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The Spanish Civil War through Film

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Introduction

Why would someone want to teach the Spanish Civil War? I am a language teacher and therefore I can easily implement other disciplines, like history, geography and literature, in my instruction. I always try to do so since I believe that meaningful interdisciplinary teaching benefits students greatly: it opens up their minds and gives them a wider perspective.

As a high school Spanish teacher, I always work on including aspects of diverse cultural groups in my lessons about peoples from around the world, because I believe my students should be raised to appreciate the highly diverse society that we all live in. However, I tend to emphasize cultural components of countries of the Hispanic world so students reach a better understanding of the second language they are studying.

I intend to implement the "5Cs" of the National Standards of Foreign Language Learning—Cultures, Connections (among disciplines), Comparisons (between cultures), Communication, and Communities—into context in this unit.

The unit *The Spanish Civil War Through Film* will allow me to achieve a variety of different but equally important goals: It will give me the opportunity to introduce history, literature and culture in the classroom. My students have not been exposed to many different cultures and sometimes it is difficult for them to interpret or even understand other perspectives, points of view or behaviors. By teaching the students to analyze and decode movies, I will provide them with the tools to relate some of the cultural background information they already have to new concepts (and to their own experiences.) The other important goal I want to accomplish with the unit is to improve student's critical thinking skills by analyzing and synthesizing information. It will also give my students the opportunity to perfect their reading, listening, writing and speaking skills in Spanish while learning about some important historical events and literature.

The unit is to be used at The Sound School Regional Vocational Aquaculture and Agriculture Center in New Haven. It is a unique magnet school with a hands-on marine and agriculture program offering students a blend of academic and practical education, and encourages interdisciplinary study wherever applicable. The Sound School enrolls students from New Haven and twenty surrounding towns, creating a diverse community that reinforces students social and intellectual learning. The result is a racially, ethnically and socio-economically diverse student body with a broad range of academic abilities. We encourage students to be participants in a

multi-cultural society by involving them in a diverse range of high school experience.

The Spanish Civil War Through Film has been designed for my upper level classes: Spanish IV, though with proper modifications, the unit could also be taught in Spanish III and AP Spanish. Students at this level have an intermediate to advanced level of the language and a better understanding, as well as a more critical view of the world.

The unit is designed to be covered within a period of 25-30 sessions, which are from forty to seventy minutes in length. We have a rotational period system that changes every day. The average class size will be twenty or so, a perfect number for the class discussions and the debates.

I enjoy introducing history in my classes, and the Spanish Civil War perfectly fulfills my purposes of improving my students' critical thinking skills. Of all the crucial events in the history of Spain, I would say the Civil War is the one that has to be really understood to interpret present Spanish society. The Spanish Civil War became the testing ground for World War II as thousands of volunteers arrived from around the world to fight for their ideas. It not only devastated the country, but it also led to a dictatorship that lasted thirty-six years. Even though the topic seems to be very localized at first, it is not so. It will drive my students to connect the Civil War to the situation in Germany and/or Italy and how a new wave of fascism spread around Europe. As a fact, we cannot isolate the Spanish Civil War from the situation in Europe at that time.

A vast filmography of the Civil War, filmed during the period inside and outside Spain, allows one to choose a variety of aspects to work with in this unit. We will work with various movies, supported by fragments of other fiction movies and documentaries to clarify concepts or illustrate ideas.

Some of the fiction films chosen for this unit are representative of the two extremes in which Spanish society and politics were divided: *La Lengua de las Mariposas* (José Luís Cuerda, 1999) takes place in a small Galician pre-war town, where the Second Republic was struggling to survive. Another movie, on the other hand, *Raza* (José Luís Sáenz de Heredia, 1942), is a propaganda film written by Jaime the Andrade, pseudonym for Francisco Franco. The film synthesizes Franco's ideology in the first years of the post-war era through the stories of four brothers and their experiences during the war. These and other movies to be shown in this unit were written and filmed with different perspectives and different time frames. This is the reason why I have also chosen André Malraux' *Espoir* (or *Sierra de Teruel*): the famous novelist filmed this movie in 1939, the year the war came to an end.

We will also work with newsreel footage and documentaries. The Spanish Civil War was the first war ever to be filmed and I think this could be very valuable for my students since they will view real images of the conflict. We will work with *Spanish Earth*, a documentary filmed on the spot in 1937 in Fuentedueña de Tajo, a small village near Madrid. We will also work with *La Guerra Civil Española* as a resource to illustrate the main events and a couple of short newsreels chosen from the NODOS, in order to briefly show some of Franco's propaganda in the post war years.

History

Before the War (1931-1936)

Five years before the beginning of the war, the proclamation of the Republic (democratic government system opposed to the Monarchy) had been welcomed with enthusiasm because the monarchy was falling apart. Up to that moment, Spain was an unevenly divided country, in which the power was held by few landowners, the Church and military forces. The vast majority of the country resented the fact that the king, Alfonso XIII, had backed up Primo de Rivera's dictatorship for seven years. The working class viewed the king as the symbol of repression. He understood the delicate situation he was in and left the country before he was deposed.

Supported by intellectuals and the majority of the people, the Republic was proclaimed on April 14th, 1931. In October, shortly after finishing the new Constitution, the electoral process led to new liberal middle class government formed by a center-left coalition of political parties. The new leader, Manuel Azaña, had a very difficult situation to overcome. First of all, he had to confront the resistance of the privileged and powerful classes, the Church and the military forces. The Catholic Church was openly opposed to any kind of liberalization due to its conservative nature. Another factor, despite being really close to the landowners, was that it had total control of secondary education. The new regime had promised reforms because the levels of illiteracy were too high (almost 40% of the population), and they wanted to develop a lay effective educational system. In less than a year, 10,000 new schools were open. Art and culture spread rapidly throughout the country. Artists and intellectuals became quite involved in this process.

La Barraca was part of this "intellectual offensive." *La Barraca* ("The Shack") was a university student theater company founded and directed by Federico García Lorca, one of the best Spanish poets and playwrights of the 20th century (and probably of all times). Lorca also acted in the plays. Not only that, but he managed to write some of his best known plays while touring with the group. One example of his world-renowned work is "the Rural Trilogy": *Bodas de Sangre*, *Yerma* and *La Casa de Bernarda Alba*. *La Barraca* was funded by the Ministry of Education to introduce modern and radical interpretations of classic Spanish dramas to all sorts of audiences in rural and remote areas of the country.

Other important achievements were universal suffrage and the legalization of civil marriages and divorce. These, along with the Land Reform (1932), by which lands were expropriated and given to humble farmers, made both landlords and radical leftist groups unsatisfied. The tensions started to escalate and become a menace.

Republicans and socialists in the government were determined to reduce the Church's power. In less than a month, this anticlericalism radicalized some lower social spheres and became violent. On May 11th, six churches in Madrid were set on fire. Catholics never forgot this incident.

Another big issue was the autonomy granted to Catalonians in 1932. Historically and culturally Basques and Catalonians were quite distinct from the rest of the country and were very advanced. Military forces strongly supported the idea of state unity. This and the previous reasons led to the attempt of general San Jurjo's military coup on August 10, 1932. It did not succeed because the conservative right was not well organized. .yet.

Even the liberal groups were frustrated because the reforms were advancing too slowly. There was a revival of

anarchism as a more violent opposition to the Republic. The anarchist movement had disappeared in the rest of Europe after the Great War, but it grew in Spain, especially in Andalucía and Catalonia. Called CNT, *Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores* (National Confederation of Workers,) it had union ideology as well.

Hunger, misery and some scandals made socialists abandon a discredited government. This deep crisis ended with 1933 elections. The CEDA (*Confederación Española de Derechas Autónomas*), a cluster of small right wing parties opposed to Azaña and the Republic, won the elections. When José María Gil Robles, the leader of this very conservative Catholic party, took office he paralyzed all the reforms approved by the previous government. This led to an unsuccessful general strike on October that became an armed rising in Asturias. Gil Robles sent the Legion and the Army of Africa (1) to confront it, an operation that was coordinated by a 33-year-old General called Francisco Franco. About 2000 people were killed and thousands of republicans and socialists were imprisoned. Azaña was accused of encouraging these disturbances, but he had to be released shortly after since no evidence against him was found.

The next couple of years were marked by repression. This helped to forge a coalition of stronger left parties called The Popular Front. This new political group included the Socialist Party, the Communist Party, The Esquerra Party (left-wing party that called for the establishment of a Catalan autonomy) and the Republican Union Party. Their goal was to win in the 1936 elections. The Popular front advocated for a new agrarian reform, amnesty for political prisoners and autonomy for Catalonia. The Anarchists, on the other hand, refused to support the coalition but supported the campaign for the amnesty for the prisoners.

The outcome for this February election was a very tight success for the Popular Front. Immediately after, the new government transferred some of the most involved right-wing military leaders to posts away with the idea of isolating them: they sent Francisco Franco to the Canary Islands, Emilio Mola to Pamplona and introduced the reforms they promised during the electoral campaign. These measures upset the conservatives and as a result, the CEDA activists joined the *Falange Española*, a fascist political party founded by José Antonio Primo de Rivera in 1933. He believed Spain should have followed the model Benito Mussolini had established in Italy.

The polarized and radicalized situation prevented both sides from dialogue and parliamentary compromise. Some unfortunate episodes like the occupation of private extensions of land in Extremadura or the closure of the Falange offices and incarceration of Primo de Rivera led to an extremely violent situation that was difficult to maintain. For a growing group of military officers, the only way to reestablish the order was a military coup. Mola was in Pamplona, Navarra, where Carlism was particularly strong. The Carlists were a right-wing political movement created in 1833. They opposed liberal secularism and were quite conservative. Mola would plan the coup from there, and Franco would be in charge of the raising in Morocco where he would lead the legion and the Army of Africa. During the San Fermines (2), most of the generals met in Pamplona and some of them did not agree with the rebellion. Primo de Rivera fully supported it.

In the middle of all this chaos, on July 12th, José Castillo, a Republican Assault Guard (3) officer and a socialist, was murdered by Falangists in Madrid. The following day some of Castillo's colleagues took revenge by murdering José Calvo Sotelo. This event resulted in the military uprising generals Mola, Franco and Sanjurjo were planning on July 18th, 1936. The uprising failed in most parts of Spain but Mola's forces were successful in the Canary Islands, Morocco, Seville and Aragon. It would eventually result in the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War since Spain was divided in two irreconcilable sides.

Spanish Civil War (1936-1939)

Most part of the military forces was still loyal to the Republic. The Nationalist Front, on the contrary, had on

their side the most effective troops from the Army of Africa and the Legion. They all were in Morocco when Franco assumed command of the force. Franco asked Hitler—who was not very interested in Spain at that time- for help. During the first months of the war they were flown to Seville by German airplanes.

The insurgence was successful at first, as unions and left-wing parties resisted it. In Andalusia, farmers organized revolutionary committees that took over landowner's properties and even city halls.

The situation in Barcelona was going to be different during most of the war. The CNT (*Confederación Nacional de Trabajo*), an Anarcho-Syndicalist union, was very strong in in Barcelona. They believed in the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and opposed any kind of established authority. Right after the revolt, the CNT and the POUM (*Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista*)—a revolutionary Communist anti-Stalinist party strongly influenced by Trotsky's political ideas- organized a militia in which all the parties that supported the Revolution were represented to ensure the failure of the revolt.

The insurrection was defeated in five main cities: Bilbao, Barcelona, Madrid, Malaga and Valencia and therefore there were "two Spains." On the Nationalist side there were Pamplona, Burgos, Valladolid, Salamanca and Seville. They controlled the provinces of Galicia, Navarra, most of Castilla and Aragón in the north, and Cádiz, Sevilla, Córdoba, Granada, Huelva and Cáceres in the south. Not only were these sides opposed in ideology but also in military tactics: the nationals were a very organized, unified and disciplined force, meanwhile on the Republican side every party or union organized its own militia.

The first important battle took place in Badajoz. The city was loyal to the Republic and tried to resist the attacks from general Yagüe and his Nationalist Army. The fight was bitter and cruel, it is said that about 2,000 people were executed. One month after the conquest, Republicans were still being executed. When Republicans in Madrid and other cities heard about these atrocities, they started taking revenge and started executing prisoners. The revolution ended the judicial system, but these tragedies highlighted the necessity of a new system: in the Republican side they established the Popular Tribunals (*Tribunales Populares*) by which prisoners would have the opportunity to try to defend themselves.

On the outbreak of the conflict, the French prime minister and leader of the socialist party, Leon Blum, initially agreed to send forces to help the Republican Army. Stanley Baldwin, the British prime minister, persuaded him not to do so. Both leaders were afraid of a new international conflict so they called for the Non-Intervention Agreement, by which foreign countries would not get involved in the Spanish Civil War at all. The first meeting of the Non-Intervention Committee took place in London on September 9th, 1936. The agreement was signed by 27 countries that included France, Great Britain, Germany, Italy, the Soviet Union, Portugal and Sweden. This really was a diplomatic strategy by which every country could comply with their own interests: Italy and Germany continued to send troops and arms to the Nationalists. In the case of Germany, Hitler also gave permission for the formation of the Condor Legion (a unit of Nazi Germany's air force sent to Spain to support Franco and his troops).

Stalin did not help the Republic at first, since he was trying to get some kind of agreement with Great Britain and France; he only sent military advisers and food. Later on he sent tanks and aircraft as well as tank drivers and pilots. He firmly believed that the best way to confront the imminent threat of Germany would be an anti-fascist alliance

As a reaction to the Soviet aid to the Republicans, Mussolini's prime minister and Hitler met in Germany and decided to increase theirs.

Roosevelt decided not to get involved in the conflict but allowed the oil company Texaco to provide fuel to the Nationalists.

Maurice Thorez, the French Communist leader wanted to create an international force of volunteers to fight for the Republic. Stalin supported the idea, and in September 1936 the Comintern (Communist International) began organizing the formation of International Brigades. This idea was opposed by Largo Caballero (socialist Prime Minister and later on War Minister) at first, but he finally agreed. About 60,000 French, Greek, Polish, Italian, American, Irish, Australian, Swedish, Swiss and English volunteers joined the International Brigades. The main recruitment center was in Paris, where they would facilitate volunteers' assistance to get to Spain. The base was in Albacete, where men and women were organized in Battalions (Abraham Lincoln Battalion, British Battalion, Dimitrov Battalion, Dombrowski Battalion. . .) sorted according to their origin and experience, although there were mixed ones.

Discipline was one of the values the brigadists wanted to maintain, and this was extremely beneficial to the Popular Front militias. The International Brigades participated in most of the main Battles playing an important role in all of them: defense of Madrid (November 1936), Teruel (December 1937), Jarama (February 1937), Brunete (July 1937), Belchite (June 1937) and Ebro (July-August 1938).

The bombing of Guernica became a world-renowned event because it was the first aerial bombardment in history in which a civilian population was attacked with the apparent intent of producing total destruction. On the 26th of April 1937, 43 German Legion Condor planes bombed the town. The attacks nearly destroyed it entirely. There was no apparent motivation of the attack. This unfortunate event inspired Pablo Ruiz Picasso's painting *Guernica*, which is recognized internationally as the symbol of the horrors a war can cause.

The siege of Madrid was the longest and the most difficult for the National Army. It started on November 1936 and it continued until 1939. The Nationalist Army entered Madrid on March 27th. There were many attacks in different parts of the city, but no real successes for the Nationalists. Many intellectuals, journalists and writers convened in Madrid: Ernest Hemingway, André Malraux, John Dos Passos, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, Gerda Taro, Robert Capa, Arthur Koestler, Ilya Ehrenburg, George Orwell, W.H. Auden, Sean O'Casey. . .

Valencia and Barcelona were two other difficult targets for the Nationalists. As mentioned before, the vast majority of the people in Barcelona wanted Cataluña's autonomy, and therefore the Republican government. In May 1937 the CNT and the POUM were subdued by the Assault Guard. As a result, the Communist Party gained most of the power. Barcelona was also protected by other resisting cities such as Tarragona. In the final stages of the war, Barcelona was also bombed by the Condor Legion. Barcelona was occupied on January 26th, 1939. That same day, President Negrín had the last government meeting in Spanish ground in the Figueras Castle cellar. Almost a half million of refugees crossed the border that night, including Negrín and his ministers.

For the Catalonians that was the end of the war, but one forth of the country was still Republican and Negrín was still the Prime Minister. He had to go back to negotiate, but Franco had no interest on any kind of pact. When Negrín went back to Spain he established his headquarters in Alicante. Meanwhile, Segismundo Casado, a Republican colonel was trying to negotiate a peace settlement with Franco, who would only accept an unconditional surrender. On March 27th, the Nationalist Army entered Madrid without any kind of opposition. Madrid surrendered and four days later Francisco Franco announced the end of the Spanish Civil War. Hundreds of thousands of Republican were executed and placed in concentration camps.

Films

The following are synopses of the films we will be working with.

Spanish Earth (United States, Joris Ivens, 1937)

Dorothy Parker, John Dos Passos, Lillian Hellmann and some other writers formed Contemporary Historians (production company) to raise money for this documentary. John Dos Passos, as a matter of fact, was initially in the project and, when he left the crew, Ernest Hemingway replaced him. Joris Ivens filmed the documentary in a small town near Madrid call Fuentedueña de Tajo in 1937, in the middle of the war. The author found balance showing daily life of people and their struggle to survive. This is one of the main accomplishments of the movie since Ivens effectively alternated both throughout the movie. There are several scenes of people—making fresh bread in the morning, a soldier eating a piece of fruit or getting a newspaper—followed by scenes of bombings and shootings on the front line. All of these countering images are brought together by Julián, a peasant boy who appears three times going from home to the front or vice versa.

There are three modes in the film: one of them would be Fuentedueña and their struggle to get an irrigation system for survival. The second one would be the military confrontation in Madrid's surroundings: the University City area or the bombing of la Plaza del Callao in the heart of the city, and the third and final mode would be the newsreel footage of the rally of the Republican forces with Azaña's brief discourse, the words from la Pasionaria...

Another very important quality of the movie is the narration. In the first version (previewed in the White House), the narrator was Orson Welles. As the quality of his voice seemed not go too well with the images, someone suggested Hemingway as a possible narrator. It worked beautifully.

Espoir: Sierra de Teruel (France, André Malraux, 1939)

Espoir: Sierra de Teruel is based on André Malraux's novel *L'Espoir (Man's Hope)*. Malraux was a French intellectual, novelist, historian and the Minister for Cultural Affairs in France for 11 years. The author was a strong supporter of the Popular Front. He got very involved in the war on its outbreak. He first acted as an intermediary in the negotiations between Leon Blum and Azaña. Later he organized a squadron of volunteer French pilots to fight for the Republic.

The novel, *L'Espoir*, appeared in 1937, while the war was still going on. It is a description of the war he lived himself. He followed the International Brigades from front to front, giving simultaneous impressions from different places as if he had been an eyewitness. (4)

The novel was adapted for the screen. Malraux began the shooting in 1938 and finished it the following year. *Espoir* is a very committed film without references to ideology. The movie seems to be a tribute to the International Brigadists and the Republic.

It is an apparently a simple movie that relates the sufferings some Republican soldiers go through to blow the Zaragoza bridge in order to block the advance of the Nationalist troops. The movie is full of symbols and little details that make it seem real.

Raza (Spain, José Luis Sáenz de Heredia, 1942)

Raza is one of the four propaganda movies about the Spanish Civil War made during Franco's dictatorship. The other three were *Sin Novedad en el Alcázar*, *La Patrulla* and *La Fiel Infantería*. It is a fiction movie that synthesizes the ideology of Franco's Fascist Regimen in the early postwar years.

The movie script was written by someone named Jaime de Andrade—in reality Franco's pseudonym. José Luís Sáenz de Heredia, José Antonio Primo de Rivera's cousin, directed the film. He had the best resources: money, time, huge settings and film stock (almost 45 meters) to make this film. It was a very expensive movie but that was not a problem since it was state sponsored. This was not a very innovative idea; other countries had made state sponsored propaganda movies. Some examples would be:

- *Scipio Africanus* (Italy, Carmine Gallote, 1937)
- *Aleksandr Nevskiy* (Russia, Sergei M. Eisenstein, 1938)
- *La Marseillaise* (France, Jean Renoir, 1938)
- *Triumph of the Will* (Germany, Leni Riefenstahl, 1935)

There are two different versions of the movie (5): one from 1942 (previewed in El Palacio de la Música in Madrid); and a second one from 1950. With the excuse of making a new, re-mastered sound version, they changed the movie. Apparently, no one noticed what they really did. The second version, titled *El Espíritu de una Raza*, was six minutes shorter than the first one: all the fascist, anti-American and antidemocratic references were removed for political reasons. They tried to destroy all the copies of the first version, but one appeared in Berlin, in 1993, after the recovery of some UFA (Universum Film AG) (6) archives. It was then when critics realized there were two different versions.

The movie starts with Pedro Churruca, a brave naval Spanish officer, who shortly after dies while fighting the United States in Cuba. His widow raises four children and all of them follow different directions in life: Isabel marries a military officer; Jaime becomes a priest; Pedro gets into politics and José becomes a military officer as well. The war divides the family in opposite poles: Pedro supports the Republican government (he is shown as the villain of the movie) and José is part of the nationalist front. Jaime is executed with other priests by the anarchists. . .

This movie will be used as a counterpoint to the documentaries. Students will be able to effectively analyze and compare some fragments of *Raza* and some fragments of any of the documentaries to discern different points of view. They will separate fact from opinion and will be able to recognize propaganda.

Notification y Documentales Cinematographic NO-DO (1943-1975)

The NO-DOs (NOticiario DOcumental) were brief propaganda documentaries that served Franco's regime to spread his values and praise his figure. In December 22, 1942 the NO-DO appeared in the Boletín Oficial del Estado (B.O.E.) (7) as an official entity depending on the Vice-secretary of Popular Education, and announced that from January 1, 1943 editing any piece of news or documentary that was not a NO-DO was forbidden.

The exhibition of the NO-DOs before any movie was compulsory in all the movie theaters from 1943 to 1975. They filmed about 4,016 programs, in which the regime would show the government's manipulated version of news and events.

The images, the scripts and the music of these NO-DOs will help my students to reflect in the importance of

freedom of speech and also in how the media could influence people, culture and society.

Since these newsreel footage pieces are very short, we will be able to watch whole pieces and work with them in order to get students opinions and ideas.

La Guerra Civil Española (Spain, David Hart, 1983)

La Guerra Civil Española is a remarkable documentary on the Spanish Civil War. It is divided into six-55 minute episodes that cover the conflict in great detail. The episodes cover the following themes:

1. El Preludio de la Tragedia (1931-1936)
2. Revolución y Contrarrevolución
3. La Guerra de los Idealistas
4. Franco y los Nacionalistas
5. Cara y Cruz de la Revolución
6. Victoria y Derrota

This is an invaluable tool as historical evidence, but it could be too long and probably too detailed for my students. I will however be using images and fragments of the documentary in order to illustrate concepts or events.

La Lengua de las Mariposas (Spain, José Luis Cuerda, 1999)

The script of *La Lengua de las Mariposas* is based on *¿Qué me Quieres Amor,?* a collection of 16 short stories written by Manuel Rivas, one of the most renowned Galician writers today. To understand the movie, we will first learn some of the main historical events that led to the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). Once we have a clear idea of the social and cultural implications of the war, we will read two of the three short stories on which the movie is based: "*La Lengua de las Mariposas*" and "*Un Saxo en la Niebla*." I have decided to leave out the third one, "*Carmiña*", because of its sexual references. Students will first develop an understanding of the stories and the cultural implications and details of Galicia: its peoples and traditions and the unique role of public figures (the major, the priest, the school teacher or the cacique) in a small village. We will watch the movie broken up in fragments, so we can work with each detail: meanings of images, symbols, dialogue; and in order to avoid a few adult scenes based on the "*Carmiña*" story.

The plot of the movie, presents the close friendship between a six year old, Moncho, and his Republican teacher, Don Gregorio, the summer before the military rebellion that ultimately led to the beginning of the war. We can identify several secondary topics that are key to the story and to a better understanding of it: the value of an education based on freedom; the appreciation of nature; social and political criticism of that particular historical moment; the importance of making decisions.

Strategies

In order to give students the opportunity to better understand the Spanish Civil War and to be able to decode many of the themes symbols, cultural, social and political references, I am going to gradually introduce background information to them. The first day, I am going to show them a couple of very representative

pictures either on the overhead projector or in the smart board, and I am going to ask them to describe in the target language what they see, by calling on different people. They will have a graphic organizer in front of them in which they will write down the information they are getting from their classmates. I do not count on them knowing what the pictures are, but I want to question them to see their approaches. Upon the completion of the graphic organizer, I will ask them to choose one of the two pictures and create a 10-line story about it. I will reveal the time frame we are dealing with and I will ask students to brainstorm on the topic.

Once I have pointed out the topic of study, I will ask them to write at least five things they hope to learn within the unit. This might seem abstract, but I think that at least it forces them to reflect on the process of learning. Immediately after this, I will give them a reading comprehension exercise that will consist of a very brief easy overview of the Civil War. My intention with this opening lesson is to call students attention to the subject matter in an effective way so they will be motivated.

The unit will be taught once or twice a week starting in December when students will be more confident using Spanish as the only language to communicate in class.

"Discussing Movies"

In many lessons of the unit I will start the class introducing one or two (depending on time) "Viewing Cue(s)" contained in Timothy Corrigan's *The Film Experience*. (8) As the author says, "*they are designed to encourage critical viewing habits and offer cues for film analysis.*" I will try to sample all these with scenes of Spanish movies on the civil war, when possible. This will take a good 20 to 30 minutes every day, but I consider learning to look at a movie important. In addition, they will be practicing their listening comprehension.

Some of the movies to be used for this purpose will be:

- Los Años Bárbaros (Spain, Fernando Colomo, 1998)
- ¡Ay, Carmela! (Spain, Carlos Saura, 1991)
- Belle Époque (Spain, Fernando Trueba, 1992)
- La Colmena (Spain, Mario Camus, 1982)
- Los días del Pasado (Spain, Mario Camus, 1977)
- El Espíritu de la Colmena (Spain, Victor Erice, 1973)
- *La Hora de los Valientes* (Spain, Antonio Mercero, 1998)
- *Libertarias* (Spain, Vicente Aranda, 1996)
- *Muerte de un Ciclista* (Spain, Juan Antonio Bardem, 1955)
- *La Niña de tus Ojos* (Spain, Fernando Trueba, 1998)
- *Tu Nombre Envenena mis Sueños* (Spain, Pilar Miró, 1996)
- *Soldados de Salamina* (Spain, David Trueba, 2003)
- *La Vaquilla* (Spain, Luis García Berlanga, 1985)
- *El Verdugo* (Spain, Luis García Berlanga, 1963)

Comparative time line

In order to facilitate students acquiring a global view of history and to frame the conflict in a context, we will be creating a comparative time line, including the main historical events in the United States, the rest of the world (just mentioning the most relevant issues) and Spain. This activity will directly address one of Gardner's Multiple Intelligences (9): the visual-spatial.

"Posters, pictures and other visuals"

Every other week we will be analyzing a picture, or a poster. We will use the same format as the opening lesson. Students will first examine and discuss posters using their prior knowledge and, later on, individually they will either write a paragraph on it or answer given reflective questions previously prepared by the teacher. One of these will be Picasso's *Guernica* (1937.) See Sample Lesson Plan 2: *Guernica*.

War songs and lyrics

We will work on this strategy only twice to sample real war songs. We will work on two different (and carefully chosen) songs: one from the Republican side and one from the Nationalist side. (10)

The first day we will listen to one of the songs a couple of times. The teacher will give each student the lyrics with numbered blank spaces. The first time they will be asked to listen carefully and to read along to see if they understand. The second time they will fill in the blanks. They might need a third listening of the song, since the quality of the audio is not as clear as I wished. The teacher will ask if a third time is necessary. If so, the teacher will write a "word bank" on the board to make it easier.

A couple of students will read the lyrics as a way of correcting the exercise. We will stop in each stanza to go over the meanings and symbology. The teacher will question different students on what they think.

The second day for this exercise (it does not have to be consecutive, actually I recommend to do it a week later), we will be doing exactly the same thing: two or three listenings to the song, fill in the blanks, reading. . . The main difference will be that they will be asked to compare both of them. They will be given a chart and they will have to reflect on the different ideologies of the two political groups and compare them. We will discuss this orally in class and they will be asked to write a long reflective essay as homework. The teacher will give them a week to work on this assignment.

Debate

Towards the end of the unit, the teacher will evenly and thoughtfully divide the class in two. One group is going to be representing the Nationalist party and the other will be representing the Republican Party. Students will have to defend their ideology and try to reason and convince the other group. Students will get a rubric and some strategies for effective speech. They will have to complete mini-tasks both days in order to make sure they utilize their time well. This will take a couple of classes to complete. The teacher will be supervising and helping both groups. When the class engages in the debate, a student moderator will lend authenticity to the process.

Analysis and comparing of movies

As mentioned before, both movies *Raza* and *La Lengua de las Mariposas* will be analyzed comparatively. Students will be asked to compare a couple of scenes from both. They will have to write a short essay doing so and introducing Corrigan's "viewing cues" mentioned previously.

Final Project

This final project will be explained to students at the beginning of the unit, so they will have it in mind and can prepare their material: gathering information from the movies, handouts. . .

Students will have to prepare a final group project that will be presented in class. The teacher will divide the class in four different groups. Each group will be assigned a different task. In order to decide who will do what, students will have to choose a person who will draw a paper with the task.

The four tasks will be: Politics, language, culture and film. Detailed rubrics will be given to each group.

Política (politics)

Students will gather information on the major political groups of the moment, what were their ideologies, what did they defend. . . Students will be asked to identify examples and information in the movies we watch. This is a good practice to develop a critical attitude since identification will lead to analysis. They can do whatever they want in order to present their research to the rest of the class, as long as they do so in Spanish: posters, a Power Point presentation, games, iMovie. . .

Lengua-glosario (language)

Since we are in a language class, this group is going to develop a glossary with warlike, propagandistic and political terms that appear in the movies and handouts. Students will have to put it together and organize it thoughtfully. They will have to present it to the teacher a couple of days before their presentation to the class. Parts of the glossary will be on the final assessment or quiz.

Cultura (culture)

This group will have to identify specific Spanish cultural features in the movies (good resources will be the *Nodos*, movies such as *La Niña de tus Ojos*, *La Vaquilla*. . .) This group could make a Power Point presentation showing still images and explaining them. (These are just suggestions, the teacher will have no problem to get different creative proposals from the students if she thinks they will work.)

Películas (movies)

This group will be doing a film glossary in Spanish in which they will explain terms and will show examples from the movies. They will not be able to use the same scenes or the teacher used while working with the "viewing cues." Students will have to give the teacher a copy of the glossary a couple of days before their presentation to the class. Parts of the glossary will be on the final assessment or quiz.

Every period, students will be given a brief handout structured differently for every group so they can take notes so the teacher will see the progress and will be able to help a group if needed.

Assessment

As part of the final project, every group will submit 15 multiple choice questions from their work to the teacher and to their classmates. The teacher will choose about 40 of them that will pass at the very end of the unit.

Sample Lesson Plans

Lesson One: La Lengua de las Mariposas

(This lesson plan is to be developed in a 70-minute class. However, it can be changed according to teachers needs)

Goal

Understand and analyze the connections between film and literature and how both represent and explore human experience.

Learning Objectives

As a result of this lesson the students will be able to:

1. Search for information in a text.
2. Develop their reading and listening comprehension skills.
3. Identify and analyze cultural aspects of Spanish society
4. Make inferences about ideas implicit in a written text in order to compare them to its adaptation on screen.
5. Understand how writers or film directors manipulate stories in order to achieve a desired effect.

Materials

- Movie *La Lengua de las Mariposas* (José Luis Cuerda, 1999)
- DVD player, TV.
- Handout with specific questions on the final scene of the movie to help students to understand and analyze it.

Special Needs

The teacher has already introduced students to the prewar (Second Republic) period. Students were asked to answer the questions on the handout for homework.

Students and teacher have previously read the story "*La Lengua de las Mariposas*," included in Rivas's book *¿Qué me quieres Amor?* (11.)

Initiation

"Pass the bull" strategy: I usually start all of my classes passing around a foam bull toy asking questions- could be grammar, or anything. It is a great strategy because you assess students daily and it helps to start the class on a good tone, since they love it!

The teacher will toss the bull to correct the homework.

Procedure

1. Different students will read aloud the end of "*La Lengua de las Mariposas*" (pages 35-39.)
2. Students will be asked to pair up to discuss this fragment of the story. (Some questions will be prompted so students know what to look for.)
3. Different groups will share their point of view with the rest of the class.
4. Students will watch the corresponding final segment of the movie. During the film, the teacher will stop it at critical moments to get reactions from students.
5. Students will be given the handout. The teacher will lead a discussion on the final scene.

Closure

Debate: The class will be carefully divided in two groups. One group will have to defend Moncho's position at the end of the movie, the other group will have to criticize it. Students will have to argue giving reasons. This will serve as a practice for the big debate at the end of the unit.

Assessment / homework

Students will be asked to write a brief 25-30 lines essay (using the pluperfect subjunctive) answering to the question: *¿Qué hubieras hecho si hubieras estado en la situación de Moncho? ¿Por qué?* (If you were Moncho, what would you have done? Why?).

Lesson Two: Corresponsales en la Guerra de España: Las Brigadas Internacionales.

(This lesson plan is to be developed in a 70-minute class. However, it can be changed according to teachers needs)

Note: This lesson plan, due to its length, will not start with the "Viewing Cue(s)" strategy.

Goal

To introduce students to Las Brigadas Internacionales

Learning Objectives

As a result of this lesson students will be able to:

1. Practice their reading and listening comprehension skills.
2. Understand the importance of history as part of the identity of countries.
3. Read and gather information of a text written in Spanish in order to select the main ideas.
4. Make connections with other areas of study (history) and acquire information of a given topic.
5. Express relevant information in their own words.
6. Watch movies with a critical eye.
7. Understand and analyze a poem in the target language.

Materials

- Chapter 3 of the documentary *La Guerra Civil Española* (Spain, David Hart, 1983), titled *La Guerra de los Idealistas*.
- Copies of the article "Las Brigadas Internacionales" written May 1, 1937 by the Russian journalist Ilya Ehrenburg for *Izvestia*. (12)

- Copies of the poem "A un soldado Internacional caído en España" written by Miguel Hernández and included in *Viento del Pueblo* (13)
- Smart Board, computer (14) and speakers.

Special Needs

Students have previously read Ilya Ehrenburg's "Las Brigadas Internacionales" for homework.

Initiation

"Pass the bull:" students will be asked questions about the article to see if they have read and / or understood it.

Procedure

1. The teacher and students will go over the article in order to make sure they have understood its general sense.
2. The teacher will ask students to write down three questions about Las Brigadas Internacionales in a piece of paper.
3. The teacher will ask a couple of students to formulate their questions to their classmates.
4. Students will get a handout with questions about the documentary fragment they are about to watch. They are asked to carefully take notes during the movie.
5. Students and teacher will watch a fragment of chapter 3 (*La Guerra de los Idealistas*) of the documentary *La Guerra Civil Española*.
6. The teacher will stop a couple of times to make sure all the students are following and are understanding the information since the documentary does not have subtitles.
7. Teacher and students will discuss what they have seen.
8. Teacher will show students 3 different still images taken from the documentary (15) and ask them for their reactions.

Closure

To wrap up the lesson, the teacher will "pass the bull" asking different students to read from their notes their three most important insights about the Brigadas Internacionales.

Assessment / homework

For homework the students will read Miguel Hernandez's poem "A un Soldado Internacional Caído en España" included in *Viento del Pueblo*. They will also answer questions on the poem.

Lesson Three: "Guernica"

(This lesson plan is to be developed in a 70-minute class. However, it can be changed according to teachers needs)

Note: This lesson plan, due to its length, will not start with the "Viewing Cue(s)"

Goal

To introduce students to the process of viewing, describing, interpreting and recognizing art.

Learning Objectives

As a result of this lesson students will be able to:

1. Describe, express opinions and analyze a piece of art in the target language.
2. Understand the importance of art in expressing and illuminating human experiences, beliefs and values.
3. Practice their listening comprehension skills of the target language.
4. Search for relevant information and express it orally in the target language.
5. Gather relevant information from an audiovisual source.
6. Practice their listening comprehension skills.

Materials

- Transparency of Picasso's *Guernica*.
- Overhead projector.
- Chapter 3 of the documentary *La Guerra Civil Española* (Spain, David Hart, 1983), titled *La Guerra de los Idealistas*.
- Smart Board, computer and speakers.

Initiation

There will be a propaganda poster up on the Smart Board as the students come in. The teacher will give them a piece of paper with a couple of tasks and questions about the poster. They will start working on them as they sit down. Students will read their answers in turns when called, and then students and teacher will analyze the poster together reflecting on the implications of propaganda in society. What is propaganda? Do you think it is effective?

Procedure

1. Teacher will ask general questions about *Guernica*, to find out if the students know anything about it.
2. With the *Guernica* painting up in the overhead projector, students will be asked to write down three sentences on what they see or how they interpret the painting.
3. Students will watch the fragment of the *La Guerra Civil Española* about the bombing of Guernica. The teacher will stop the film at critical moments to point out important concepts or ideas.
4. Students and teacher will briefly discuss the fragment, reasons and implications of the bombing.
5. With the transparency up in the overhead projector, students will be asked to get in groups of three (previously and thoughtfully established by the teacher.)
6. Students will be asked to carefully reflect on the fragment of the documentary and the painting through some questions that they will answer in groups.
7. Students —still working in groups— will be asked to prepare a brief explanation of the painting as if they have to present it to someone who has never heard of the painting or the town.
8. All the "proposals" will be collected and graded.

Closure

One group will informally sample their work.

Lesson Four: Miguel Hernández

(This lesson plan is to be developed in a 70-minute class as well)

Note: This lesson plan, due to its length, will not start with the "Viewing Cue(s)."

Goal

Understand poetry as a complex literary genre

Learning Objectives

As a result of this lesson the students will be able to:

1. Develop active reading, writing and oral language skills.
2. Develop listening comprehension skills.
3. Understand, analyze and interpret a poem.
4. Broaden vocabulary.

Materials

-Movie *Viento del Pueblo: Miguel Hernández* (second part.) (16)

-Copies of the poem "*Nanas de la Cebolla*" (17) and of Hernández' letter "*A Josefina Manresa. Madrid, 12 de Septiembre de 1939.*" (18)

-Poem "*Nanas de la Cebolla*" (19) versioned by flamenco singer José Mercé.

Special Needs

The students are familiar to the writer and have previously seen the last part of the movie *Viento del Pueblo: Miguel Hernández*, which will ease students' understanding of the poem.

Initiation

"Pass the bull:" students will be asked brief questions about the author and his work.

Procedure

1. Different students will read aloud a fragment of the famous letter Miguel Hernández sent to his wife, Josefina from prison.
2. Students and teacher will discuss the letter.
3. The teacher will provide students a copy of the poem with blank spaces.
4. Students will listen to the poem sang by José Mercé for the first time to get a general sense of the poem.
5. Students will listen the poem broken in segments of three stanzas per segment, in order to fill in the blanks
6. Different students will read out loud one stanza, giving the answers to the blanks and explaining the meaning of that particular stanza.
7. Students and teacher will discuss the poem in detail.

Closure

Students will be asked to write 3 different reactions to the poem in a card. Some of them will read them to the rest of the class.

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