

TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT

Lesson Title – Puerto Rican Migration Historical Fiction Story

Grade – High School Level

Length of class period –1 period for explanation and planning, 1 period for writing (1 period equals 50 to 60 minutes).

Inquiry – (What essential question are students answering, what problem are they solving, or what decision are they making?)

Essential Question: What were some of the achievements and challenges that Puerto Rican migrants faced? (Students are sharing their knowledge about these achievements and challenges by writing a historical fiction story).

Objectives (What content and skills do you expect students to learn from this lesson?)

-Students will demonstrate their knowledge about the Puerto Rican migration experience by creating a new product: a four paragraph historical fiction story.

-Students will demonstrate the achievements and challenges of Puerto Rican migrants through creating a story.

Materials (What primary sources or local resources are the basis for this lesson? – (please attach)

Puerto Rican Passages Video: available through the Mattatuck Museum of Waterbury, Connecticut. (Note: This video focuses on the Puerto Rican experience in Connecticut cities such as Willimantic, Waterbury, Meriden, etc. The video uses oral histories extensively).

Text Readings (pages 184 to 188, pages 256 to 265, and pages 338 to 345) from *The Latino Experience In U.S. History* printed by Globe Fearon, 1994.

Note: You should also go to Wikipedia and obtain a map showing Puerto Rico and its towns.

Activities (What will you and your students do during the lesson to promote learning?)

Students first learn about the Puerto Rican migration experience through text readings from *The Latino Experience In U.S. History*. These text readings examine when Puerto Rico first came under U.S. control (pages 184 to 188), the migration from Puerto Rico to the mainland between 1945 and 1980 (pages 256 to 265), and the Puerto Rican experience from 1980 to the present (pages 338 to 345). A significant local Connecticut history link is included in the video *Puerto Rican Passage*. This video utilizes oral history interviews from Puerto Rican migrants who settled in various communities such as Willimantic, Waterbury, Meriden, Bridgeport, etc.

Students must demonstrate their knowledge about the achievements and challenges faced by Puerto Rican migrants. This will be accomplished by taking information learned from the text readings and video and then creating a new product: a four paragraph historical fiction story.

One class period should be devoted to reviewing the story assignment instructions and time for the students to complete the story planning sheet. The story planning sheet is a very structured writing organizer that helps even the most reluctant writers prepare for creating this story.

Depending upon your class, you should then allow one to two class periods for student writing. If you choose, you can also have students create artwork based on their stories. In terms of closure, you can have student volunteers read their stories. This could lead to class discussion about the Puerto Rican migration experience.

A copy of the Puerto Rican Migration Historical Fiction Story assignment is included with this lesson plan.

How will you assess what students learned during this lesson?

Students will be assessed through the creation of a Puerto Rican migration historical fiction story.

Connecticut Framework Performance Standards –

Content Standard 2: Local, United States, and World History

- demonstrate an understanding of major events and trends in world history, United States and local history from all historical periods and from all regions of the world.

Content Standard 4: Applying History

- display empathy for people who have lived in the past.

Puerto Rican Migration Historical Fiction Story (Test Grade)

This activity is a PBLA (performance based learning assessment). It counts as a test grade. You will take the knowledge you learned from the articles, the video, and maybe even your own family history to create a new product: a four paragraph story about a Puerto Rican migrant.

In the story, your character will be a grandparent telling a story to your grandchild about your experience as a Puerto Rican migrant (a person who moved from Puerto Rico to the mainland). Your character could have moved to the mainland anytime from the 1917 (the year that Puerto Ricans were granted U.S. citizenship) to 2007! No matter what time period you set the story in, **MAKE SURE THE STORY IS HISTORICALLY ACCURATE!**

Your character could also have moved to any location on the mainland. Think back to the *Puerto Rican Passages* video about Puerto Ricans in Connecticut. Puerto Ricans moved to cities like Willimantic (thread mill work), Meriden (silver mill work), Waterbury (brass mill work), Bridgeport (sewing machine factory work), Connecticut River Valley and then Hartford (migrant labor in tobacco fields). Puerto Ricans also moved to other locations on the East Coast: New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Philadelphia, Florida, and even Chicago.

If you'd like your story to be set on the West Coast...Puerto Rican communities also developed in the U.S. West. Puerto Ricans had moved to Arizona to work in cotton fields (I actually saw a Puerto Rican social club in Tucson, Arizona) and to Hawaii for higher paying sugar cane cutter jobs. Puerto Rican U.S. army soldiers stationed at Fort Lewis in the Seattle/Tacoma area of Washington sometimes decided to stay after their time was done. The same thing happened for Puerto Rican U.S. Navy veterans who had been stationed at San Diego, California.

Your character must come from a certain town in Puerto Rico. With this packet is a map of the major towns of Puerto Rico. Keep in mind these towns are large in land area. For example, your character might have come from the "city" area of Utuado or maybe from one of the small rural villages of Utuado.

Here are the prompts you will respond to in the story. Before you write the story, you will fill out a planning sheet first.

Paragraph 1

What is your name? Where were you born in Puerto Rico and where did you grow up there? Also, what year were you born? What was your childhood like? Why did you decide to leave Puerto Rico?

Paragraph 2

In what year did you leave Puerto Rico for the mainland and how old were you at the time? Where did you move to?

Why did you move to that location? What kind of work did you do? What were your first impressions of your new home?

Paragraph 3

What challenges did you face in your new home? How did you try to overcome those challenges?

Paragraph 4

Talk about five major events that happened in your life here on the mainland. Finally, are you glad that you left your home in Puerto Rico for a new home on the mainland?

Explain.

Assessment List

This is how your story will be graded. Remember that it counts as a test grade.

A fully completed planning sheet is filled out. _____ of 15 points

Complete sentences are used throughout the story. _____ of 15 points

The first paragraph's prompt is fully completed. The paragraph is detailed and historically accurate. _____ of 14 points

The second paragraph's prompt is fully completed. The paragraph is detailed and historically accurate. _____ of 14 points

The third paragraph's prompt is fully completed. The paragraph is detailed and historically accurate. _____ of 14 points

The fourth paragraph's prompt is fully completed. The paragraph is detailed and historically accurate. _____ of 14 points

The story is turned in appearing neat and clean. _____ of 14 points

TOTAL SCORE: _____ of 100 points

IF YOU DO A DETAILED, COLORED DRAWING OF YOUR CHARACTER, FIVE EXTRA CREDIT POINTS WILL BE ADDED TO YOUR TEST SCORE.

Planning Sheet

This planning sheet must be filled out before writing the story. For the paragraph notes, look at the paragraph writing prompts on pages one and two.

Character's Name: _____

Place of Birth: _____

Where The Character Grew Up: _____

Year of Birth: _____

Year The Character Moved To The Mainland: _____

First Location The Character Moved To: _____

Paragraph 1 Notes

Paragraph 2 Notes

Paragraph 3 Notes

Paragraph 4 Notes