

Countries Around the World™

Portugal

Program Summary

Meet 10-year-old Tomás. He and his family live in Lisbon, the capital of Portugal. Join Tomás as he rides his skateboard through the streets of Lisbon, introducing students to aspects of Portugal's history and culture when he observes statues of Portuguese explorers and visits a local shop to buy some *pasteis* — egg custard pastries. After Tomás attends a surfing lesson, he and his family travel along the coast to Cabo de Roca, or the "cape of the rock." Along the way, Tomás and his family stop at a restaurant that serves traditional, Portuguese dishes. Discover the importance of seafood to the Portuguese economy and diet when Tomás's father takes him to the Lisbon docks to see all the fishing vessels before they head over to a market to buy some freshly-caught fish. Then, Tomás and his family head to the mountain town of Sintra to snack on chorizo bread and peruse the antique sailing equipment for sale and at an outdoor market. Finally, in keeping with the tradition of the great Portuguese sailors and navigators of the past, Tomás and his father take to the sea in their own vessel.

Country Information

- **location:** Southwestern Europe, on the Iberian Peninsula and bordering the North Atlantic Ocean; bordered by Spain
- **capital:** Lisbon
- **official languages:** Portuguese and Mirandese
- **type of government:** parliamentary democracy
- **total area:** approximately 92,391 sq km
- **climate:** maritime temperate; cool and rainy in the North and warmer and drier in the South
- **terrain:** mountainous north of the Tagus River with rolling plains in the South
- **natural resources:** includes fish, forests, iron ore, copper, zinc, tin, tungsten, silver, gold, uranium, marble, clay, gypsum, salt, arable land and hydropower
- **industries:** includes textiles and footwear, wood pulp, paper, cork, metals and metalworking, oil refining, chemicals, fish canning, rubber and plastic products, ceramics, electronics and communications equipment, rail transportation equipment, aerospace equipment, ship construction and refurbishment, wine and tourism
- **agricultural products:** includes grain, potatoes, tomatoes, olives, grapes, sheep, cattle, goats, swine, poultry, dairy products and fish

Vocabulary

Vasco da Gama — A Portuguese navigator and explorer who lived from 1460 to 1524. He explored parts of Africa and opened trade routes between Europe and Asia.

Iberian Peninsula — A peninsula of southwest Europe comprised of Spain and Portugal.

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caravel — A durable ocean-going cargo ship that the Portuguese and other Europeans used to navigate the world during the Age of Exploration.

Moors — A term originally used to describe people of mixed Berber and Arab descent, which eventually came to be used to reference all Muslims who conquered the Iberian Peninsula in 711 C.E.

azulejos — Painted, glazed, ceramic tiles that are often arranged into decorative patterns on the insides and outsides of many buildings in Portugal.

pasteis — A small, tart-like pastry, usually filled with egg custard.

futebol — Portuguese for "soccer."

European Union (EU) — A family of democratic European countries that are committed to working together for peace and prosperity. Portugal is a member of the European Union.

Madeira — A group of islands off the northwest coast of Africa. It is, politically, a part of Portugal.

Azores — A group of islands in the North Atlantic that are located west of Portugal. It is, politically, a part of Portugal.

sea bream — A type of fish found in the waters off Portugal.

bacalbau — Portuguese for "cod."

sextant — An instrument used to chart the positions of the stars.

euro — The currency of Portugal and several other nations of the European Union.

chorizo — A type of spicy sausage.

Pre-viewing Discussion

- Discuss how cultures are formed and changed by means of cultural diffusion. What are the different things that make up culture? Are cultures always the same or can they change? Why do they change? In your experience, what are some examples of cultures changing and adapting? Have students watch for examples of cultural diffusion and assimilation in the program on Portugal.
- Lead a discussion about how people adapt their way of life to fit their environment. Begin by asking students to come up with a list of things that comprise the environment (e.g., land formations, bodies of water, weather) and to describe what the environment is like in their communities. What are some ways in which people in your community have adapted to the environment? What about people who live in places like the mountains, the desert or near the ocean? If you lived in one of those places, how might you have to change your way of life? As they prepare to watch the program, instruct students to watch for examples of people adapting to their environment in Portugal.
- Distribute outline maps of the Iberian Peninsula to students. Have them find and label Portugal, its capital, Spain and its capital and the major bodies of water. Questions to ask include: Which country borders Portugal? How close is Portugal to Africa? Based on its location, what do you think the people of Portugal are like? Do you think the people and culture of Portugal are influenced by the countries around them?

Follow-up Activities

- During the Age of Exploration, the Portuguese sailed around the world and discovered different places and peoples previously unknown to Europeans. Divide students into small groups and have each one discover for itself the details of the Portuguese voyages of discovery. Assign each group an explorer and instruct it to create a time line of the explorer's journey(s), maps of the places explored and the routes taken to get there, a brief biography of the explorer and a picture or illustration. Each group can plan and give a presentation to the rest of the class about its explorer.

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- The Portuguese are crazy for *futebol*, or as it's better known in the United States, soccer! Invite students to immerse themselves in the *futebol* culture of Portugal by designing their own soccer teams. Students can pick Portuguese cities for their teams to represent, give Portugal-themed names to their teams and design and draw their teams' uniforms. Students can even write "fight songs" for their teams and role-play as soccer fans at an important game. If possible, have students play a game of soccer as their invented Portuguese teams.
- Students can pretend that they are restaurateurs opening a new Portuguese establishment by creating a menu of Portuguese food. Divide the class into groups and instruct each group to name their restaurants and come up with meals for breakfast, lunch, dinner and dessert. For each dish, they need to provide a name, a brief descriptive caption, an illustration or picture of the food and the price. As an extension, students can convert the prices of the foods on their menus from U.S. dollars to euros and several other currencies.
- The island chains of Madeira and the Azores are part of Portugal and are popular tourist destinations. Students will have fun creating travel brochures for these islands. Be sure to include information about the wildlife, landforms, bodies of water, climate and activities that make these islands so much fun to visit. For information on Madeira, visit www.madeiratourism.org/pls/wsm/wsmwhom0.conteudos_area?p_cot_id=111&p_lingua=en&p_sub=1&p_menu=Discover%20Madeira, and for information on the Azores, visit www.destinazores.com/index.php.
- Celebrate Portugal in verse! Have students write a diamante poem based on what they learned about Portugal. For an interactive diamante poem guide, visit www.readwritethink.org/materials/diamante/. Encourage students to share their poems with the class.
- Throughout Portugal's history, ships and sailing have been integral to the Portuguese way of life. Students can deepen their understanding of sailing by investigating different types of boats. Have students choose a type of vessel and create a fact poster that includes the ship's name, labels for the parts of the ship and the ship's purpose, in addition to any other relevant information. Students can also compile a list of nautical terms and navigational devices used by sailors.
- An example of the Moorish influence in Portugal, *azulejos* are more than just decorative tiles — their patterns have been used to depict events from Portuguese history! Students will have fun building a classroom mural out of their own, custom-made *azulejos*. Using squares of paper and various craft materials, students can design tiles that are either purely for decoration or ones that depict events from their lives. Once the students have finished making their tiles, arrange them on a wall in the classroom.
- Fado is a famous style of Portuguese folk music that is characterized by its soulful melodies and melancholy topics. Share samples of fado songs with students by visiting lisboa.kpnqwest.pt/i/ouvir/fado/sons_fado.html. After listening to a few clips, discuss the songs by asking questions, like: How did the songs make you feel? What did you think about when you were listening to them? Does it matter that the songs are in Portuguese, or did you have an idea of what the singers are trying to convey? What do you think the singers are expressing? As an extension, play clips of other types of music for the students and have them compare those songs to fado.
- Bom dia! Invite students to learn basic words and phrases in Portuguese by visiting www.bbc.co.uk/languages/other/portuguese/talk/. Students can pair up, and using a combination of the words and phrases, write and perform a short skit in Portuguese. After they perform their skits, students can translate what they were saying into English.

Suggested Internet Resources

- www.cia.gov
The CIA World Factbook web site presents detailed and up-to-date information on Portugal 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.
- worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/europe/pt.htm
The World Atlas page on Portugal contains maps and information on topics such as geography, history, climate and current time and temperature. Also contains links to other sites about Portugal.

Suggested Print Resources

- Blauer, Ettagale and Jason Laure. *Portugal*. Children's Press, Danbury, CT; 2002.
- Goodman, Joan Elizabeth. *A Long and Uncertain Journey: The 27,000 Mile Voyage of Vasco da Gama*. Mikaya Press, New York, NY; 2001.
- Heale, Jay and Angeline Koh. *Portugal*. Marshall Cavendish, Tarrytown, NY; 2006.

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