

Countries Around the World™

Peru

Program Summary

Meet 11-year-old Viviana. She and her family live in Lima, the capital city of Peru. Join Viviana as she meets up with her friend Tatiana at one of Lima's beaches to watch some surfers. Next, the girls travel to the craftsman's market to shop for silver jewelry and clothing made from alpaca and vicuña wool before revealing Peru's religious heritage with a visit to a Catholic church. Then Viviana and Tatiana rehearse traditional Peruvian dances representing the three major geographical regions of Peru: the coast, the mountains (or *sierra*) and the rainforest (or *selva*). Students will learn about Peru's government when Viviana meets up with her Aunt Veronica and they watch a ceremony on the grounds of the presidential palace. After a quick transaction with a money-changer, Viviana and her aunt introduce students to Peruvian food when they buy some fruit at an outdoor market, and then head out with local fishermen to catch some fish for use in their own homemade ceviche — a type of seafood salad marinated with lime juice. Finally, discover some of the indigenous wildlife found in Peru's three climate regions as Viviana and her mother wander the Lima Zoo and see llamas, alpacas, parrots, bears, otters and black panthers.

Country Information

- **location:** western South America, bordering the South Pacific Ocean; bordered by Ecuador, Colombia, Brazil, Bolivia and Chile
- **capital:** Lima
- **official languages:** Spanish and Quechua
- **type of government:** constitutional republic
- **total area:** approximately 1,285,220 sq km
- **climate:** varies from tropical in the East to dry desert in the West; temperate to frigid in the Andes
- **terrain:** western coastal plain (*costa*); high and rugged Andes in center (*sierra*); eastern lowland jungle of Amazon Basin (*selva*)
- **natural resources:** includes copper, silver, gold, petroleum, timber, fish, iron ore, coal, phosphate, potash, hydropower and natural gas
- **industries:** includes mining and refining of minerals, steel, metal fabrication, petroleum extraction and refining, natural gas, fishing, fish processing, textiles, clothing and food processing
- **agricultural products:** includes asparagus, coffee, cotton, sugarcane, rice, potatoes, corn, plantains, grapes, oranges, coca, poultry, beef, dairy products and fish
- **major bodies of water:** includes the Amazon River, Lake Titicaca and Pacific Ocean

Vocabulary

Inca — A group of indigenous, powerful South Americans who ruled over a large empire that stretched for some 2,500 miles in northern South America from the early 13th century to the early 16th century.

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aboriginal — Referring to the native inhabitants of a place.

alpaca — A domesticated mammal related to the llama and vicuña. Its coat is a source of fine wool.

vicuña — A mammal related to the llama and alpaca that lives in the central Andes. Its coat is a source of fine wool.

sierra — A rugged mountain range with a jagged profile.

selva — A dense, tropical rain forest that usually has a cloud cover, especially in the Amazon Basin.

Quechua — Also "Quetchua." The language of the Inca Empire. It is still spoken in Peru.

nuevo sol — The currency of Peru.

ceviche — A traditional Peruvian dish made from raw fish, onions and a citrus marinade, usually lime or lemon juice.

Machu Picchu — An Inca city located high in the Andes Mountains.

Pre-viewing Discussion

- Peru's culture is influenced by the different groups of people who live there. Lead a discussion on diversity and its effects on the formation of culture. What makes up culture? What happens when different groups of people start to share their culture with each other? Have you ever eaten food or listened to music from a different culture? How have different groups of people contributed to the culture of the United States? Have students watch for examples of cultural diversity in Peru during the program.
- Distribute outline maps of South America to students and have them locate and label Peru, its capital, and the other countries on the continent. Have students answer questions, such as: How many countries are there in South America? How many countries border Peru? Where is Peru in relation to the equator?
- Inform students that they are going to experience a different country and culture as seen through the eyes of young girl. Ask students what they would do and show if they were going to give a tour of their community to a child from another country. In small groups, have students brainstorm a list of things they think would be important to show their visitor as well as explain why they chose the things they did. Engage the students with questions, such as: Why are these things important to you? How are they representative of where you live? Do you think your visitor would fully understand your community if he or she experienced all these things?

Follow-up Activities

- Because of the different climate regions in Peru, the country boasts a wide array of wildlife. Have each student choose an animal found in Peru and create an informational poster about it for display in the classroom. Instruct students to include a picture or illustration and at least five facts on their posters. As a resource, visit www.peruwildlife.info/.
- In the program, Viviana participates in traditional dances that represent the three major geographic regions in Peru. Students can expand their knowledge of culturally significant dances by exploring how different peoples around the world express themselves through dance. For a simple introduction to some dances from around the world, share George Ancona's *Let's Dance!* (HarperCollins, 1998). In addition, consider watching the shows on Kenya, China, Brazil and Chile in this series. Working in small groups, have students select a dance and create a flip book telling about it. They may wish to include information about the different movements or the costumes worn in the performance of these dances. As a culmination, students may enjoy practicing and sharing with each other some of the dances they have learned.

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- Hello from Peru! Postcards are a fun way to show people the different places you've visited. Using information from the program, have students design and write postcards as if they had visited Peru and wanted to tell their friends back home all about it. Students can visit www.readwritethink.org/materials/postcard/ to create postcards online. As an extension, incorporate some Spanish words and expressions like "hasta luego" or "hola" into the postcard.
- Read Lois Ehlert's retelling of the Peruvian folktale *Moon Rope/Un Lazo a la Luna* (Harcourt, 1997) to the class. Then have students recreate this tale in the classroom by acting it out. This can be done as a puppet show, a mime skit, a student play, etc. Divide the students into small groups and have them prepare their own production by choosing a format and thinking about the story's elements of character, setting and plot. And since Moon Rope is in both English and Spanish, encourage students to use words from both languages in their performances. After each group performs, conduct a question and answer session where the students talk about why they chose to retell *Moon Rope* the way they did.
- Celebrate Peru in verse by having students write an acrostic poem using words associated with Peru, like "Amazon," "Machu Picchu" or "Quechua." For help on how to write an acrostic poem, visit www.poetryteachers.com/poetclass/lessons/acrostic.html. Encourage students to share their poems with the class. As an extension, students can create a collage featuring pictures of the different things they wrote about in their poems.
- In Peru, tourists who want to buy souvenirs don't have to look far to find someone willing to turn their dollars into nuevo sols, since money-changers can be found all over the place — even on street corners! Students can pretend that they are Peruvian money-changers by creating a chart featuring prices for common items found in Peru, like alpaca-wool clothing, silver jewelry or a plate of ceviche. To make their charts, have students select two currencies, in addition to American dollars and Peruvian nuevo sols, and calculate the prices for the different items. Then, have students pair up and act out skits where they take turns playing the money-changer and the tourist, finding out prices for their items and exchanging currency. For added authenticity, students can use basic Spanish words and phrases in their skits. As a resource, visit: www.languagehelpers.com/words/spanish/money.html.
- From warm, sandy beaches to tropical rainforests and frigid mountain ranges, Peru's climate and geography is "all over the place"! Distribute outline maps of Peru and have students use different symbols and colors to label the major climate regions: the western coastal plain, the central Andes Mountains range and the eastern Amazon Basin. As a resource, visit worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/samerica/pe.htm.

- The Inca Empire stretched along the western coast of South America. As a result, Peru boasts several ancient Inca sites, like the city of Machu Picchu and the ruins in Cuzco. Students can explore how the Inca once lived in Peru by investigating aspects of their civilization. As a resource, visit coe.fgcu.edu/students/webb/meso/inca.htm. Then, have students build dioramas depicting an aspect of Inca culture, such as clothing, agriculture or architecture, based on their findings. Have students present their dioramas to the class and share what they have learned.

Suggested Internet Resources

- www.factmonster.com/ipka/A0107883.html
This child-friendly site includes information about Peru's geography and history.
- www.timeforkids.com/TFK/specials/goplaces/0,12405,358684,00.html
Discover Peru and what it is like to live there! This web site by Time Inc. presents information about Peru's famous sites, history and language. Also includes a quiz.
- www.katw.org/pages/sitepage.cfm?id=107&pname=Home&purl=index.cfm
This site introduces students to the lives, customs, and cultures of children in Peru. Includes lesson plans.
- www.cia.gov
The CIA World Factbook web site presents detailed and up-to-date information on Peru and many other countries. Topics include geography, people, government, economy, transportation and communication. On the main page of the CIA site, click on the "World Factbook" link.

Suggested Print Resources

- Croy, Anita. *National Geographic Countries of the World: Peru*. National Geographic Children's Books, Washington, DC; 2007.
- Falconer, Kieran and Lynette Quek. *Peru*. Marshall Cavendish, Tarrytown, NY; 2006.
- Lewin, Ted. *Lost City: The Discovery of Machu Picchu*. Penguin Young Readers Group, New York, NY; 2003.
- Morrison, Marion. *Peru*. Children's Press, Danbury, CT; 2000.

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