



OS ARVORES—UMA CONECCAO ENTRE O PORTUGAL E O BRASIL DE ONTEM E HOJE

(The Trees—a Connection between Portugal and Brazil from Yesterday and Today)

Level: high school, 9-12 grades
Course: Portuguese I or higher

Rationale

Foreign language courses should incorporate strong content and cultural information to be successful. It must go beyond labelling places and peoples to explore real historical and cultural information to develop students' understanding of the Portuguese-speaking peoples.

Portuguese is spoken by more than 170 million people worldwide, in Portugal in Europe, Brazil in Latin America, Angola and Mozambique in Africa. The spread of Portuguese is due to the early explorations and colonization by the European Portuguese. This unit challenges students, through the topic of "trees," to examine the historical and cultural connections between Portugal and Brazil.

Time Needed

1-3 Weeks, or interspersed into a wider curriculum which might include other units of culture/history.

Materials

Handouts included in this document, reference materials, atlases, library access, Portuguese-English dictionary, internet access.

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Objectives

- * Student will become familiar with the physical geography of Portugal and Brazil, with particular focus on forests;
- * Student will understand the language connection between Portugal and Brazil;
- * Student will explore past and present uses of forests in both Portugal and Brazil and make inquiry into how these forests have impacted the countries.

Procedures

Lesson 1: The World of the Portuguese Language

1. A Reading in Portuguese “Portugal e outras culturas” (Seabra) or similar article which discusses the use of Portuguese as a world language.

- * Provide students with a copy of the article (Handout Lesson 1-A attached).
- * As homework, students will read the article quickly for understanding of main topic.
- * In the following class, students will read outloud, taking turns, in small groups. After reading the entire article as a group, students will be assigned sections of the article (a paragraph is usually enough) which they will read to understand thoroughly and be able to explain to their entire group. (This is known as a “jigsaw” activity.)
- * Students might develop a vocabulary list of difficult or unknown words for a follow-up vocabulary quiz.

2. Brazil and Portugal—Where are they, how are they similar and different?

- * Using atlases, world almanacs, maps, internet resources, have the students compare and contrast the two most important Portuguese-speaking countries in terms of physical geography, resources, populations, indigenous/ethnic minorities, etc.
- * Provide students with a photocopy of categories, or use an overhead transparency, to research. Ask them to provide resource information as well as data. (Sample Handout Lesson 1-B follows)
- * You will want to determine *how many categories* to assign, *which resources* to use, and how much *time* to allot this segment.

Handout Lesson 1-B

COMPARE/CONTRAST BRAZIL & PORTUGAL

_____ In the spaces below, list the categories suggested by your teacher and fellow students. Using as many resources as possible, collect and reference the data that you acquire.

Category:	Brazil	Portugal	Resource
Area (in square feet)	_____	_____	_____
Elevation	_____	_____	_____
Climate	_____	_____	_____
Political areas	_____	_____	_____
Population centers	_____	_____	_____
Population	_____	_____	_____
Types of Vegetation	_____	_____	_____
Forests	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____

Lesson 2: The Historical Connection—Brazil and Portugal

1. The Trees

Focusing on the reign of Dom Dinis, son of Afonso III of Portugal, use Dos Passos' The Portugal Story, Chapter 5 to explore the persona of Dom Dinis, a man ahead of his times. Dom Dinis was responsible for a reforestation effort, along with his wife, Dona Isabel. He was a visionary, but also a practical man. His *reforestation efforts*, support of the trades, enabled the eventual Portuguese discoveries, because the Portuguese were subsequently able to support the construction of an extensive maritime force of "caravels."

Later, Prince Henry, the Navigator, takes advantage of this wealth of wood, economic factors and societal changes to push Portugal to the forefront of expansion and discovery. Again, use Dos Passos' book to present the "persona" of Dom Henriques (The Portugal Story, Cap. 3).

- * Portuguese students will read Handouts "A expansao, uma saida para a crise" to use foreign language vocabulary acquisition skills.
- * Have students research and report on topics related to the Portuguese discoveries, such as Dom Denis, Henry the Navigator, Caravel ships, Early Portuguese Discoveries, or others that come to mind.
- * Consider posing the question about what modern thinkers/leaders are creating opportunities for tomorrow's discoveries?

2. Brazil Wood?

- * How did the area we know now as Brazil get its name? Who discovered it and when? Use Smith's book *Explorers of the Amazon*, Chapter 1, to introduce Pedro Cabral's discovery of Brazil and subsequent naming.
- * What is brazil wood and why is it important, or is it? Why was brazil wood prized in its day? Does it still have any economic value in the world market? What kind of product is harvested today from the forests of Brazil?
- * What about the rain forest? Consider showing a film here on the rainforest of Brazil. Check with your district film catalog, or ask your social studies teachers. This would be a good opportunity to connect with the Internet sources either independently or as a class. Most libraries now carry extensive resources and museums often feature displays.

Lesson 3. What similar issues do Brazil and Portugal share today? What role do "trees" play in their common concerns/problems?

As the world approaches the year 2000, no country can ignore its own history as it considers the challenges of the future. We are all facing a critical turn where our past use of resources and our current planning will determine our ability to survive.

Use this lesson as a time to research forestation, the Amazon Basin, the issues of population migration, forest management, climatic changes (drought in Brazil/Portugal), dependence on a single economy, or world political issues etc. The resources here could be videos, news broadcasts, journalism articles, internet resources from Lynx, WWW, subscription databases, etc.

Grouping the class into teams facilitates research. Have each team select a particular topic to compare and contrast. Since this is a language class, I would want to find as many resources as possible in Portuguese. Internet would be my tool of choice, since I have access to it along with my students. If you have time, you can plan to contact the Organization of American States, embassies, tourist offices, and similar agencies. Students could prepare visual displays of their information.

Bibliography

Bras-Noticias (Brazilian Newspaper):

<http://astro.berkeley.edu/zepka/bras/brasil.html>

A source for current event issues from Brazil.

The Children's Rainforest, P.O. Box 936, Lewiston ME 04240

An annotated bibliography of educational resources related to the rain forest.

Dos Passos, John. The Portugal Story. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co. 1969.

In this book, the author describes the major and minor events that made fifteenth century Portugal the most important power in Europe. An essential "reader" for understanding the history of Portugal.

Geography Education Standards Project. Geography for Life: National Geography Standards - 1994. National Geographic Research and Exploration, 1994.

This book details the national geography standards, while offering suggestions on how to implement quality geography in the classroom. It is an excellent guide to the teacher who desires to integrate geography, history and culture.

Geographic Inquiry into Global Issues: Development Effects. Britannica Global Geography System. Encyclopedia Britannica Educational Corporation, 1995.

This module focusses on Latin American, and answers the question: What are the effects of development in the Amazon Region?

Jordan, Terry G., and Rowntree, Lester. The Human Mosaic: A Thematic Introduction to Cultural Geography, 5th Edition. New York: Harper and Row. 1990.

A useful text for exploring a variety of themes related to cultural geography which could be used to develop other units for combining foreign language and geographic study.

Kapit, Wynn. The Geography Coloring Book. New York: Harper Collins Publishers. 1991.

A useful book of line-drawings, useful for making graphic presentations, maps and transparencies.

Latin America Data Base, Latin American Institute, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM. 87131
telephone 505-277-6839 url: <http://ladb.unm.edu>

An electronic news digest service covering political and economic issues on Mexico, Central America, and South America. A full-text service, it can be searched by topic from gopher and WWW sites. An excellent on-line resource for current and recent articles on topics and themes related to Latin America, updated weekly.

Lombardi, Cathryn L., and Lombardi, John V. Latin American History: A Teaching Atlas. Madison, Wisconsin/London: University of Wisconsin Press. 1983.

This useful book provides useful cartographic materials, emphasizing themes and topics in Latin American affairs, such as discovery and conquest, Indian civilizations, politics, geography, vegetation and climate, and more.

Margolis, Carolyn, and Herman, J. Viola. Seeds of Change. Five Hundred Years Since Columbus. Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press. 1991.

This book "reflects some of the inquiry that supports the Columbus Quincentenary exhibiton "Seeds of Change." It reexamines some of the changes that have occurred since the contact of the Old and New Worlds.

Portugal (general information in English and Portuguese)

<http://s700.uminho.pt/Portugal/portugal.html>

A general information web page with more resources on Portugal.

Peres, Damiao. Os Descobrimentos Portugueses, 3a Ed. Sintra/Portugal: Graficas de Resopal, Lda. 1988.

This book, in Portuguese, is an illustrated juvenile history text about the Portuguese explorations and discoveries. The language in the book would be sufficiently difficult for a non-native student of Portuguese. It has wonderful illustrations of museum objects, ancient maps and drawings from manuscripts.

Rainforest Action Network. "Native Peoples of Tropical Rainforests."

<http://www.ran.org/ran/>

This web location provides an overview of the rainforest and rainforest issues in the Amazon. Somewhat like an encyclopedia, the article addresses indigenous peoples, the World Bank, and other topics.

Sa Couto, Fernando. Atlas de Geografia de Portugal, 2da Ed.. Rio Tinto/ Portugal: Edicoes Asa. 1993.

This atlas, in Portuguese, offers graphic resources for all aspects of Portugal in maps, photos, and statistical graphs. The information is up-to-date and attractively presented. Even if this unit were used for English-speaking students in a Geography course, the graphic material would be useful.

Seabra, Jose Augusto. "A Lingua Portuguesa no Mundo (adaptado)." Revista Internacional de Lingua Portuguesa. 1989.

A summary, in Portuguese, of the use of the Portuguese language throughout the world. This article would serve as a reading to practice language skills.

Smith, Anthony. Explorers of the Amazon. New York: Viking Penguin Press. 1990.

In this book, the author recounts the stories of the explorations of the interior of the South American continent, specifically the Amazon River basin, describing the early forays of the Portuguese and Spanish explorers.

1492 Exhibit

<http://sunsite.unc.edu/expo/1492.exhibit/Intro.html>

A good source for ordering resources, viewing portions of the Quincentennial Exhibit.