

Countries Around the World™

Spain

Program Summary

Meet 11-year-old Inés. She and her family live in Madrid, the capital of Spain. Join Inés as she hunts for a birthday present for her mother, first browsing among the handmade dolls — representative of the Andalusia region — in storefront windows before shopping at El Rastro, an outdoor market. Next, Inés introduces us to aspects of Spanish history when she and her sister, Marta, visit the Madrid Wax Museum and look at the various displays that depict important people from Spain's past, including the ancient Romans, the Moors, Christopher Columbus and Cervantes. After selecting a hand-held fan for her mother's present, Inés buys some groceries at the Mercado de San Miguel. Finally, Inés and her family go out for a meal at a *tapas* bar.

Country Information

- **location:** Southwestern Europe, bordering the Bay of Biscay, Mediterranean Sea and North Atlantic Ocean; bordered by Andorra, France, Gibraltar and Portugal
- **capital:** Madrid
- **official language:** Castilian Spanish
- **type of government:** parliamentary monarchy
- **total area:** approximately 504,782 sq km
- **climate:** temperate; clear, hot summers and cold winters in the interior; more moderate and cloudy along coast; partly cloudy and cool along coast
- **terrain:** large, flat plateau surrounded by rugged hills with the Pyrenees in the North
- **natural resources:** includes coal, lignite, iron ore, copper, lead, zinc, uranium, tungsten, mercury, pyrites, magnesite, fluorspar, gypsum, sepiolite, kaolin, potash, hydropower and arable land
- **industries:** includes textiles, apparel, food and beverages, metals and metal manufacturing, chemicals, shipbuilding, automobiles, machine tools, tourism, clay and refractory products, pharmaceuticals and medical equipment
- **agricultural products:** includes grain, vegetables, olives, wine grapes, sugar beets, citrus, beef, pork, poultry, dairy products and fish

Vocabulary

flamenco — A vigorous and rhythmic dance style, which is commonly associated with the Andalusia region of Spain. It also refers to a style of guitar music that often accompanies flamenco dancing.

Andalusia — A region of southern Spain.

fútbol — Spanish for “soccer.”

Middle Ages — Also known as the medieval period, the time period that stretched roughly from the fifth to the 15th century. The term was coined to describe the era between the time of ancient Rome and the Renaissance.

Castilian Spanish — A dialect that serves as the basis of modern, standard Spanish.

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Basque — A language primarily spoken in the Guipúzcoa, Vizcaya, and Álava provinces of Spain.

Catalan — A Romance language, related to Spanish, that is spoken in Catalonia in eastern Spain.

Galicien — Also “Galician.” A Romance language, similar to Portuguese, that is spoken in Spain.

Cervantes — Full name: Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra. (1547-1616) A Spanish author who is most famous for his novel, *Don Quixote*.

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

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

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

secular — Something not specifically relating to religion.

tapas — Any of various small, savory Spanish dishes, often served as a snack or with other tapas as a meal.

los gatos — Spanish for “the cats.” A slang term used to describe people in Spain who like to stay out late.

Pre-viewing Discussion

- Ask students about their favorite foods. Questions to ask include: What is it about your favorite food that makes you like it so much? From where does your favorite food originate? Is your favorite food synonymous with a particular place, state or country? Is there any type of cultural significance to your favorite food? Why do we eat certain foods on certain occasions, like Thanksgiving or the Fourth of July? As they prepare to watch the program, instruct students to watch for examples of Spanish food and their significance to the Spanish people.
- Distribute outline maps of the Iberian Peninsula to students. Have them find and label Spain, its capital, other major cities, Portugal and its capital and the major bodies of water. Questions to ask include: Which country borders Spain? How close is Spain to Africa? Do you think the people and culture of Spain are influenced by the countries around it?
- Discuss how cultures are formed and changed by means of cultural diffusion. Begin by having students brainstorm a list of things that they think make up culture and ask students to provide examples from their own lives. How do these things make up culture? Are cultures always the same or can they change? Why do they change? Point out to the students that cultural change and diffusion usually occur when different groups of people come into contact with each other. What are some historical examples of people who came to the United States and introduced things that have since become part of American culture? Have students watch for examples of cultural diffusion and assimilation in the program on Spain.

Follow-up Activities

- During the Age of Exploration, Spain funded expeditions that allowed explorers like Christopher Columbus and Francisco Vazquez de Coronado to sail and explore different places and encounter peoples previously unknown to the Europeans. Divide students into small groups and have each one discover for itself the details of the Spanish voyages of discovery. For information about the Spanish explorers, visit library.thinkquest.org/J002678F/spanish_explorers.htm Assign each group an explorer and instruct the students 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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- ¡Hola, mis amigos! Invite students to learn basic words and phrases in Spanish by visiting www.bbc.co.uk/languages/spanish/talk/. Students can pair up and, using a combination of the words and phrases, write and perform short skits in Spanish. After they perform their skits, students can translate what they said into English. Encourage fluent Spanish speakers in your class to share their knowledge and serve as class leaders in pronunciation and alternate ways of saying things. As an extension, encourage students to pick their favorite Spanish words or phrases and write them on note cards that include the word or phrase's English translation. Post the note cards on a word wall dedicated to Spanish.
- Pablo Picasso was arguably one of the most famous and influential painters of the 20th century. His experimental and visceral style spearheaded whole new styles of art and expression, and inspired countless others to follow his lead. Invite students to share in the genius of Picasso's work by selecting some of the Spanish artist's paintings to share with the class. Students can pick their favorite paintings and draw their own interpretations of them. Each student-produced work can include an informational placard that tells the original name of the painting, when it was painted and why the student chose it. Hang the pictures and placards throughout the room and have students do a gallery-style walk to take in and enjoy the work of their peers. Then, share Liz Gogerly's biography of Picasso, *Pablo Picasso: Master of Modern Art* (Raintree Publishers, 2004) with the class. Students can discuss Picasso's life and how his experiences may have influenced his art.
- A retelling of Cervantes' classic novel, Barbara Nichol's *Tales of Don Quixote* (Tundra, 2004) is a great way to introduce students to the exploits of the eccentric and whimsical Man of La Mancha. After reading *Tales of Don Quixote* to the class, students can explain what they liked about the story and discuss its elements. Then, working in small groups, students can complete story maps for *Don Quixote* by visiting www.readwritethink.org/materials/storymap/index.html. Keeping the same groups, encourage students to reenact their favorite scenes from *Don Quixote* for the class. As an extension, students can write and illustrate their own chapters about *Don Quixote*, wherein they use elements from the original text to detail yet another misguided adventure of the fabled knight. Collect the students' chapters for inclusion in a class book.
- In the program, Inés purchases a fan for her mother and explains that fans are very popular in Spain. Moreover, we learn that, at one time, fans were more than just fashion accessories; people used fans to send non-verbal messages by making gestures with them or positioning the fans in just the right place. Using paper, paints, crayons and other art materials, have students create their own hand-held fans. As an extension, have students work in pairs to create "fan signals" wherein certain movements and gestures with the fans have meanings. Students can demonstrate their "fan signals" while the class guesses the meanings.
- Tapas is a traditional Spanish meal that consists of several, bite-sized dishes all served at once. Students will have fun devising their own tapas-style meal featuring some of their favorite snacks. Have students write "tapas menus" featuring ten different snacks: five snacks of the students' choosing and five traditional tapas from Spain. Encourage students to make sure the different food groups are represented in their menus and include healthy choices. Students can pick their favorite type of tapas and write out its recipe for inclusion in a class tapas cookbook. As a culmination, students can bring samples of their creations to class for a tapas tasting.
- Spanish region bingo! Invite students to create their own bingo cards featuring the 17 different regions and two administrative districts that make up Spain. For an additional challenge, include Spanish cities from each region in the game. Then, have students fill out their bingo cards with the names of the regions. Draw the names of the regions from a bag. Who will be the first to bingo?
- The Spanish love *fútbol*, or as it's better known in the United States, soccer! Invite students to immerse themselves in the *fútbol* culture of Spain by designing their own soccer teams. Students can pick Spanish cities for their teams to represent, give Spain-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 Spanish teams.
- Extra! Extra! Read all about it! Students can pretend that they are publishers at a Spanish newspaper by designing and printing newspaper pages about Spain's history. For an interactive page maker, visit interactives.mped.org/ppress110.aspx. Divide students into groups and assign each group a period of Spanish history to cover. As students complete rough drafts of their papers, have them exchange with another group for a peer editing session. Once they've finished making their papers, students can print copies to pass out to the class and give presentations based on their topics.

Suggested Internet Resources

- www.sispain.org/
This site presents information on the geography, history, people, culture, government and economy of Spain.
- www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/online/explore/journey/spain/spindex.htm
Discover Spain and learn what it is like to live there! This child-friendly site provides basic information about Spain's culture.
- www.cia.gov
The CIA World Factbook web site presents detailed and up-to-date information on Spain 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

- Anno, Mitsumasa. *Anno's Spain*. Philomel, New York, NY; 2004.
- Brenner, Barbara. *If You Were There in 1492: Everyday Life in the Time of Columbus*. Aladdin, New York, NY; 1998.
- Elias, Mary Louise and Elizabeth Robin Cohen. *Spain*. Marshall Cavendish, Tarrytown, NY; 2003.
- Seavey, Lura Rogers. *Spain*. Children's Press, Danbury, CT; 2001.
- Spengler, Kremena. *Spain: A Question and Answer Book*. Capstone Press, Mankato, MN; 2005.

Teacher's Guide written by Brian Wales, Curriculum Specialist, Schlessinger Media

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