The Rescue of Basque Language and Culture

WebQuest Description: A guided tour through Basque history in an effort to save our richness.

Grade Level: College / Adult

Curriculum: Foreign Language

Keywords: Basque Language, Basque Culture, Euskera, Basque Country

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Introduction

As a Basque speaker, you are the member of a community that speaks a minority language. Due to several historic conflicts and cultural impositions, your language is in danger of extinction. The extreme dictatorship of a cruel man has cast your language and culture into oblivion and your identity is now in danger of extinction. Most of the members in your community have thrown in the towel. They are feeling frustrated about the uselessness of their native language and they have stopped using it. Euskera is not being transmitted to the new generations and all the symbols of your ancestral culture are vanishing, leading to the boring picture of an homogenous society where everybody is forgetting about their roots and accepting the impositions of the dominant culture. In a cold night of December, you are about to fall asleep when somebody knocked on the door. You open it dubiously and a robust man with a pronounced nose and prominent ears appears in front of you, he is wearing a big beret and leather “abarcas”. After staring at you for a few minutes, he offers you his wooden cane without pronouncing a single word. You are amazed and quite scared, but you decide to grab the stick. Immediately, you are transported to a parallel reality where everybody is dancing typical dances, practicing archaic sports, tasting delicious meals, listening to engaging stories narrated in Basque... Mysteriously, you start feeling like at home, while a pleasant sensation of proximity overwhelms you until you hear the alarm clock. Was it a dream? What a real dream! You look around the dark room and, astonished, you recognize the wooden cane of your night visitor in one of the corners. A White sheet is hanging from the top of the stick, only a brief sentence is written on it: “The future of our culture is in your hands”.

Tasks

After that experience, you feel like a new messiah. You call three of your friends and persuade them about starting a mission together. Now, you must save the future of Euskera and the Basque Culture. Each of you is going to work on a different field: 1) Popular Traditions 2) Language and Education 3) Music and Literature 4) History and Society. As tenacious researchers, you will analyze the main characteristics of these four aspects, talking about their development and their current situation and providing several examples. After finishing this labor, you will gather all the information and discuss about all the difficulties suffered by Basque Language and Culture throughout history, reflecting about the reasons why it’s important to keep them alive. To sum up, you will organize a public campaign, proposing new ideas for the promotion of Basque Language and Culture. You will design engaging initiatives in order to attract all the members of your community, making them aware of the consequences of being indifferent. Add pictures, videos, songs, images... to your campaign and present it in front of the class.

Process

1. LOCATING THE BASQUE COUNTRY: Find a world map and point the exact location of the Basque Country.

2. INVESTIGATING ABOUT BASQUE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE: Check the Internet sites listed below to find basic information about the field you are working on, you can also use your own resources:

   - Describe some of the most popular traditions and celebrations: sports, dances, myths, popular characters, festivities, typical dishes, habits...

   - Present a brief definition of Euskera and its development: Mystery of its origins, obstacles throughout history, situation nowadays, education system and alternatives...

   - Talk about the main genres of Basque music and literature and explain their development, as well as the different styles and perspectives that have taken place throughout history.

   - Organize a guided tour through the history of the Basque Country, focusing on the most delicate ages and the repercussions of the different political systems. Show a general picture of the Basque society and its evolution: family structure, jobs...

3. TAKING IDEAS FOR YOUR SPOT:

   Check the next spots to find some examples for your campaign and discuss about the resources used by the
4. CREATING YOUR OWN CAMPAIGN:

Create a suggesting slogan for your campaign.
Add the main messages you want to transmit.
Find an image for your campaign.
Find a song in Basque suitable for your campaign.
Be creative

5. PRESENT YOUR POWERPOINT TO THE CLASS.

Standards
Credits
Other

Evaluation

The evaluation will be based on the following items:

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<th>ITEM</th>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>Providing real and complete information about the four fields</th>
<th>1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10</th>
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<td>Adding personal and group reflections about the contents.</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10</td>
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<td>Cohesion among the different information showed, demonstrating that you know how to work in groups</td>
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<td>Identifying the main obstacles suffered by the Basque Language and culture and proposing solutions.</td>
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<td>Providing arguments to support your ideas.</td>
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<td>Clarity of your explanations.</td>
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<td>Using the suggested websites, as well as additional resources.</td>
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<td>Identifying useful resources to create an effective campaign.</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10</td>
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<td>Designing a creative and attractive campaign following the instructions given.</td>
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<td>Originality and clarity of the power point presentation.</td>
<td>1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10</td>
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<td>FINAL GRADE</td>
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Conclusion

Now all the classmates, as other members of the same society, are able to reflect about the needs to keep their culture and language alive. In addition, they have learnt a little bit more about their origins and they should have a clearer idea about who they are. LETS SEE IF YOUR CAMPAIGN PERSUADES THEM TO REACT!