

Havana Hop



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ABOUT THE SHOW

Written, Choreographed and Performed by Paige Hernandez
With original music by Nick "Nick tha 1da" Hernandez

Young Yeila dreams of being a superstar but her lack of confidence gives her awful stage fright. With advice from her mother and mentors, Yeila begins her journey to find her roots, get confidence and be amazing! Travel with Yeila who visits her grandmother in Cuba to add a salsa flavor to her own hip-hop style! The audience gets to dance along in this dynamic participation play where one actress creates three generations of lively women. Journey with Yeila as she discovers the fun of her multi-cultural heritage

The inspiration for *Havana Hop* comes the multicultural background of its creator, Paige Hernandez. It's important to her to acknowledge every aspect of her identity and not just one facet. Keeping this in mind, she created *Havana Hop*, a story that takes a young girl's passion and fuses it with culture and family history. Paige creates different characters using props, music, dance and costumes and hopes that by the end of the performance, the audience will see that the differences that divide us can only make us more well-rounded if we accept them. As Paige says: "Anything is possible when you listen to your grandmother and keep an open mind!"



ABOUT THE ARTIST



Paige Hernandez, a Baltimore native, is a multidisciplinary artist who is critically acclaimed as a performer, director, choreographer and playwright. Paige is most notably known for her effective fusion of theatre, hip-hop, dance and education. She has nearly twenty years

of experience in arts administration, arts education, creating new works, producing and performing. As an arts educator, Paige has taught throughout the country, to all ages, in several art disciplines. With her company, B-Fly Entertainment, Paige tours internationally with her original works for multicultural and multigenerational hip-hop audiences. To date, she has reached more than 10,000 students, from Pre-K through college, in several hundred residencies, workshops and performances around the world. She takes great pride in her professional development for educators which include keynote presentations for Disney, The Wharton Center at MSU, The Smith Center in Las Vegas and the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta. The Huffington Post named Paige a "classroom hero" because of her outstanding arts integration work with STEM initiatives. During the 2020 pandemic, Paige created and produced *Paige and Friends*, a three-episode digital series that focuses on self-care for elementary age students.

As a playwright, she has collaborated with the Lincoln Center and has been commissioned by several companies including the National New Play Network, the Smithsonian, The Kennedy Center, La Jolla Playhouse, the Glimmer glass Festival and the University of Maryland. Paige was named a "Top Theatre Worker You Should Know" by American Theatre Magazine, "40 under 40" by the Washingtonian Magazine, a "Rising Leader of Color" by Theatre Communications Group and a "Citizen Artist" by the Kennedy Center.

Visit Her Website: <https://www.paigehernandez.com/>

KEY TERMS & EVENTS

Alzheimer's Disease – a condition affecting the brain and memories.

Ancestor – a person from whom one is descended.

Auditions – an interview or performance to try out for a role as a singer, actor, dancer or musician.

Collaboration – figuring out how to do things with one or more people; to create with others.

Confidence – feeling certain or trusting oneself.

Coping – handling difficulties successfully.

Crooned – hummed or sang in a soft, low voice, usually with affection.

Culture – the customs, arts, behaviors and beliefs of a nation, people or social group.

Finding Your Roots – Being able to link your identity to a particular place or group based on ethnic, social, or cultural connections.

Havana – the capital of Cuba, an island off the Gulf of Mexico.

Heritage – a unique and inherited sense of family identity; the values, tradition, cultures and artifacts handed down by previous generations.

Identity – the qualities and experiences that make a person who they are.

Obstacle – a thing that blocks the way or makes progress difficult.

Roots – cultural heritage from the time of your ancestors to the present day.

Salsa – a type of Latin American dance incorporating elements of jazz and rock.

Self-Care – the ability to recognize and respond to moods, feelings and emotions in positive ways.

Stage fright – nervousness before or while performing.

Unique – anything that is the only one of its kind.

SPANISH TERMS

Abuela (ah-BWAY-la) – grandmother

Adios (ah-dee-ohs) – goodbye

Amigos (ah-ME-goes) – friends

Amorcita (ah-more-cee-ta) – little love

Bailar (bye-lar) – to dance

¿Como estas? (co-mo-ess-ta) – how are you?

Corazón (core-a-zone) – heart

Hola (oh-la) – hello

Jugar (hoo-gar) – to play

Mi amor (me ah-more) – my love

Mundo (mun-doh) – world

Raices (rye-EE-cess) – roots

Señor (sen-yore) – Mr., a term for addressing a Spanish man.

Señora (sen-yore-ah) – Mrs., a term for addressing a Spanish woman.

Señorita (sen-yore-ee-ta) – Miss, a term for addressing a young or unmarried Spanish woman.

Uno, dos, tres, cuatro – one, two three, four

HIP-HOP CULTURE

Hip-hop is a cultural movement that exploded in the early 1970s in the Bronx, New York. It draws upon the dance, poetry, visual art, social and political legacy of African, African American, Caribbean and Latino immigrant communities in the United States. Hip-hop began as an independent, non-commercial musical and cultural form of expression.

The roots of hip-hop are often traced directly to the African American community, but hip-hop scholar Daniel Banks says it has been multi-ethnic since the beginning. A distinct hip-hop culture emerged as urbanized youth united and, as a way to identify themselves with unions, formed gangs – often referred to as “crews” or “posses” – with whom they found support, identity and family.

Four cultural activities converged in Hip-Hop. These four fundamental elements are:

MCing or Rapping:

Stemming from the initials for “Master of Ceremonies,” rapping is the art of speaking rhymes to the beat of music. It draws its roots from the Jamaican art form known as toasting. The influences of present-day rap can be traced to artists like James Brown, The Last Poets and Gil Scott Heron, along with old “dozens” rhymes and jail house jargon passed down through the years and made popular by Black activist H. Rap Brown.

Graffiti:

The first forms of subway graffiti were quick spray-painted or marker signatures (“tags”) of one’s crew, gang or nickname. Graffiti evolved into large elaborate calligraphy, complete with color effects, shading and more. Graffiti is now recognized as a force in contemporary visual art and is collected by major art institutions worldwide as well as remaining an expression of rebellion and youth culture in public spaces.

DJing:

The art of “cuttin’ and scratchin’” and the manipulation of a vinyl record over a particular groove so it produces a high-pitched recombinant scratching sound is known as DJing. The term also refers to the practice of selecting dance party records or other songs in a compelling thematic sequence. This was invented by Grand Master Flash and Grand Wizard Theodore, two popular disc jockeys from the Bronx.

Breakdancing:

The acrobatic style of dance that includes head spins, backspins and gymnastic style flairs (long before Olympic athlete Kirk Thompson) is called breakdancing. No one knows who New York’s first break dancer was, but a group of youngsters known as “BBoys” or Break Boys and original members of an organization called Zulu Nation popularized it. At the same time breakdancing became known in the streets and dancehalls of New York, Black and Latino communities in California popularized a style of dance known as “Pop-Locking.”

Did You Know?

Breakdancing will make its debut at the 2024 Summer Olympic Games in Paris, France.

Hip-Hop’s Fifth Element

Some members of the community have added a fifth element to the fundamentals of hip-hop: activism. Many see hip-hop as a larger movement – more than just a musical or cultural genre. While this means different things to different people, it suggests that hip-hop is a way of life with its own ethical code, politics and aesthetics.



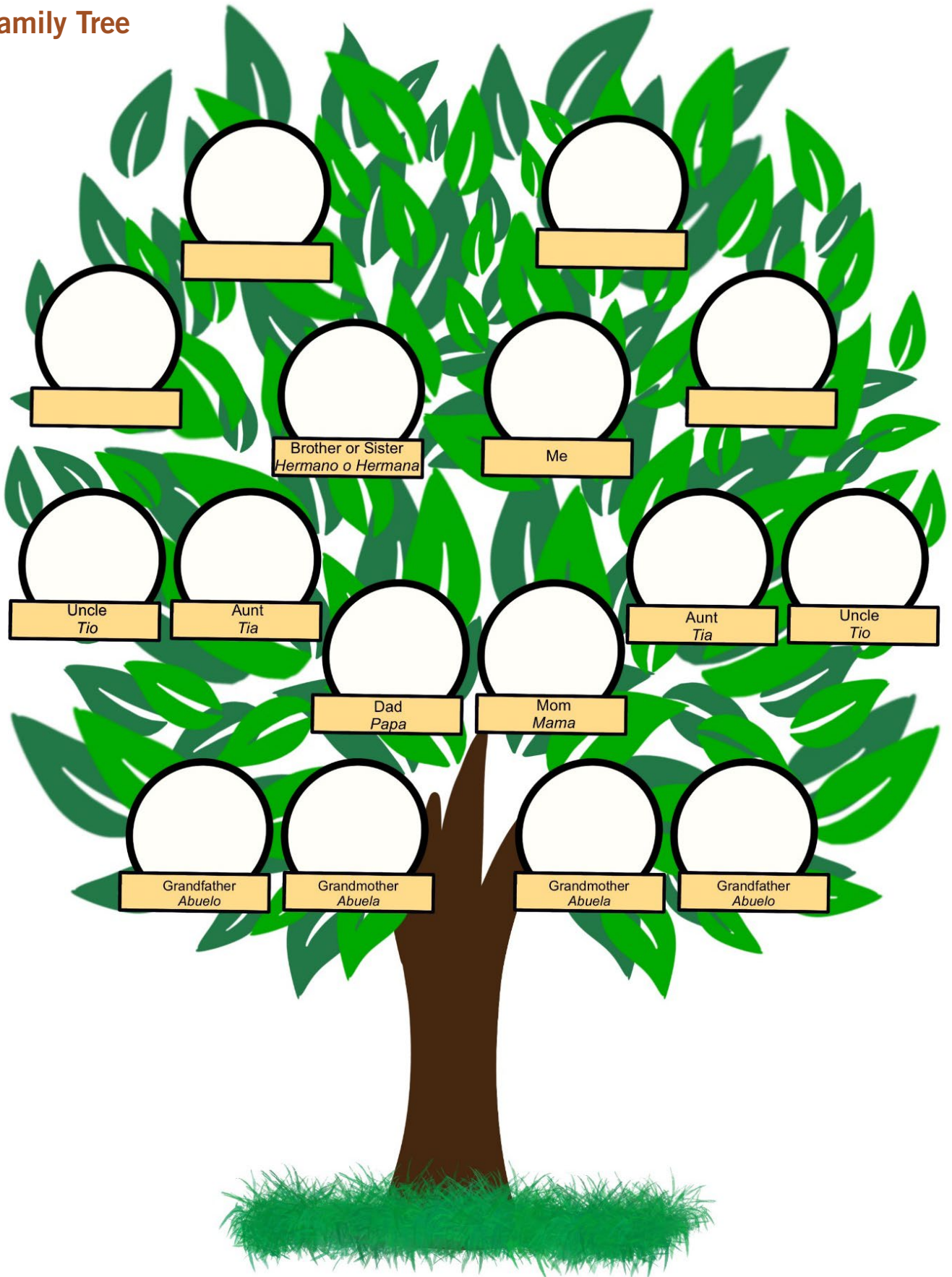
Family Ties (Grades PreK-K)

Begin reading *Grandma's Records* by Eric Velasquez to build a frame of reference for *Havana Hop* and the Latin American culture represented in the play. The story features a special relationship with a grandparent, introduces the students to records and a record player as well as Hispanic music, percussion, and dancing. A read-aloud version and a visual vocabulary hand-out to pair with the book is available on the resources page. Ask students to reflect on the story. Why is music important to the story's family? Does anyone in their own family own a record player? What kind of music is played at their home? Are there any other connections students can make to the story?

Next, introduce the idea of a family tree by drawing a simple tree with branches on the class board. Draw boxes labeled Me, My Brothers & Sisters, Parents, Grandparents, etc. in ancestry form. Ask students to volunteer a favorite memory involving a grandparent or person special to them. Ask students to fill out a family tree of their own using the handout on the next page and drawing a picture or writing the names of their family members where appropriate. Unlabeled circles may be assigned to additional siblings, cousins, etc. Once all selected relatives have been added, students should draw lines between them indicating lineage. Students may need help from a parent or guardian to complete this task. You may wish to contact families in advance to discover any potential sensitivities surrounding foster or adoptive parents.



Family Tree



El Culture de Cuba (Grades PreK-3)

In the show, Yeila travels to Cuba to visit her grandmother and learn more about her family's heritage. In her travels, she takes viewers along with her to discover more about the culture – commenting on the language, music and dancing native to the island. The Classroom Connections Pre-Show Workshop video (see resources page and previous activity) also invites students to explore more about this amazing country.

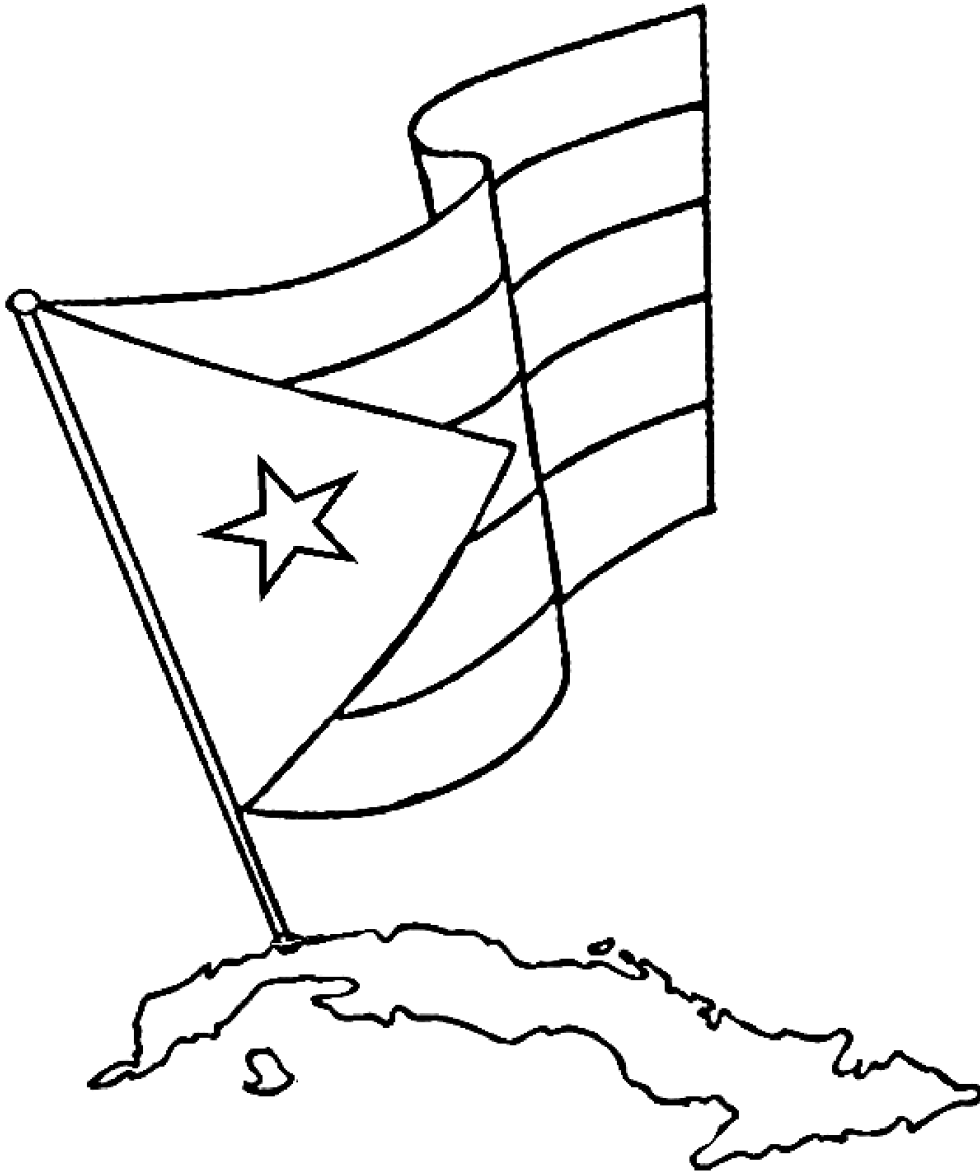
Provide students with a copy of the coloring sheet on the next page. Ask students to search online for the Cuban flag and complete the flag on the coloring page to match. For younger students, provide a reference photo for them. How is it similar or different to the national flag of the United States?

Then ask students to surround the flag with words or drawings of what they have learned about the island culture (i.e., Spanish, salsa, island, claves etc.). Students can refer back to the videos as they need or can research texts or online to discover more.

Finally, hold a class discussion about why it is important for people to learn about cultures and countries other than their own. What are the advantages? Additional activities addressing the importance of teaching diversity to young children are available on the resources page.



Things I Know About Cuba Are...



Spanish Vocab Practice (Grades K-3)

There are several Spanish terms used in the *Havana Hop* performance and related activities. Using the glossary in the Key Terms & Events page of this guide, say each of the Spanish terms aloud to the class. As you go, have students match the words with the English ones by drawing a line to pair the two columns below. While students are watching *Havana Hop*, have them circle any of the Spanish words they hear during the performance.

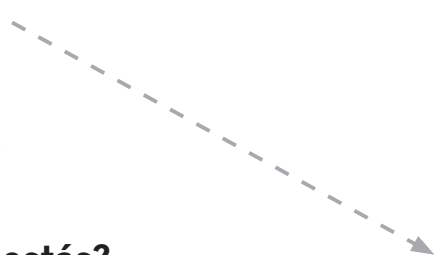
The children's book, *Martina, the Beautiful Cockroach: A Cuban Folktale* is a great example of a text that also showcases many of these words. If time allows, read it as a class in groups for context (a YouTube read-aloud link is available on the resources page).

Spanish

Abuela
Adios
Amigos
Bailar
¿Cómo estás?
Corazón
Cuatro
Dos
Hola
Jugar
Mi amor
Mundo
Raíces
Señor
Señora
Señorita
Tres
Uno

English

To Dance
Four
Friends
Goodbye
Grandma
Heart
Hello
How are you?
Miss
Mr.
Mrs.
My love
One
Roots
To Play
Three
Two
World



■ POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES

Finding My Roots (Grades PreK-3)

In the pre-show activities and throughout the play, students learned about Cuban culture and young Yeila's family roots. This activity will encourage students to explore their own personal heritage. Ask students to complete the following Finding My Roots worksheet on the next page with a family member or caretaker. Explain that many people have origins in more than one country but that for the sake of this project, they will only be required to research one. Students in older grade levels should also prepare three interesting facts about the country of their choice.

Have students present their work to the class. Then create a classroom map highlighting all countries represented by the students' presentations and backgrounds (see the resources page for a user-friendly online map creation tool). Examine the map as a class. How many countries are represented? Explain that America is what's known as a **melting pot**, or a society with different elements and backgrounds that "melt together" to create a common culture. We all come from somewhere and our family journeys have helped to shape what we know as American life today.

Extension Activity for grades 1-3:

Imagine that a family member 50 years from now is trying to learn about your class! Ask students to each consider five objects that could be put into a time capsule to represent what is important to them and their family traditions. Have students write a list of the five objects and explain why they chose each one and how it would help them understand who they are as a person.

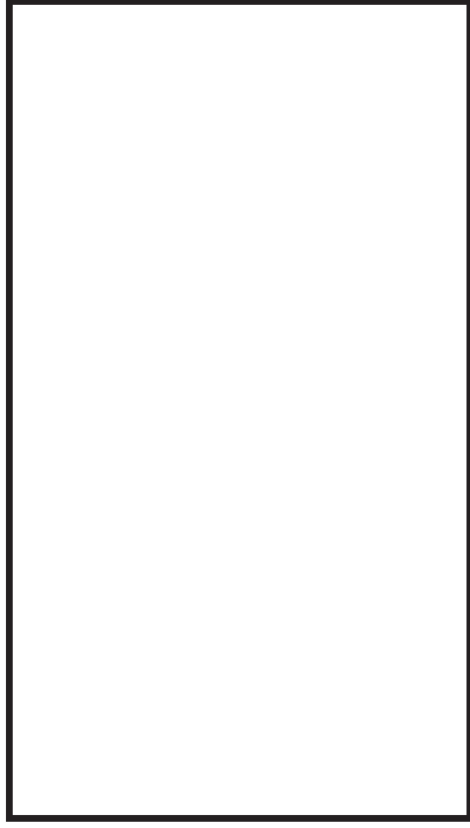


Finding My Roots

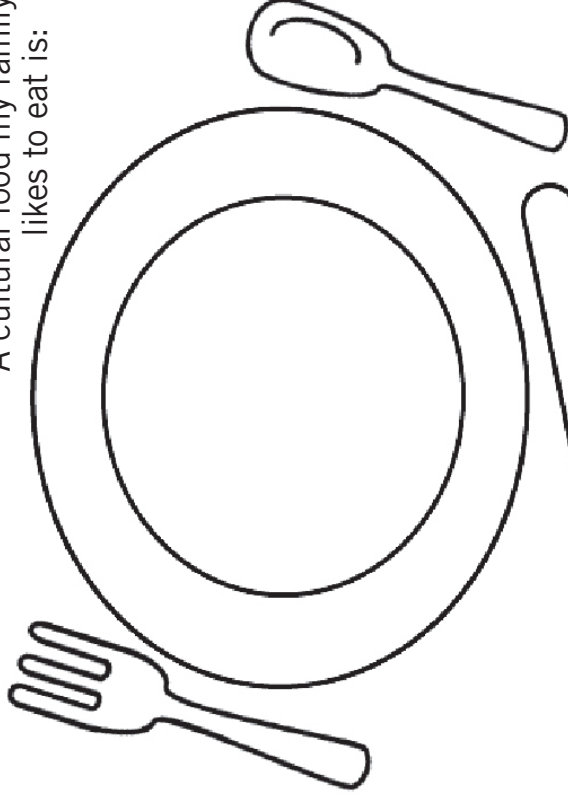
My name: _____

My family comes from: _____ (country)

The country's flag looks like this:



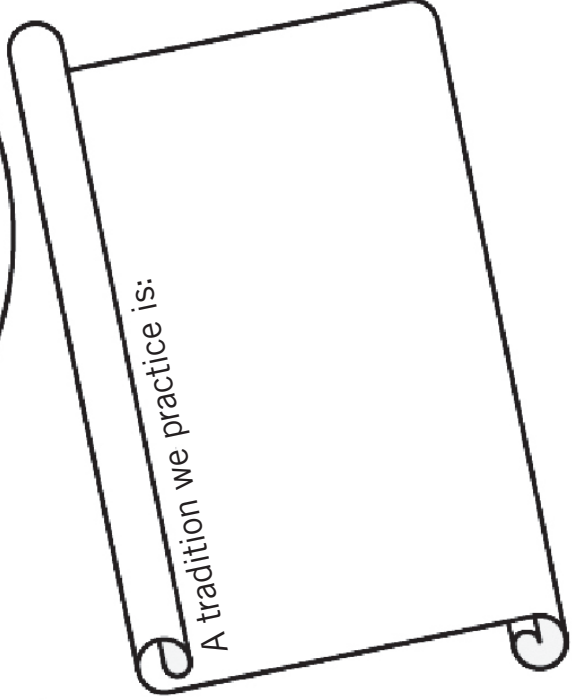
A cultural food my family likes to eat is:



The language they speak is:



A tradition we practice is:



Rhyme Time (Grades PreK-1)

Begin by reading nursery rhymes to introduce rhyming words, calling out and repeating the words that sound the same. Use the BBC Teach website on [Nursery Rhymes and Songs from A-Z](#) (see resources page) to familiarize students with rhymes on a beat. On a piece of poster paper, begin a T-chart to track rhyming words. Add to this chart throughout the year as you help students identify rhyming words in familiar poems, stories, and songs. Ask students to finish the rhyme “Jack and Jill...” and “One, two, buckle my shoe...” Encourage them to play with rhymes and even make up nonsense rhyming words. Make the connection to rapping, the musical style of speaking rhymes to the beat of the music.

Materials Needed:

- Various bottles or jars or cardboard cores of toilet paper rolls.
- Several bags of dried beans, peas or colorful beads.
- Super Glue or Hot Glue (teacher use only)
- Tape and decorative supplies



Next, let's make some musical instruments! Using a variety of jars/bottles and beans, lead each student through the process of making a Maraca. Allow students to use whatever bottle and materials they wish to make their instrument. Have them count out 10 beans and add them into their bottle. For early learners, a Counting Assistance Worksheet is available on the resources page and can be used to instruct students to place one bead in each circle, saying the numbers as they place the bean. Repeat this step multiple times until the bottle is about half full. Secure the lid with a strong glue and tape! If time allows, have students decorate their instruments with stickers, construction paper, tissue paper or other available supplies. Play any selection of salsa music and encourage students to play along. Model shaking a Maraca in time to the music.

Watch the [Sesame Street Hip-Hop Alphabet video](#) available on the resources page. This is a great introduction to rapping and breakdancing, both elements of Hip-Hop culture. As a culminating event, allow students in small groups to create and present a dance, reminding students that Yeila, the narrator of the play was preparing for a dance contest. Model some simple dance moves for students. If you watched the Pre-Show Workshop Video, this is a great time to incorporate some of the cultural dance steps learned or have fun with simple movements: wave hands in the air, roll them in front of you, brush off the shoulders, take a step to the left, take a step to the right, turn around and clap your hands – you get the idea! Create small groups. Ask some students to play instruments for the performance while others dance, then let them change roles. Add some salsa music and enjoy!



RESOURCES

READING



Grandma's Records by Eric Velasquez.

Martina, the Beautiful Cockroach: A Cuban Folktale by Carmen Agra Deedy, illustrated by Michael Austin.

The Family Book by Todd Parr.

Children's Books on Cuba

All Around the World: Cuba, by Joanne Mattern (grades 2-5)

If You Were Me and Lived in... Cuba: A Child's Introduction to Culture Around the World by Carole P. Roman, illustrated by Kelsea Wierenga (grades K-3)

Let's Explore Cuba by Walt K. Moon (grades PreK-2)

Vámonos: Havana by Patty Rodriguez & Ariana Stein, illustrated by Ana Godinez (grades PreK-K)

WEB



Martina, the Beautiful Cockroach, YouTube read-aloud by Michelle Oaxaca. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o9X_4aChQqA

"We are different, we are the same: Teaching young children about diversity." The Pennsylvania State University, 2013. <http://bkc-od-media.vhost.psu.edu/documents/Activities1506.pdf>

MapChart interactive map creator – World Map: Simple. <https://www.mapchart.net/world.html>

"The Great American Melting Pot" *Schoolhouse Rock*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=su7bsDuOwP4>

Cuba Facts for Kids. *Kids World Travel Guide*. <https://www.kids-world-travel-guide.com/cuba-facts.html>

Cuba Facts for Kids. *National Geographic Kids*. <https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/discover/geography/countries/cuba-facts/>

Rhyme Time Activity

Let's Practice Counting to Ten! Counting Assist Template

<https://www.playhousesquare.org/assets/doc/Havana-Hop-Counting-Activity-52b180e356.pdf>

Nursery Rhymes and Songs A-Z. *BBC Teach*. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/nursery-rhymes-a-to-z-index/z4ddgwx>

"Sesame Street: Abc Hip hop With Miles." *Sesame Street*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p-f6aboKAEE>

Collaboration and Self-Care Activity

Stop/Play/Rewind/Fast Forward Lyrics. https://www.playhousesquare.org/assets/doc/Lyrics-Stop-_-Play-for-use-with-Video-1-Paige-and-Friends-2-eacd62f9b0.pdf

Back to My Garden Lyrics. <https://www.playhousesquare.org/assets/doc/Lyrics-Back-to-My-Garden-for-use-with-Video-1-Paige-and-Friends-2-98e81cad3f.pdf>

Family Ties Activity

Grandma's Records YouTube Read Aloud from Kids Books with Pictures. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQzvMgf1Au8>

Grandma's Records Visual Vocabulary Sheet. <https://www.playhousesquare.org/assets/doc/Grandmas-Records-Vocabulary-99f9643bc7.pdf>