

Suggested Print Resources

- Fox, Virginia Mary. *Vamos a Costa Rica*. Heinemann Library, Portsmouth, NH; 2000.
- Garrett, Rosalie and Nicole Frank. *Welcome to Costa Rica*. Gareth Stevens, Milwaukee, WI; 2001.
- Collard III, Sneed B. and Michael Rothman. *The Forest in the Clouds*. Charlesbridge Publishing, Inc, Watertown, MA; 2000.
- West, Tracey, Laura Westlund and John Erste. *Costa Rica*. Lerner Publishing Group, Minneapolis, MN; 1999.



My Family from Costa Rica

Grades K–4

TEACHER'S GUIDE

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Families Around The World Video Series

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From Asia to Africa, city to suburb, or rural farm to tropical rain forest, the presence of the family is common to all people and present in every culture throughout the world. Studying families from different places helps us to learn and appreciate both the similarities and differences between ourselves and others. Also, through exposure to cultures that are unfamiliar to them, children can learn to be accepting of people, lifestyles and traditions that may be very different from their own. The family — that special group of adults and children who care for, love, protect, and help each other — is both explored and celebrated in *Families Around the World*.



Program Summary

In *My Family from Costa Rica*, students will meet 9-year-old Heriberto and his family who live on an Indian Reservation in Talamanca in Costa Rica. Students will accompany Heriberto and his father as they tend to the family banana plantation, play a spirited game of football (known in America as soccer) and prepare for a harvest celebration. Through Heriberto, students will experience life without many modern conveniences. Heriberto and his family live without electricity and both bathe and wash clothes in the river. Finally, students will witness Heriberto's pride as he speaks of the self-sufficiency of his people and participates in a ritual circle, an Indian tradition symbolizing the importance of the family.

Geographical Information

The Republic of Costa Rica, or Costa Rica as it is more commonly called, is one of seven countries located in Central America. Named by Christopher Columbus in 1509, Costa Rica means *rich coast*. Costa Rica is roughly 51,000 square kilometers and is bordered on one side by the Pacific Ocean and on the other by the Caribbean Sea. Costa Rica's population is about 4 million and although its official language is Spanish, Heriberto and his family speak a dialect known as Bri Bri in addition to Spanish. Costa Rica's capital city is San Jose. Costa Rica contains two volcanic ranges and is home to many active volcanoes. Rain is a fact of life for Costa Ricans, with an average yearly rainfall of roughly 70 inches. Costa Rica has abundant plant and animal life and is home to approximately 150 species of amphibians and 200 species of snakes. Monkeys, anteaters, sloths, deer, wildcats, otters and a wide variety of birds including the protected Macaw also live in Costa Rica.

The region of Talamanca where Heriberto and his family live is located in the southeastern part of the country and is densely forested. Recently, tourism has impacted the region although the Bri Bri people, as seen in the program, still maintain many of their customs and beliefs.

Pre-viewing Discussion

Using a web, brainstorm with your students to determine who they consider to be members of their family. Share with your students that families come in all shapes and sizes, and that a family is a group of adults and children who care for, love, protect, and help each other. Use the following questions to help students access their thoughts and ideas about families:

- Who do you care for, love and help?
- Who cares for, loves and helps you?
- Does a family member have to be a person who lives with you?

After this discussion, ask students to draw a family portrait which includes all the people who they consider to be members of their family.

Follow-up Discussion

After viewing the program with your class, discuss the similarities and differences between their families and Heriberto's family. Refer students back to the original definition of a family: *A group of adults and children who care for, love, protect, and help each other*. Ask them to provide examples from the video that demonstrate how this particular family expresses love, shows care and provides help for each other.

Follow-up Activities

- Write a thank you letter to a family member which acknowledges and thanks him or her for the love, care and support he or she gives you.
- Pretend that Heriberto is your pen pal. Write him a letter that explains how his life is different from yours.
- Prepare a presentation on the Cordillera Central and the Cordillera de Guanacaste volcanic ranges. What impact have these ranges had on the people of Costa Rica? Useful resource: *Volcanoes* (Morrow, William & Co., 1995) by Seymour Simon.
- Using the Internet and other print resources, create a collage that shows some of the indigenous animals of Costa Rica.
- Do a project on Macaws, focusing on the impact deforestation has had on them and what steps are being taken to protect these endangered birds. Useful resource: *Save the Macaw* (Raintree Publishers, 1992) by Jill Bailey and Ann Baum.
- Bananas are a staple in Heriberto's diet and also a Costa Rican export. Research the banana to discover its nutritional content. Make a poster advertising the benefits of eating bananas. Useful resources: *Banana* (Scholastic Library, 1998) by Pam Robson and Paul Robson.
- Do an analysis of Costa Rica's monthly rainfall and/or temperature. Create line or bar graphs to record your data.

Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our Web site at www.LibraryVideo.com

- vulcan.wr.usgs.gov/Volcanoes/CostaRica/framework.html
This Web site from the Cascades Volcano Observatory contains extensive information about all of Costa Rica's volcanoes.
- www.rainforest-alliance.org
This Web site from the Rainforest Alliance, a leading international conservation organization, has a variety of resources to assist in any type of study of the rainforest.
- www.lex5.k12.sc.us/ces/CostaRica.htm
Read reports about the geography, history, government, daily life, and people of Costa Rica as written by fifth grade students.