

***Hispanic Heritage
Commemorating Florida's Quincentenary
in Tampa Bay***

October, 2012
University of South Florida

Lesson Title

Juan Ponce de León the Explorer

Authors

Alesha Looper, School District of Hillsborough County
Daryl Saunders, School District of Hillsborough County
Bárbara C. Cruz, College of Education, University of South Florida

Concept/Main Idea/Big Idea of Lesson

The purpose of this lesson is for students to learn who Ponce de León was, why he is an important figure in Florida's history, and what an explorer is and does.

Conference Theme

Spanish Exploration, Conquest, and Colonization

Intended Grade Level

Kindergarten/1st grade

Infusion/Subject Area(s)

Social Studies: American History, World History, and Florida History

Curriculum Standards

NCSS Themes:

Time, Continuity, and Change
People, Places, and Environments
Global Connections

Florida Next Generation Sunshine State Standards:

SS.K.A.2.4: Listen to and retell stories about people in the past who have shown character ideals and principles including honesty, courage, and responsibility.

SS.1.A.2.4: Identify people from the past who have shown character ideals and principles including honesty, courage, and responsibility.

Instructional Objectives

Students will:

- define the word "explorer";
- learn about Ponce de León's exploration of Florida;
- role-play being an explorer.

Learning Activities Sequence

“I Spy” Game: Give each student a piece of paper to roll into a spyglass before playing the game (optional: allow students to decorate/personalize their papers before rolling). Select an object in the room but do not tell students what it is. Then say, “I spy something...” (complete the sentence by stating an adjective that describes the selected object). Have students look through their spyglasses. Call on students until the correct object is named, providing additional clues as necessary. Repeat these steps two or three more times. (If using an Interactive Student Notebook, have students write, “I spy something___”, for the preview. Have students write down or draw three guesses before you call on a respondent.)

After three rounds of “I Spy,” tell students that today they will be learning about an explorer who came to Florida many years ago, looking for new and valuable things. Define “explorer,” telling students that an explorer is a person who looks for new things. Ask: Have you ever explored a new place? (possible responses: a park, backyard, store, city). Say: Today you will learn about a man named Juan Ponce de León who explored Florida 500 years ago, in 1513. (As a side- or pre-lesson, show students a timeline with today’s date and the year 1513, helping them to understand the amount of time.)

Gathering Information: Students will gather information through the use of two sources (a poem and a play).

Poem: The poem is presented in the form of a PowerPoint presentation, titled “Juan Ponce de León, Explorer.” Show the presentation to the class, allowing students to view the images and follow along while you read aloud the poem, advancing from slide to slide. Use it as you would for shared reading, pausing to paraphrase or explain any unknown words. Also note that there are additional questions embedded in the “Notes View” feature.

Play: After sharing the slideshow with the class, have students act out the play about Ponce de León (HO3). The play teaches students that the King and Queen of Spain gave Ponce de León the money to travel in search of riches.

One option is to select three students to be the actors (King, Queen, and Ponce de León), helping them to read aloud the lines or whispering the lines in students’ ears and have them say the lines aloud to the class. Alternately, students from a higher grade can also be employed to act out the play.

Before the play begins, teach the audience three hand motions:

1. Each time the words, far, far, far away are spoken hold out your right arm with the palm facing left. Move the entire arm away from your body each time the word far, is spoken.

2. Each time the words “riches like gold” are spoken, bring your hands close to your face and rub your hands together in small circles.
3. Each time the words “Fountain of Youth” are spoken, interlock the fingers of both hands and hold them under your chin.

The teacher shall act as the narrator and whisper the lines to the three actors just before they repeat them.

Cooperative Role Playing: This activity allows students to work together in small groups, role playing Ponce de León’s expedition. One student in each group will act as Ponce de León, who is in charge of the group. The other students in each group are members of Ponce de León’s exploration team. All members on each team are explorers. Their goal will be to find new land, searching for riches like gold to send back to the King and Queen of Spain. Ahead of time, cut apart the images on Handout 1, “Ponce de León Treasure Grid --- New Land.” Explain to students that the purpose of the treasure hunt is to help tell the story of the new land to the King and Queen.

Production: Divide the class into small groups, arranging desks in clusters to represent ships. On the floor, mark a small area near each ship with masking tape and label as “New Land”; in this area, place the images from Handout 1 face down on the floor.

Distribute to each group of students a copy of Handout 2, the blank “Ponce de Leon Treasure Grid.” One student is to take the spyglass, walk up to the tape on the floor, look through the spyglass at one card on the floor, pick up the card and return to the ship. Ponce de León or his designee is to glue the artifact in one of the spaces on the Treasure Grid (HO2). Ponce de León will then determine the next explorer to head to the “New Land” to find more riches. Students repeat this until all boxes on the Treasure Grid (HO2) are filled. Once all cards are glued on to Treasure Grids (HO2), students are to answer the questions, related to their data, at the bottom of the sheet.

Closure and Evaluation

Facilitate a conversation about what each search party discovered and what they decided to name the “New Land.” Ask students: Do you think Ponce de León was disappointed in what he found in La Florida? What do you think the Native Americans thought of Ponce de León and his men? Would you like to be an explorer – why or why not?

Materials and Resources

Paper for spyglasses
PowerPoint presentation/poem: “Juan Ponce de León, Explorer”
Props for the play (two crowns, money, spyglass, flag of Spain)
Handout 1 (HO1): Ponce de Leon Treasure Grid --- New Land
Handout 2 (HO2): Ponce de Leon Treasure Grid (blank)
Handout 3 (HO3): Ponce de Leon play
Glue stick

Internet Sources

Florida Then & Now. This set of reproducible images found in Florida are presented in PDF format designed to print and photocopy well.

<http://fcit.usf.edu/florida/lessons/lessons.htm>

Exploring Florida. Information about Ponce De León's search for the Fountain of Youth.

<http://fcit.usf.edu/florida/docs/d/deleon2.htm>

Internet Sources for PowerPoint Images

Art.com. <http://www.art.com/products/p13288278-sa-i2352248/juan-ponce-de-leons-expedition-searching-for-the-fountain-of-youth-in-florida-c1500.htm>. Retrieved March 1, 2012.

Brevard County Parks and Recreation.

http://www.brevardparks.com/visittheparks/historic/hist_juanponce.php. Retrieved March 1, 2012.

Enchanted Learning. <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/explorers/page/d/deleon.shtml>. Retrieved March 1, 2012.

Encyclopedia Britannica. <http://www.britannica.com/blogs/2009/07/can-calorie-restriction-increase-ones-life-span>. Retrieved March 1, 2012.

How Stuff Works. <http://history.howstuffworks.com/american-history/history-of-florida1.htm>. Retrieved March 1, 2012.

Ruiz, Bruce C.

http://bellsouthpwp.net/r/u/ruiz_b/PuertoRico/juan_ponce_de_leon_florida.htm. Retrieved March 1, 2012.

The Springs. http://www.warmmineralsprings.com/fountain_of_youth.html. Retrieved March 1, 2012.

Tampa Bay History Center. <http://tampabayhistorycenter.org/touchton.html>. Retrieved March 1, 2012.

Visit Florida 500. <http://www.visitflorida.com/viva/biography>. Retrieved March 1, 2012.

Totally History: Past, Present, and Future. <http://totallyhistory.com/juan-ponce-de-leon>.

References

Florida Center for Instructional Technology. *Exploring Florida: A Social Studies Resource for Students and Teachers*. Tampa, FL: FCIT, 2004.

Heinrichs, Ann. *Juan Ponce de León Searches for the Fountain of Youth*. North Mankato, MN: Compass Point Books, 2002.

Hoogenboom, Lynn. *Juan Ponce de León: A Primary Source Biography*. New York: PowerKids Press, 2006.