composition out of a small portion of a drawing; the use of repetitions to form patterns and exaggeration to emphasize features.



“Lo que aprendí de las pinturas africanas fue que ellos pintan con contraste y colores fuertes como rojo, negro, amarillo, anaranjado y verde y que pintan basado a lo que ven. (‘I learned that African paintings are painted with contrast and strong colors like red, black, yellow, orange and green, and they are painted based of what they see’)”
Celyn Sánchez participated in the VFOA African Art Appreciation workshop instructed by Gabriela Mariño at the 2011 Great West Indian Fair in Panama City, Panama

Step 1. Begin by showing images of African paintings. Lead participants into an observation process and give them the following list of elements to focus on:

- Long and thin arms and legs
- Geometric shapes
- Non-linear scaling
- Repetitions
- Exaggeration

Step 2. Give participants some note paper to jot down 1-3 sentences about what they learned. Make sure they remember to include the previously mentioned elements which characterize African artwork.

Step 3. Give participants materials to paint: tempera, paintbrush, cloth. Participants will create a painting about an everyday life activity of their choice. Encourage them to remember the previously mentioned elements which characterize African artwork. Give participants enough time to finish their work.

Step 4. Ask participants to present and explain their artwork pointing out the elements they identified in the examples they analyzed before.

African Art Appreciation Workshop - Focus on Composition

Composition refers to the combination of forms and colors in each art work. The human figure has always been the most important subject matter in African Visual art. The human figure may symbolize the living or the dead, may reference leaders, dancers, drummers or hunters or it may also symbolize the interaction between human and animals. These figures are normally dressed with the traditional African clothing characterized for its vibrant colors and abstracts shapes.

Abstraction is another characteristic of African artwork in contrast to occidental realistic representation style. Hot colors, such as red, yellow and orange, and black and earth like colors stand out the most.



Kenny participated in the VFOA African Art Appreciation workshop instructed by Gabriela Mariño at the 2011 Great West Indian Fair in Panama City, Panama.



Step 1. Begin by showing images of African paintings. Lead participants into an observation process and give them the following list of elements to focus on:

Symbolism of the human figure

Traditional African clothing

Abstraction

Hot colors

Black

Earth like colors

Step 2. Give participants some note paper to jot down 1-3 sentences about what they learned. Make sure they remember to include the previously mentioned elements which characterize African artwork.

Step 3. Give participants materials to paint: tempera, paintbrush, cloth. Participants will create a painting about an everyday life activity of their choice. Encourage them to remember the previously mentioned elements which characterize African artwork. Give participants enough time to finish their work.

Step 4. Ask participants to present and explain their artwork pointing out the elements they identified in the examples they analyzed before.

African Art Appreciation Workshop - Focus on Balance and Proportion

Balance refers to the areas of the painting which suggests a certain visual weight, a certain degree of lightness or heaviness. For example, light colors appear lighter in weight than dark colors. Brilliant colors visually weigh more than neutral colors in the same areas. Warm colors, such as yellow tend to expand an area in size, whereas cool colors like blue tend to contract an area.

Proportion in art is the comparative harmonious relationship between two or more elements in a composition in relation to size, color, quantity, etc. A relationship is created when two or more elements are put together in a painting.

African artists achieve balance and proportion by using color, composition and form rather than having a perfectly realistic representation of the human or animal subject.



Paintings created by anonymous participants at the VFOA African Art Appreciation workshop instructed by Gabriela Mariño at the 2011 Great West Indian Fair in Panama City, Panama.



Step 1. Begin by showing images of African paintings. Lead participants into an observation process and give them the following list of elements to focus on:

Light and neutral colors – light weight

Dark and brilliant colors – heavy weight

Warm colors – expanded areas

Cool colors – contracted areas

Small vs. large elements

Step 2. Give participants some note paper to jot down 1-3 sentences about what they learned. Make sure they remember to include the previously mentioned elements which characterize African artwork.

Step 3. Give participants materials to paint: tempera, paintbrush, cloth. Participants will create a painting about an everyday life activity of their choice. Encourage them to remember the previously mentioned elements which characterize African artwork. Give participants enough time to finish their work.

Step 4. Ask participants to present and explain their artwork pointing out the elements they identified in the examples they analyzed before.

References

www.askart.com

www.africaclub.com

www.pinturayartistas.com

www.artneteafrica.com

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www.history.com

www.bluemoonwebdesign.com/art-lessons-7.asp



Points of View...



Elaboration Game

Methodology derived from: Artful Thinking Project, © Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education

Objective

Students will look carefully and deeply at details.

Students will develop elaborate, nuanced and imaginative verbal descriptions.

Students will distinguish between observation and interpretation.

Key Terms

observe: What do you see? Provide a physical description, withholding personal opinions or ideas about what the painting means.

elaborate: Provide more details, withholding opinions or ideas.

interpret: What does it all mean? Read between the lines. This is the place for opinions and ideas.

Step 1. Individual Work - Visit one of the links below to select one of the recommended paintings focusing on everyday life in one of the many historically West Indian neighborhoods in Panama.

“Impromptu market (Plaza Santana)”, by George Scribner at

http://www.scribnerart.com/panama_page.php ("Impromptu market ")

“A scene from the barrio” by George Dunn at

http://www.thepanamanews.com/pn/v_14/issue_10/culture_01.html (Szock)

Step 2. Group Work -Working in groups of four students (who have selected the same picture), mentally divide the painting into four sections (i.e. four quarters) and select one section of the painting and proceed as follows:

1st person: observe the section selected and describe what you see

2nd person: elaborate on the first person’s observation

3rd person: elaborate further

4th person: elaborate further

Step 3. Repeat Step 2, until each remaining section until all have been elaborated.



Step 4. Class Work - After all groups in the class have observed and made elaborate descriptions of the painting, interpret the painting as a class by trying to answer the following questions about the painting:

What is going on in this painting?

What is the message the artist trying to convey through the painting?

What insight does the painting give us about life in some of Panama's predominantly Black neighborhoods?

References

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<<http://www.pz.harvard.edu/tc/routines.cfm>>.



Perceive, Know, Care About

Methodology derived from: Artful Thinking Project, © Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education

Objective

Students will explore different points of view and perspectives through oral narratives of Panamanians of West Indian descent.

Students will imagine situations, problems, issues differently.

Key Terms

perceive: What is the person aware of because of his or her senses, or intuition?

know: What knowledge does the person have based on his or her background?

care about: What is important to the person?

Step 1. INDIVIDUAL WORK - Visit the link below found at the Voices from Our America website to read, listen or view an excerpt from an interview with Ms Clarke from Cativa, Colon.

Ms. Clarke talks about speaking English at home:

http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/VfOA/voices_JClark.php

Step 2. GROUP WORK – Working in groups of 2-3 students, list at least three (3) different perspectives or points of view (including your own) from which you can analyze the excerpt from the interview with Ms Clarke. For example:

- Ms. Clarke's point of view
- Ms. Clarke's mom
- Ms. Clarke's teachers
- Your point of view

Step 3. For each point of view listed (starting with your own point of view), answer the following questions:

What do you/the person perceive about speaking English at home?

What do you/the person know about speaking English at home?

Why do you/the person care about speaking English at home?

For example:

What does Ms. Clarke perceive about speaking English at home?

What does Ms. Clarke's know about speaking English at home?

Why does Ms. Clarke care about speaking English at home?



Step 4. MAKE YOUR THINKING VISIBLE - Create a large grid like the one below, and compare and contrast your group's answers with the rest of the class. Which perspectives are most similar? Which are most different from each other? Which perspective(s) is most similar to your own point of view?

	Perceive	Know	Care about
My perspective #1			
Perspective #2 from interview			
Perspective #3 from interview			

References

Traverse City Area Public Schools and Project Zero, . "Artful Thinking Routines." Artful Thinking Program. Harvard Graduate School of Education, n.d. Web. 31 Dec 2010.
 <<http://www.pz.harvard.edu/tc/routines.cfm>>.

"Listen to Voices: Joheta Clark." Voices from Our America. Web. 6 Feb 2011.
 <http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/VfOA/voices_JClark.php>.



Creative Comparisons

Methodology derived from: Artful Thinking Project, © Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education

Objective

Students will engage in metaphorical thinking to gain a better understanding of oral history.
Students will create comparisons between dissimilar things.
Students will understand an unfamiliar subject by linking it to what they already know.

Key Terms

What is oral history?

"a self-conscious, disciplined conversation between two people about some aspect of the past considered by them to be of historical significance and intentionally recorded for the record." ("History Matters")

"recorded memories of the past" ("Oral History Society")

collection and interpretation of "human memories to foster knowledge and human dignity."
("Oral History Association")

Step 1. AS A CLASS - Read and analyze the answers to the question "what is oral history?" Three definitions are listed above. Which definition do you like the most? Why?

Step 2. INDIVIDUAL WORK (OR HOMEWORK) – Read an example of oral history. Click on the link below to access the Digital Library of the Voices from Our America website and select one of the 10 interviews to read carried out by the VFOA project in the Republic of Panama. There are three (3) interviews in Spanish, seven (7) interviews in English and one interview in both English and Spanish. Allocate 20-30 minutes to read as much as you can of the interview you select.

VFOA DIGITAL LIBRARY: <http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib.php>

Step 3. AS A CLASS – Read about the interview process used for the collection of oral histories in the Voices from Our America project. Go to <http://vfoa.edublogs.org/publications/> and click on the Voices from Our America Oral History Activity Book. Scroll to page 9 and read the first four steps of the Calendar activity in the "What to do" section.

Step 4. GROUP WORK – Working in groups of 2-3 students, answer the following questions on a post-it note?

If the oral history process was a kind of game, without audio or video recorders, which game would it be?

List two (2) reasons why you choose that game?



NOTE FOR TEACHERS: If students have a hard time coming up with examples of games, remind them to think about games that require that they recall information from memory and/or have limited communication options (only drawing, acting, singing or whispering, etc.), like “telephone”, “memory”, “charades”.

Step 5. MAKE YOUR THINKING VISIBLE - Create a chart like the one below and place your post-it note next to other’s with the same or similar game listed.

Most listed game	2nd most listed game
3rd most listed game	4th most listed game
5th most listed game	Game least mentioned

Discuss the following questions with the rest of the class:

What are the most commonly listed games?

What are the least commonly listed games?

Which games surprised you?

Read through all the reasons listed for each game.

Could there be any distortion in the information being transmitted in any of the games listed? (for example, not hearing or seeing part of the information) Why?

Could there be any misinterpretation of the information being transmitted in the games listed? (for example, not understanding the information) Why?

Why do you think it is important for oral history to be properly recorded and interpreted?

References:

Traverse City Area Public Schools and Project Zero, . "Artful Thinking Routines." Artful Thinking Program. Harvard Graduate School of Education, n.d. Web. 31 Dec 2010.

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"Welcome to the Oral History Society." Oral History Society. OHS, 06Feb2011. Web. 6 Feb 2011.

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Voices from Our America

Book of the Month



From White to Black, Things that Happen to Me, by Haydeé Beckles

Being born with a disability did not give me an advantage over others, but it did make me more mature and aware of who I am. I didn't know the value of money until I was twenty years old. The time came when I wanted to have an apartment and a car. Actually, I have neither one nor the other. I live with my mother, and this has been enough for me. I often say I'll leave home because I can't take it anymore. But everyone has their moments, and every action, a reaction. (p. 15)

At times when I exclaimed, "this only happens to me!" I wasn't quite correct, since many of the events that happen to me also happen to other people with disabilities. I understand that I have the motivation to transcend to higher heights. When one door is closed, another opens- even if it closes again from time to time. Let us look towards new horizons, without forgetting that we have constant support from God and our fellowmen.

For Book Clubs

Do you know what it feels like to be a person with a disability?

How does a person with a disability live?

Why did I write this book?



My Deepest Feeling, by Haydeé Beckles

My Disability

I have been able to compensate my disability
with my impromptu friendship,
my nervous laugh,
my mental agility,
because I have taken advantage
of every moment of the day,
because that which I lack
no one notices.

Because there is no simple vantage point.
Because as time passes
I have been able to confront the small problems
with my impromptu friendship
and my good feelings, which spring
from the knowledge that
God has taken mercy on me.

I knew myself
When I
Found out that I am nothing.

For Book Clubs

Why did I write the book?

Define friendship.

What is my strength? (Section on Strength)



De/From Barbados a/to Panama, by Melva Goodin

"Manuelita: Quiero escribir sobre algo que nunca he visto en los textos de historia y cívica...sobre los obreros antillanos como el abuelo Samuel..." (p. 6)

De/From Barbados a/to Panama is a bilingual play about Manuelita, a Panamanian schoolgirl, discovering her family's West Indian roots.

The scenes depicting Manuelita at home and at school are written in Panamanian Spanish. The flash-back scenes of her great-grandparents, Samuel and Leah, who came to the Isthmus of Panama from Barbados for the building of the Panama Canal in 1909, are written in West Indian English. There are also scenes written in American English that reflect the interaction between Americans and West Indians during the construction of the Panama Canal.

For Book Clubs

What generational change(s) is evident among the characters in the play? or How do the characters in the play reflect a generational change?

How can we attribute an economic motive to the events that take place in the play and the reactions of the characters to these events?

Does the author of the play show support for the theory that the West Indian workers were better at withstanding the effects of malaria and yellow fever that plagued the Isthmus during the period of the construction of the Canal?



Naitafon, by Raul Houlstan

“Satan”

They refuse to ask forgiveness
they trivialize sacrifice
thinking of death
they live.

For them there will be nowhere
sold are the tickets of Naitafón.

They will enliven
LORD COBRA
UNCLE PAPS
COQUILLO
MAGAMÁN
and a musical star
whose name will not be mentioned
appealed Satan. (p. 16)

Naitafón’s poem is a work containing evocative content, where the poet takes up the thread that leads to his childhood, through characters who left a deep mark on the collective imagination of the inhabitants of the Bocas del Toro archipelago. It is the result of a mixture containing Anglophones, Spaniards, and indigenous ethnic groups, owners of the Ngaba-bugle, Miskito and Garifuna alphabets.

Satan's poem is dedicated to a musician nicknamed Satan, a name which wasn't negative, and which was due to his goatee and mischievousness, that is, his “look and feeling”. This character of Miskito origins travelled across Central America and the Caribbean peoples, carrying the lyrics of his catchy calypso tunes and the swing of his guitar. The poem is a tribute to him.

For Book Clubs

Highlight aspects of ethnicity in the author's work.

Develop the concept of evocativeness and its relationship with oral tradition in Naitafón’s poems.

Emphasize the role of the characters in the play. Their importance and the implications.



Dutu, by Francisco Paz

"Dutu a graceful sixteen year old maiden, had long black hair that reached down to her waist, smooth, coppery skin, a beautifully sculpted body and a fierce and decisive look. In her veins she carried the courage and strength of the black man, the gallantry and posture of a European man and the skill and cunning of the native indigenous Creole." (p. 5)

During the eighteenth century colonial times the trafficking of African slaves throughout the Americas was a profitable enterprise. It is assumed that 60% of the slaves that arrived in the Americas first passed through Panamanian soil, to then be distributed to the entire continent. The maroons were born out of the slaves' need for freedom which in turn gave rise to the mixing of the indigenous inhabitants, Europeans and Africans.

Traditional Panamanian culture is based on this crossbreeding, thereby engendering the folklore of this nation we call Panama.

Dutu is a historical Panamanian folk play, which urges the reader to appreciate the traditions and customs of these people who fought hard to forge ahead as a free nation with its very own identity.

For Book Clubs

What does the character DUTU represent?

What natural environments are depicted in the novel?

In your opinion, what happened to DUTU?



Reminiscences/Recopilación, by Ines Sealy

"Many were the games West Indian children played (in the areas of Panama where they lived). Girls played ring games: "Chick, chick,chick...", Bingo, London Bridge, etc., and boys played tops, picks, teo, etc."

"Many words from the games went into calypsos: Brown Girl (in the ring), Hilding, building, Jobalinda..."

This is a bilingual book in volumes, which collects historic anecdotes, poetry, games, songs about life for West Indians and their descendents in the Republic of Panama during the days of the Construction of the Panama Railroad and the Panama Canal as told by the protagonists.

Volume one was printed in 1999. Other volumes are being prepared to be sent to press.

For Book Clubs

"How are the games kids play today different or similar to the games West Indians used to play during the canal construction era?"

Who brought the lottery to Panama?

Name some Canal Zone towns.

Where can you find a "quaty"?

Where was Aspinwall? Where was La Boca Town?



Book Reviews



My experience using 'Dutu' in the classroom, by Professor Enrique Plato, Instituto Episcopal San Cristobal, 5th and 6th grade

Which activity was based on the book?

The project we developed based on the novel *Dutu* involved getting students to focus on the suffering experienced by Afro descendants in Panama. This is why we decided to create a small socio class skit in which students portrayed characters in accordance with their particular physical characteristics. The goal itself was to instill in students a sense of where we came from and how our ancestors survived in spite of all the humiliation and mistreatment they had to face.

How was the students' work evaluated?

The procedure that we used was to cast the characters in the play according to the physical characteristics of the students, and for them to focus on developing the artistic side of their personalities specifically with regard to tone and body language, which would serve to imitate the characters from the novel that they were playing.

In the evaluation we took their interest in the skit into account, their attendance at rehearsals as well as other factors.

Why would you recommend the book to other educators?

Because it is a work that contains experiences which we can use to instill in our students 1) the importance of the descendants of the different ethnic groups contained in the reading, 2) the memory of the experiences of our ancestors that should never be forgotten, and 3) an understanding of the struggles, achievements and contributions that occurred in order for us to enjoy what we have today.



My experience using 'Dutu' in the classroom, by Professor Jannett Hoo, 9th grade, León Antonio Soto High School

Dutu (flower in the Kuna language) narrates the origin of our folklore in a simple and enjoyable manner. Francisco Paz de la Rosa knew how to weave stories into each chapter in order to help us understand the melting pot which together we form in this beautiful country of ours called Panama.

Because the novel was so interesting, we decided to read it with our ninth grade students. We developed a reading project with stimulating activities to awaken interest in the children and which in turn, could cut involve other subject areas. For me and my two colleagues Marcela de Chung (Instituto América) and Lesbia Beteta (Primer Ciclo Louis Martínez) reading is supposed to be an enjoyable activity. We therefore designed the activities with that objective in mind.

The project was divided into three stages: Pre, during and post reading activities. Before reading the novel, we did "read-without-reading" activities on the novel such as scanning and skimming. At this point, the students were able to express their opinions about the novel orally. They were also able to create a vocabulary list based on the cover of the book. Questions were asked in order to activate prior knowledge. Once the students became enthusiastic, we proceeded to read collaboratively and to continue the novel. We paused occasionally to explain some terms or to clarify some aspects of the novel. Once we completed the reading (which was very enjoyable and allowed students to bring cushions and get into comfortable positions) we did other activities that were related to other subject areas.

An alternate ending to the novel was created.

A continuation of the novel Dutu was written.

A letter expressing the students' comments was sent to the author.

The students dramatized the chapters that they most enjoyed.

A cross-disciplinary approach was made with Artistic Expressions when students drew scenes of the novel.

A connection was made with History (research on the arrival of the Spaniards and blacks in our country)

Places mentioned in the novel were located on a map of Panama

During a discussion the main contributions of blacks, Spaniards and indigenous inhabitants were presented as well as information on how this mix of races created our nation Panama

Fun activities were carried out: crossword puzzles, word searches, etc.

This experience was unforgettable. The young people acquired new knowledge, applied their speaking and writing skills, but most of all, they enjoyed a wonderful reading.



Voices from Our America

Creole



Creole

by Leticia Thomas, Ph.D.

Background

Spanish is the official language of Panama and many Panamanians of Antillean descent are bilingual. The other language spoken by the Caribbean people who immigrated to Panamá, their descendants and by others who have learned it from them is an English-based creole. Antillean Panamanians do not call their English-based language 'creole'. Throughout the city of Panamá the language of Antillean Panamanians is commonly known as English.

Although it is called English in Panamá, it is a creole because it exhibits many of the well-known characteristics of creoles worldwide. Creoles are languages with multi-lingual roots, primarily lexified by one language but exhibiting influences of one or more other languages in their lexicon (vocabulary), syntax (grammar) and phonology. Panamanian Creole is an English-based creole, which means it is primarily lexified by English. Nevertheless, it does contain lexical items documented in West African languages and in Caribbean English-based creoles. It also contains lexical items from Spanish, French as well as original lexical items or innovations. Not every Panamanian of Antillean descent speaks Creole English and not everyone who speaks the creole speaks it in the same way.

Syntactic structure (grammar) provides the strongest evidence for creoles being separate languages from their lexifiers. A creolized language displays a markedly different structure from the language upon which it is based. This series of posts will highlight some common syntactic characteristics of the English-based creole spoken in Panama City.

Past Habitual 'Yuustu'

yuustu <used+to. Preverbal marker used as an indicator of past habituals.

The preverbal tense marker yuustu, probably lexified by the English used+to is used by speakers of Panamanian Creole English in Panama City, to express past habits.

"Dei yuustu tek kyer. Befor you kom outsaid yu ad tu suiip."
(They used to take care. Before you came outside you had to sweep.)

In the example above, the past time is set with yuustu before the verb at the beginning of the statement. Yuustu is an indicator of past habituals. The unmarked verb (kom) in the balance of the text is also understood to be a past habit.

Preverbal Marker 'Di'

di <did. The preverbal tense marker di, probably lexified by the English article the is used by speakers of Panamanian Creole English in Panama City, to express the simple past with state verbs as well as the past before past with action verbs.



“Ai tink shi woz op beka piipul kaal tu. Piipul staat kaalin evribadi. An piipul fram di Steits di noo bout it aredi so piipul woz kaalin dem piipul dong ier.”

(I think that she was awake, because people called too. People started calling everybody. And people from the United States knew about it already so people were calling their relatives here in Panama.)

Adjectives as Verbs

Adjectives can function as verbs in Panamanian Creole English. Sentential adjectives do not require any form of the verb ‘to be’ therefore, ‘the girl is hungry’ can be expressed as ‘di gyal ongri’ and ‘they are fat’ can be expressed as ‘dem fat’.

The flexibility of Adjectives used as verbs is extended to their use along with the preverbal tense marker *di* to indicate the tense of the action/situation as illustrated by the following:

“Un taim ai driim mai grandmada di dai, an ai, raatid!, wen ai wiek op, ai di glad ai wiek op man.”

(Once I dreamt that my grandmother had died and I, raatid! (an exclamation indicating surprise or anger) When I woke up, I was glad that I woke up man.)

“Ai din go so gud in skuul beka di sik”

(I didn't do very well in school because was sick).

Preverbal Marker ‘Ad’

ad <had. Some speakers of Panamanian Creole English use *ad* before inflected or uninflected verbs to indicate past actions that occurred before another past action. *Ad* derives from the English ‘had’.

“Uan taim ai ad root somting an ai wish dat ai cud get dat. A gonu luk it op an trai tu giv dat peepá bifer yu liiv, bout ípocrits.”

(Once I had written something and I wish that I could get that. I am going to look it up and try to give you that paper before you leave, it is about hypocrites).

Compleatives

Compleatives are used in creoles to indicate that a situation/action has already been completed or finished. *Don*, for example, is commonly used in some Caribbean English creoles or that purpose. Panamanian Creole English uses both *don* and/or *ya* (Spanish adverb *ya* = ‘already’) as indicators of completedness.



"Ai don wash dis maanin." (I finished washing this morning).

"Wen dei com fram di fineral dem av a big iitin an ya. If dem fiil laik, dem mek caafi an serv it an ya." (When they return from the funeral they serve a big meal and they are finished. If they feel like it, they make coffee and serve it and everything is finished).

"Bikaa iiz awé ya is about a ier nou." (Because he is away already about a year now).
"Ai muuv ier beka ya de woz mashin dong di pleis." (I moved here because they were already breaking down the place).

Calques of Phrases and Idiomatic Expressions

Because Panamanian Creole English co-exists with Spanish, many of its speakers utilize word-for-word translations of Spanish expressions. These Spanish sentence patterns have entered the English creole via the use of calques and other idiomatic or fixed expressions.

Following are a few samples collected in my study of Panamanian Creole English in Panama City:

"Shi wul kaal mai atenshan". -She would call my attention. (She reprimanded me).
'llamarme la atención' Spanish expression used in place of the English form 'to reprimand'.

"Yu jos stei shodop". (You just remained quiet).
To stay shut up is a calque of the Spanish expression 'Quedarse callado.'

"An op tu di dei ov tudei". (Until (now) today).
Up to the day of today is a calque of the Spanish expression 'hasta el día (sol) de hoy.'

"De yuustu paas a gud taim". (They would have a good time).
Used to pass a good time is a calque of the Spanish expression 'Pasaban un buen rato'.

"Fram di skai it na gwein kom". (It is not going to come from the sky).
From the sky it is not going to come is a calque of the Spanish expression 'Del cielo no va a caer'.



Lexical items from African Languages

The lexical items derived from African languages migrated to Panama with creole speakers who came to the Isthmus to work on agricultural and construction projects. Below are some examples of common words along with the names of the geographical locations where these same words are in use today. For example, the dictionary entry **únu** derives from the Ibo or Igbo language spoken in Nigeria where it is used as the plural of the personal pronoun 'you'.

- **kukúu** <Ewe *kuku* 'corn', n. Corn meal cooked with okra.
- **ñam** <? multiple sources in West African languages such as Wolof, Fula and Twi. To eat, especially greedily.
- **obia** <Twi *obja* 'magic spell', n. and adj. Magic or witchcraft.
- **susú** <Yoruba *esusu*, n. Money saved in a round robin system.
- **únu** <Ibo, Igbo *unu* 'you'. Plural form of you.
- **yampí** <Wolof *nyambi* 'yam', n. Small variety of yam. One of the edible roots.

Ewe is a Niger-Congo language spoken in Ghana, Togo and Benin by approximately six million people.

Wolof is a language spoken in **Senegal**, **The Gambia**, and **Mauritania**, and is the native language of the Wolof people.

The **Fula** language is a language of West Africa, spoken by the Fula people from **Senegal** to **Cameroon** and **Sudan**.

Twi is an Akan language that is the principal native language of **Ghana**.

Yorùbá is a Niger-Congo language spoken in **Nigeria**, **Benin**, and **Togo** by approximately 20 million speakers

The **Igbo** language also known as **Ibo**, is a member of the Niger-Congo family of languages. **Ibo** is spoken in **Nigeria** by approximately 18 million speakers. It is also spoken in **Equatorial Guinea**.

THE EFFECTS OF SPANISH ON PANAMANIAN CREOLE ENGLISH

Panamanian Creole English (PC) differs from other creole Englishes, those spoken in the Caribbean for example, because it has been affected by Spanish. Normally, creoles change by moving closer to their lexifier (Standard English) but in this case, its coexistence with a language other than its lexifier, for more than one hundred years, has affected this English-based creole with Spanish



influences on the syntactic, lexical and phonological levels. We will take a brief look at the effects of Spanish on the syntax of Panamanian Creole English.

Syntactic Influence

One of the most salient examples of syntactic influence of Spanish on the Panamanian English-based creole is what we call '**zero subject**'. Spanish does not require a surface subject in order for an utterance to be acceptable or for a sentence to be complete. Since verbs in Spanish are conjugated, overt subjects or pronouns are not necessary and are often stated only for clarification, emphasis or style. Some speakers of Panamanian creole English exhibit a tendency toward omitting the subjects in their PC sentences.

- For example, when asked: "Has Carnaval changed?" One of my informants replied:
"(0) Woz beta bifoo, (0) woz riil nais."
(It) was better before, (it) was real nice.
- Another informant was asked: "How did you get that job?"
He replied: "Dem get mi di work bikaas (0) di noo mai óngkul..."
They got me the job because (they) knew my uncle...

Another example of the influence of Spanish on the syntax of PC is the use of an **emphatic 'Yes' as an auxiliary**.

Many speakers of PC often use yes as do would be used in English to indicate emphasis. Spanish uses 'sí' (yes) before the verb in the same manner. In PC yes functions as a preverbal marker and can also co-occur with other tense and aspect markers.

- For example, when asked: "Did you ever hear of anyone who went there?"
The informant replied: Ye, wi yes ier, ai yes ier it.
Yes, we did hear, I did hear it.
- As well as: Bot ii yes, yu noo bois aaweis.
But he did, you know boys always.



Voices from Our America

Clips and Snapshots.

**Photography and Transcripts Featuring Places of Interest
to Individuals Interviewed by VFOA.**

Paraiso

Photography by Nedelka Campbell

Paraiso is a small town just off the banks of the Panama Canal. It is located close to where the water in the southern end of the canal empties into the Pacific Ocean. Many West Indian workers lived in Paraiso during the canal construction era, and many of their descendants continue to do so today.



Mrs. Goodin:

At the time when I grew up, it was one of the communities for the Panamanian West Indian workers and we lived there until about 1955 or '56, then we moved to another Canal Zone town called Paraíso where I completed my Junior High and High School.

There was a library available in the Paraíso Community right close to the school. I was very fond of books. I remember always going to the library on a Friday and coming out with about 4, 5 books and spending my weekend reading.

(Mrs. Goodin was interviewed by VFOA on February 15, 2007 .Learn more about Mrs. Goodin at: <http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib.php?record=2>.)



Ms. Sealy:

My paternal father was from Barbados, also, and I don't know if he worked on the canal. He may have worked in the construction of the canal, but what I can remember of him, he had a lot in Paraiso behind the railroad track. On the other side of the railroad track, and he'd been farming there. He had a horse. He used to ride a horse. And I remember going to visit him 'round the back there, and he had produce, yam and yucca and what not. And he'd give us gifts to bring back.

(Ms. Sealy was interviewed by VFOA on April 11, 2008. Learn more about Ms. Sealy at: <http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib.php?record=9>.)

La Boca

Photography by Nedelka Campbell

La Boca is a small town just off the banks of the Panama Canal. It is located at the point where the water in the southern end of the canal empties into the Pacific Ocean. Many West Indian workers lived in Paraiso during the canal construction era, and many of their descendants continue to do so.





Mr. Russell:

And La Boca was perhaps one of the places where I remember with a lot of affection because I remember at certain periods during the years, seasons, oh thousands of butterflies would uh, fly across the lawn that existed between the school and where we lived and kids would nail cardboards on sticks and swat them. They were green and black, and they still do it, going across, migrating across the Canal. (Mr. Russell was interviewed by VFOA on February 15, 2007. Learn more about Mr. Russell at: <http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib.php?record=1>.)

Mr. Haynes:

In the Episcopalian church it was St. Peter's Church in La Boca and I remember when she held my hand and took me there for the first time to the church and then my brother and I we grew like twins. And everything she did, she did for both of us. And she had that, that, that style of dress where these young English boys used to, how they used to dress with the knickerbockers and the long stocking...and...collars. (Mr. Haynes was interviewed by VFOA on March 28, 2007. Learn more about Mr. Haynes at <http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib.php?record=4>.)

Ms. Beckles:

Mi mamá, mi mamá, ella sí le encanta el deporte, ella en la Boca, ella jugaba beisbol. Entonces cuando se fueron los militares de Panamá y se llevaron el Canal Ocho, ella me envió a Cable Onda y nunca vieron las cosas que estaban en la zona, pero ella lo que hace es ver deportes, y ella habla de eso, cuando se pega ahí ella vive, hasta batea. (Ms. Beckles was interviewed by VFOA on September 24, 2008. Learn more about Ms. Beckles at <http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib.php?record=8>.)



Gorgas Hospital

Photography by Nedelka Campbell

Gorgas Hospital, originally known as Ancon Hospital, was a United States military hospital named after Army Surgeon General William C. Gorgas. This hospital played an important role in controlling many tropical diseases including yellow fever and malarial, which was essential for the completion of the Panama Canal. Gorgas Hospital is located in the town of Ancon. Many Panamanians of West Indian descent were born in Gorgas Hospital. It is currently the site of the Instituto Oncologico Nacional (the National Cancer Institute).





Mr. Newland:

But I used to make it my duty when I leave Corzal in the evening at 3:30 I reach my by the hospital about 4 and I see go through on visit every patient until about 6:00 before I go, at Gorgas hospital. Sometime I spent a lot of time with them. There was one young there, he died Ricardo Saw, and I used to spend a lot, a lot of time. I spent a lot of time with him at my brother's and those things I met a lot of before. I remember once when I was hospitalized and I got up, I was operated, the man was next to me said when people came in the evening they asked why your place was so quiet. And he told them the reason there is he just got operated because when I was moving around I just went to all the patients and kept the place lively. I just liked to keep everybody lively. (Mr. Newland was interviewed by VFOA on February 16, 2007. Learn more about Mr. Newland at

<http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib.php?record=5.>)

Mr. Gobern:

And they had me go to Gorgas, in the research laboraroty, with Dr. Johnson. He sent me there to do research work with them too, because they always used to be workin' in the laboratory and I used to be there assisting them.

And then at the Gorgas in the Canal Zone with the United States Government at that time, all there with those doctors, I got training there with them too. And there was a gentleman there now, that got sick in the laboratory, and they recommended that I was capable of so I was in charge of laboratory and the pharmacy. And finally when the Seguro Social took charge of the hospital now, and and the company became Seguro Social, that's why they gave me the diploma of honor. (Mr. Gobern was interviewed by VFOA on February 16, 2007. Learn more about Mr. Gobern at

<http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib.php?record=6.>)

Ms. Beckles:

Yo nací en el Gorgas, fui sietemesina, me dio parálisis cerebral.

...cuando nací en el Gorgas, es que a mí me operaron a los 3 días de haber nacido y luego tuve un mes en la incubadora, y cuando mi mamá me llevó al Gorgas de nuevo, el doctor le pidió a mi persona y fue por el hospital diciendo: -¡Esta era la niña que iba a morir, esta era la niña que iba a morir!-, y me presentó a todo el mundo de allí. (Ms. Beckles was interviewed by VFOA on September 24, 2008. Learn more about Ms. Beckles at

<http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib.php?record=8.>)

The Commissary Store

Photography by Nedelka Campbell

The commissary stores on the Panama Canal Zone were established in 1905 by Governor Charles Magoon. Their purpose was to distribute food at cost to the canal labor force.



Mr. Russell:

As you know, there were uh, gold commissaries and silver commissaries. Uh, my mother, for example, sold shoes in a gold commissary. And uh, I always remember the story of the little lady, little black lady who went at the water fountain and it had a spigot that says silver, and the next one that says gold. And she walked over and was drinking water from the gold one and someone came and asked her. The policeman said, "Woman why are you drinking?" Say, "I just, mister, I just want to know what gold water tastes like," you know. (Mr. Russell was interviewed by VFOA on February 15, 2007. Learn more about Mr. Russell at <http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib.php?record=1.>)



Mr. Newland:

I was 16 years old when I started to work. Started to work in the commissary because at that time the war was just starting and there was a lot of boom in jobs and those days our parents didn't make any money. They were only working for \$22 and \$25 a month. So, you just have to get out and get a job to help yourself and to help them. So most of the young people just started to work when they were about 15 or 16 years at that time. (Mr. Newland was interviewed by VFOA on February 16, 2007. Learn more about Mr. Newland at

<http://voicesamerica.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib.php?record=5.>)



West Indian Gastronomy



The Rondon an energizing, restorative aphrodisiac.

by Veronica Hidalgo. Nutritionist-Dietitian. Reg.345

If there are two things intertwined around each other at the crossroads of destiny, they are the Afro-Caribbean culture and food. Both culture and food become one word when the most subtle dishes are prepared by the hands of Afro-Caribbean people. For it is said that to discover the true Afro-Caribbean culture you must take to the kitchen.

The joyous Afro-Caribbean culture allowed the mixture of ingredients provided by nature as well as those planted by themselves for subsistence. According to an interview with the VFOA team to celebrity chef Rodolfo De Desuze Isla Colon in Almirante, Bocas del Toro, in November 2009, he tells us that in times past: "There was plenty of ground food sold to us by Indians (banana, cassava, taro, Otoe, banana, ullanura, etc., etc.) as well as the black Creoles; Indians brought up by blacks would fish and seek (turtle, lobster, conch, etc.). at that time one hardly ate octopus like we do today . "Desuze tries to maintain the Afro-Caribbean gastronomy by preparing food without forgetting the details in the original ingredients.

Thus, by chance or fate, we mix ingredients like coconut milk, which we consume in moderation mainly because of its high content of saturated fats (lauric acid, caprylic, palmitic, stearic) long chain fatty acids difficult for the body to synthesize. However not all about the coconut milk is bad; it is a significant source of mineral salts, mainly calcium, phosphorus and magnesium, which are important for the proper functioning of the bones.

In addition to coconut milk, the Rondon contains fish, which is rich in proteins and polyunsaturated fatty acids. Fish oil is very rich in so-called w-3, that decrease the concentration of triglycerides in the blood plasma and is also a potent anti-chelating agent for minerals such as iodine, zinc, phosphorus and selenium. It is important in fighting the harmful effects of LDL cholesterol which benefits the circulatory system. Rondon also contains vegetables, tubers, pepper, and chile which make it an energizing, restorative and, even an aphrodisiac dish.

Recipe - Rondon

Ingredients.

4 lbs. of fish, preferably snapper.
2 lbs. cassava
10 green bananas
2 lbs. of taro
coriander leaves
4 sweet peppers
1 / 2 cup flour
coconut milk



Procedure.

Boil the coconut milk in a saucepan for approx. 6 minutes, adding salt and seasonings to taste. Add vegetables and tubers according to your taste (yams, cassava, bananas, taro.)

Once these "hard" ingredients are half cooked, put the add the ground food and / or tubers.

Domplin is added (flour with grated green bananas).

Place the fish one by one and add the coconut milk over the ingredients.

Allow to cook for approximately 5 minutes, then turn over the fish, and allow to simmer for another 5 minutes. Serve hot.

Makes approximately 4 servings.

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Caribbean Rice and Peas.

by Veronica Hidalgo. Nutritionist-Dietitian. Reg.345

These grains have been an important part of the diet of the Afro-Caribbean population, and the Rastafarian and vegetarian population of our country as it is an alternative to animal protein sources. In this article we will learn more about Rice and Peas, or Arroz con Guandu.

Guandul, gualdu or frijol de palo (*Cajanus cajan*) is a leguminous shrub with elongated trifoliolate leaves. It is drought resistant and grows especially in semi-arid lands. We discuss whether its origin is Africa or India, but is grown for at least 3000 years. The Native American population in America was one of the first to cultivate it. In an interview with Mr. Lord Byron Dowman by the Voices of Our America project, he says "First thing to believe, my mother When She cooked, you eat two plates, not one! Gungo peas, rice and meat and what else you can do. "

Regarding their nutritional value, every 100 grams of Guandu has 343 calories and 20.9% vegetable protein. This is an alternative often used by vegetarians to replace animal protein. It also contains many trace elements and is a source of soluble vitamins such as thiamine, riboflavin, niacin and choline. If eaten when green, it contains an excellent source of vitamin C and A.

There are a variety of guandu peas. The variety depends on how ripe the grain is. It is common smelly guandu peas, which are preferred by most people, as well as non smelly guandu peas.

Guandu peas are eaten alongside rice and coconut milk, a traditional Afro-Caribbean and Central American dish.

Recipe - Caribbean Rice and Peas.

Ingredients

2 cups coconut milk
1 cup rice
1 cup guandu peas
Salt to taste

Procedures

Boil the guandu peas in coconut milk with until they are tender.
Then add the rice and cook until the water is significantly reduced.

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