

## **La gramática a través de los cuentos de hada y las leyendas:**

*El imperfecto contra el pretérito*

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### **Overview:**

As a foreign language educator, the intentions of my curriculum unit are to have my high school students in a level 2 Spanish class learn the differences in use of the preterite and imperfect tenses through the use of fairy tales and legends. The acquisition of a foreign language can be extremely frustrating to students, especially the use of these two tenses, because there are unclear rules of when to use each appropriately. The use of fairy tales and legends becomes vital in the acquisition of this grammatical concept as it not only demonstrates the correct application of each tense, but also provides students with meaningful, relevant, and culturally authentic materials. Additionally, the students will gain a better understanding of their own, as well as different cultures, as they will be exposed to Hispanic, African, and other European fairy tales and legends throughout the unit. While the true intentions of the unit are to inductively teach the students the grammatical concept, it is important that culture is included as foreign language learners need to appreciate their own as well as other cultures. Furthermore, the unit is designed to encourage students to not only read in the foreign language, but to use the reading materials to also write, speak, and listen in the foreign language. Without these four key components included in the unit plan, the students cannot acquire the target language. The legends and fairy tales included in this unit will be used to support these four basic skills necessary for foreign language learning.

### **Rationale:**

#### Background Information

I am a Spanish teacher at Lamberton High School, which is a predominantly minority

inner city school in Philadelphia. Although a relatively small school, hosting about 250 students, the majority of students are of African American descent. There are also students who come from countries such as Jamaica and Ghana. The Spanish 2 classes at the High School hold about 30 students and the students vary in age, typically from 15 to 18 years old.

Many of the students in the school have limited awareness of the world outside of West Philadelphia. They find it difficult to see the importance of learning a foreign language in High School because they have never been presented with an opportunity to use the language in their lifetime. As a result, many of the students come into class thinking that all people who speak languages other than English in the United States should learn English and be forced to give up their roots. They do not understand the value of learning another language and how important it can be, if not for personal enjoyment, at least for survival.

It is apparent in the foreign language classroom that students shy away from reading activities. Most of the students are at a lower reading level in their native language than grade level. Due to low reading levels in the native language students tend to reject reading materials in the foreign language, as they find them difficult to comprehend. Additionally, many of the students have demonstrated that they have little awareness of correct grammar in their native language, making it extremely hard for them to be able to grasp hold of these concepts in a foreign language. Traditionally in the past, foreign language instructors were encouraged to give students the rules deductively and follow up with activities. As time has progressed, foreign language instruction research has argued that students should take an active role in the learning process, and should not be given the rules, but rather should work through problems and come up with the rules on their own. I agree with this method of instruction as I think it allows students to think critically on their own, and to also work through problems to figure out solutions even though they may at first find it difficult. Students, on the other hand, can find this method of instruction to be frustrating as many of them will want the grammar rules given to them at the beginning of the unit. As a result of this, I chose to use the fairy tales and legends to ease the pain of working through the texts because they are familiar with them and can use their own schemata and background knowledge of the texts themselves to deduct rules from the readings.

In addition to this, most textbooks used in the Foreign Language classroom are theme based, and focus more on grammatical aspects of the language and vocabulary building skills than reading and speaking activities. Many of the activities in the textbook are short sentences that students have to complete. Even though contextualization is a pertinent aspect of aiding the students in comprehension of foreign language, many of the activities lack this. In some textbooks you can find supplemental activities that include one or two reading and speaking activities for every five or six grammar activities. There are very

limited supplemental activities that focus on reading comprehension and speech in the target language. While in the TIP program, I found the use of fairy tales and legends to be the perfect supplement to the textbook. The use of fairy tales and legends is exactly what is needed to provide the students contextualized language that focuses on grammar acquisition at a more in depth level.

This curriculum unit will be used during the second half of the curriculum. Before students begin this unit, they will have already been exposed to the correct conjugations of the verbs in both the preterite and imperfect tenses separately. Students will begin with the usage and correct conjugations of the preterite tense. They will then be taught the usage and correct conjugations of the imperfect tense. This unit will then be implemented to teach the two tenses mutually, as the students try to understand how to distinguish between when each of the two is appropriately used in a reading passage, listening activity, speaking activity, or writing activity.

### *Preterite vs Imperfect*

The main focus of this curriculum unit is to aid students in the distinction of when to use the preterite and when to use the imperfect tenses correctly while using both at the same time. In many passages in Spanish, students will see both tenses used within one paragraph. They will have to determine when to use each correctly given the circumstances and context of the reading and or writing. When students learn the differences in use, they learn that the preterite is used to talk about what happened or what someone did at a specific point in the past. The preterite is to be used with actions that were completed in the past. For example if you were to say Yesterday, I ate a hamburger in Spanish you would use the preterite form of the verb to eat (comer). Therefore, your sentence would look like this: *Ayer, yo comí una hamburguesa*. The action happened and was completed. On the other hand, the imperfect is used with habitual, ongoing, or repeated actions or events in the past. For example, instead of saying Yesterday, I ate a hamburger you say I ate hamburgers as a child you would use the imperfect form of the verb comer. Therefore, your sentence would look like this: *Como niño, comía hamburguesas*. Additionally, the imperfect is used when setting the background or stage to the actions of the story. It is used to describe the personality and physical characteristics of the characters, the time/weather/description of the scenes in the story.

While the students learn the conjugations and uses of the verbs in each of the tenses separately at first, they tend to become overwhelmed when they realize the two tenses can be used at the same time in a given passage. The inclusion of fairy tales and legends is perfect to teach this as it includes use of both tenses. While descriptions of protagonists and situations require the use of the imperfect, the series of actions that take place requires the preterite. Students will find themselves using both tenses throughout one

story, and will be able to see the difference in when to use each accordingly.

### *Schema Theory*

This curriculum intends to use familiar fairy tales and legends in Spanish so that students can activate prior knowledge, or schemata, in order to help them comprehend the reading passage and grasp the grammatical concept. The whole concept behind the Schema Theory is that without schemata the text carries no meaning to the students (Carrell and Eisterhold 1983). Theorists such as Kant and Rumelhart have acknowledged the idea that learners comprehend things only when they can relate them to something they already know (Carrell 82). This is why I chose to incorporate these tales into the curriculum unit. The students are familiar with the tales, so they are able to use their own background knowledge to help aid their comprehension of the text. Many times, teachers tend to throw students into this difficult concept by giving them passages that do not relate to the students' lives at all. If students are given passages and stories that they are familiar with or can relate to, they can give meaning to what they are processing while focusing on the form (the grammar tenses) as well. Learning a foreign language requires that the students keep the meaning of the passages in mind while learning the proper grammar topic. By using fairy tales and legends, I intend to do just that: allow the students to learn preterite and imperfect mutually all while understanding what they are reading based on previous knowledge and awareness of the materials presented to them.

### *Grammar Instruction Debate*

Many theorists have researched and debated the role of grammar instruction in the classroom. There are two main focuses to teaching grammar to foreign language learners: inductive grammar lessons and deductive grammar lessons. Inductive grammar lessons argue that learners acquire a foreign language when they are given a sufficient amount of comprehensible input, defined as “language that contains structures that are a little beyond our current level of competence, but which is comprehensible through our use of context, our knowledge of the world, and other extralinguistic cues direct to us. According to the hypothesis, acquirers go for meaning first, and as a result, acquire structure as well” (Omaggio 61) On the other hand, theorists that support explicit grammar instruction believe that giving the students the rules of the grammar concept are vital at some point during instruction. I personally believe that students learn better when working with the text through an inductive grammar lesson because students are faced with conflict and must struggle through it actively to get the results they wish to obtain. “Input rich inductive grammar instruction encourages students to view grammar not just as isolate letters, words and phrases, but also as a meaningful component of contextualized language use” (Paesani, 16) With this knowledge in mind, I have chosen to implement fairy tales into the curriculum as students can bring their background knowledge to work through their conflicts as they read a whole text in the foreign

language to deduct the rules of grammar use themselves. As a foreign language teacher it is essential to remember that even though students may misunderstand the grammatical structure at first, it eventually leads to understanding of the form, as aggravating as it may be to both the teacher as well as the students at first.

Although an inductive approach to the reading activities has students try to figure out rules on their own, at the end they may also be given the rule describing the grammar topic. After the students work through the reading passage on their own, I will go through the material with them to ensure that they understand what is being taught. To do so, I plan on giving the students the rules for use of each tense by taking sentences from the reading and going through the correct answer with the students and explaining why they needed either the imperfect or the preterite as a result.

### *Output Hypothesis*

While some theorists believe that input is the essential component of Second Language Acquisition, others support Swain's output hypothesis which states that while input is necessary it is not the only factor leading to acquisition. They believe that the input must be taken and internalized and must be used to create output, a second factor in determining acquisition of a language. While my unit focuses on using the fairy tales as reading materials, it can also be used to create output in the classroom. The students will be working with speaking and writing activities in addition to the reading passages as these activities force students to produce the language. They will use the reading materials as an example in order to create their own folktale. These tales implemented in the unit will be the springboard to other activities using the preterite and imperfect.

### *Authentic Materials / Legend Inclusion (cultural aspect)*

When looking for materials to utilize in the foreign language classroom, it is essential that these materials be authentic in nature and that they capture the true essence of Hispanic culture and tradition.

Many Hispanic communities thrive on storytelling as it brings together generations and continues tradition. Hispanic elders take this tradition and pass it on to new generations as they learn about the years gone by. They talk about their bygone days, days of the past in order to “provide common ground between a shared textual tradition and a host of unique human encounters, thus preserving the vitality and dynamism of the past as they endeavor to make sense of the present” (Briggs, xv). The elders use a variety of approaches to reminisce about the days of the past. One way in which they present the past to others is through the use of legends and similar stories. These stories told by the elders have been collected throughout the years. Many collectors recorded these stories told by word of mouth and published them. From these, publishers have found many

parallels between the tales told and popular Spanish literature. There have been three periods deemed by Ralph Briggs as major periods in the publication of these folktales. The first period is the mid 1800's in which Spaniards wrote down stories from storytellers. The second occurred in the late 1880's when the Spaniards published journals that included folktales. The last period was in the 1920's in which collections from Asturias were published. This soon progressed as people in North America who had a Spanish ancestry began to show interest in the folktales and eventually in Spain in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the literary fairy tale emerged. These literary fairy tales were written by numerous famous writer and included a wide variety of tales. (Taggart, 909-10). In Latin America, folktales were also being collected. Many folktales from the Indigenous groups (Aztecs and Incas) were recorded in the 1500's after the conquest of Mexico and Peru. The story tellers here relate many Spanish tales to others which focus on tales that are heroic, moral, and religious in nature (Bierhorst, 560).

The use of fairy tales and Hispanic legends is ideal in the foreign language classroom as its narrative nature allows for not only the grammatical acquisition but also allows for insight into the Hispanic world. The fairy tales and legends delve into the historical and non-historical and fictional/ non-fictional realms of past encounters. These legends recount ideas, situations, stories, etc. that have taken place in the past, or the *antes* in order to bring meaning to the present situation. Within the *plática de los viejitos*, there is a juxtaposition of *antes* and *ahora*” (Briggs, 83). What does this mean to the foreign language classroom? The narrative structure of fairy tales and legends allows readers to understand the difference in use of the preterite and imperfect. Briggs states that the nature of these narratives are “qualitatively distinct modes of experience within *antes*. ” The *antes* in this case is the talk of Hispanic elders about their past. What the narrative structure allows students to see is the “shift from imperfective to perfective aspect” that “reinforces this temporal differentiation, creating a series of discrete events” (345). The fairy tales, because they demonstrate the use of both the imperfect and preterite at different times are similar to legends in that they evoke an understanding of the use of both *tiempos*. This is true as the legends and fairy tales use the narrative structure, particularly in the past, to evoke memories of cultural traditions and historical events that have already occurred. Since foreign language classrooms need to embed the cultural aspect of the language into, fairy tales and legends use grammar perfectly to convey meaning of the past in the present. Since this unit will be completed in a Spanish 2 class, the use of fairy tales is ideal as the students are beginning to learn the *antes* (*preterite vs imperfect*) yet must not lose sight of the already mastered *ahora* (*present tense*).

Additionally, fairy tales and legends can be used in the classroom as ways to evoke performance, not solely as reading passages. A highly researched aspect of learning a foreign language is communicative competence. According to Briggs, “the concept of communicative competence provides a central focus for the task of describing and analyzing a particular speech community” (6). Allowing students to perform such tasks as

giving a speech in the foreign language that relates a known legend or fairy tale from their culture allows the students to take an active role in reflecting upon not only the grammatical rules but also the traditions and social aspect of the culture. Traditionally, folktales in Spanish countries are passed down orally from one generation to another. This oral tradition started as early as the Medieval time period with stories such as *El Cid* being told by word of mouth. These storytellers have a vital role in shaping the folktales as they give them the stamp of their culture (Taggart, 907).

The focus of this unit will be on the Mexican legend *La Llorona*. While in the TIP class, we focused our time exploring the different fairy tales, their tale types, and their variants. While *La Llorona* isn't considered a fairy tale, it is a legend taken from the Mexican culture that has similarities to some of the readings done in class. The legend focuses on a woman who spends her time crying over her children. *La Llorona* is said to have murdered her children to be with the man she loves. Unfortunately, the man rejects her and she lives as a ghost crying and searching for the children she killed. Many researchers, including Bierhorst, agree that *La Llorona* is a "spook tale" whose purpose is to warn others. *La Llorona* has a number of variations, but the main idea of the legend is that there is a young woman living near Juarez, Mexico who fell in love with a charming man. One day while she was working she caught the eye of the man she had fallen in love with. They soon after marry, have children, and find their relationship falling apart. Maria, the name of the woman, found herself filled with jealousy and thought that her husband could love her again if she somehow got rid of her children, so she does just that. Well, her plan backfires as her husband is furious and wants nothing to do with her, leaving Maria to roam the streets weeping. This is where the title *La Llorona*, or the weeping woman, comes from. From this summary, it is easy to see that there are similarities in the legend of *La Llorona* and many of the fairy tales we studied in the course. In many of the tales we read the wife or the woman in the story tries to kill off or get rid of the children in order to have a better life.

The intentions of this curriculum unit are to aid students in the acquisition of a foreign language, with the ultimate goal in mind, to have students achieve communicative competence in the class. In order to do so, I have intended to implement the four skills into the unit: reading and listening activities which should give the kids the comprehensible input necessary to begin to creatively use output through writing and speaking activities. In order for students to become fluent in a foreign language, they must be able to speak, read, write, and understand what is being said to them. Additionally, I sought to develop a curriculum unit which highlights various ethnicities and cultures as this class not only teaches students vocabulary and grammar necessary to learn the language but also should expose the students to various cultures so that they can begin to appreciate both similarities and differences between their own and other cultures.

With this unit, the students will improve their reading comprehension skills in the foreign

language which, in turn, should improve the reading comprehension in the L1. What is most important though, is that students see reading in a foreign language through a different light. Whereas many students see reading as a boring activity, I have sought to find ways to include relevant, seemingly interesting fairy tales and legends into the curriculum to make a difficult grammar topic a little more enjoyable. By taking this approach, I feel as though students will become actively involved in the text, which will help their comprehension level. They will not only understand the grammar topic, but will also develop higher level comprehension skills as they will be forced to answer not only bottom-up reading activities, which focus on the details presented in the story, but also top-down reading activities which require that students answer questions by using context clues and making deductions.

This curriculum unit includes a variety of classroom activities which will be based on the ACFTL National Standards as the curriculum of the Philadelphia School District is also based on these. As an educator it is essential to remember that all students learn differently, which is why I have a variety of not only activities for the students to choose from and do, but also a variety of assessments that the students may choose from and complete. Students will be required by the teacher to do certain activities/assessments, but will also have the opportunity to choose their own activities/assessments. As a huge proponent of differentiating instruction in the classroom, I feel as though this approach will help to give students a sense of self-awareness and reflection as they are choosing what they feel they need to do to succeed all while also making sure the students attain the knowledge they must in order to be well on their way to achieving communicative competence.

Since the majority of the students at Lamberton come from various countries (Jamaica, Ghana, France, etc.) I wish to include an opportunity for those students to present to the class fairy tales or legends that come from their own background. This allows students the opportunity to give the rest of the class insight to where they come from, and the traditions and cultures of their home culture. From this, students will be able to understand who they are and compare and contrast their own traditions with the traditions of their classmates to appreciate different backgrounds, histories, and cultures.

### **Objectives:**

This curriculum unit focuses on many objectives. Each objective will focus on one or more of the four skills in foreign language learning. By mastering the objectives by the end of the unit, students should understand the usage of the preterite and imperfect. The first objective of the unit is that students will understand written and spoken language through reading passages in the target language. This will be one of the two main focuses of the unit with the other being the acquisition of the preterite and imperfect tenses. The students will be exposed to the legend *La Llorona* as well as familiar fairy tales to



support this objective. Students, while reading, will have to complete various activities to show that they actually understand what they are reading. They will be given both bottom up and top down questions that focus on the overall themes found in the reading as well as questions that are more specific. These specific questions will focus on details found in the reading.

The second main focus of the unit is the grammatical aspect: the acquisition of the preterite and imperfect tenses and when to use them; thus by the end of the unit students will be able to use the imperfect and preterite appropriately when writing and speaking in the TL. They will take what they have learned from the reading, listening, and grammar activities and will apply these rules and use them as they are writing and speaking in the foreign language. Their writing and speaking will be assessed formally and informally throughout the unit.

Another objective of the unit is that students will be able to compare and contrast cultural aspects through the use of fairy tales and legends. The students will be focusing the majority of their time on the legend *La Llorona*. The beginning of the unit will include a research day in which the students will research background information on the legend, why it's so popular, how it came about, etc. The students will also be given other famous figures from Spanish speaking stories (*Pancho Villa, La Malinche, etc*) The students will have to compare and contrast characteristics of these figures. In addition, students will work with fairy tales and will have to compare and contrast characteristics of the main characters such as eye color, hair color, personality description, age, etc using the preterite and imperfect as they write their sentences. This will satisfy the objective stating that students will be able to identify characters, time, and setting of stories.

The final assessment will include an option in which they will choose to create a children's book. If the students choose to do this the objective that will be mastered is that students will be able to create written fairy tales/legends in the target language based on fairy tales/legends that they have read. The fairy tale and legend will be written using the preterite and imperfect as they will be asked to provide background information and setting (Time, place, personality descriptions, physical descriptions, etc) as well as events and actions (that can be either habitual or completed). The book must be read to the class at the end of the unit.

A second option for the final assessment is the ability to work in groups to perform a play of a specific fairy tale/legend in the target language. Students must also accompany their play with a one page summary using the preterite and imperfect, as well as a script of the play. Students, while creating the play, must use preterite and imperfect, but will use present tense as well in the dialogue scenes.

The grammatical aspect of the unit will allow students to work in groups to make

predictions about the rules of usage of the different past tenses. As stated before, the intention of the unit is that the students learn the rules inductively, thus allowing for critical thinking. After trying to figure out the rules, students will be able to discuss the use of the two tenses and create posters describing when to use the two appropriately.

Students will be assessed throughout the lesson. The assessments will meet one of the following objectives. Students will take knowledge of rules of when to use the preterite and imperfect and will apply it to both writing and speaking activities and from this students will write their own fairy tales/legends through picture book or children's book ( using iPhoto to integrate technology into the unit) or will have a powerpoint that displays a legend or fairy tale. The final objective of the unit is that students, if they choose this final project option, will research a legend from their own culture and will create a poster in which they use the preterite and imperfect to explain it.

### **Strategies**

A variety of teaching strategies will be implemented throughout the unit. Students will have to complete activities that focus on the four skills of foreign language learning. In addition to these activities as well as grammar practice, some teaching strategies that I have found effective in the classroom that I wish to include in the unit are highlighted below.

#### Differentiated Instruction

The curriculum unit will last approximately two weeks. Students will spend time learning the rules of the usage of tenses, practice correct conjugations of the verbs in their respective tenses, and will be exposed to numerous fairy tales and legends throughout the unit. To start off the unit, I will do a pre-reading that will be adapted towards different levels of students. For those who struggle with the language they will be given a picture in which they must write down just words that they associate with the picture in the target language. For those who comprehend the language a little better, they will receive a prompt and will have to write a short paragraph given the prompt asking what they know about the legend (from the research on the previous day). For those who comprehend the language the best, I plan on giving them an excerpt of the legend in which they must try to figure out what they believe will happen from the excerpt in the target language. At the end of the pre-reading, a class discussion will ensue. Throughout the unit, there will be worksheets that pertain to different levels. For example, lower level students in the class will have to find verbs and state which tense they are in while higher level students will have to complete blanks with the correct tense. The assessments will be differentiated as well as students will have the opportunity to choose which project they will complete for a grade in the class.

### Collaboration in the Classroom

Throughout the lesson, students will work individually, with partners, in groups, and as a class. Foreign language classrooms need to be student driven; therefore, it is a must that cooperative learning is implemented into the unit. Meaningful interaction is key to being able to communicate appropriately and grammatically correct in the foreign language classroom. Students need to cooperate with others, especially since this concept can be extremely frustrating when presented. They will work with each other through their problems but must all be held accountable for their own part in their group work. For this, I will give students a self, peer, and teacher assessment for group, partner, and individual work.

### Technology in the Classroom

The world today is technologically driven. The generation of students we teach in school these days thrive on working with technology. As a result, I feel as though technology should be incorporated into the unit. The two main methods of incorporating technology into this curriculum unit are through PowerPoint and iPhoto book. The PowerPoint will be used as a direct instruction method, through which the teacher will provide the students with the rules of use for the preterite and imperfect. This PowerPoint will take place after the students have worked in pairs to try to determine these rules on their own. This allows for active participation on the students' end, followed by reinforcement of ideas and error correction by the teacher. Included in the PowerPoint presentation will be follow up activities allowing for comprehension check. The follow up activities will be grammar based, and the students will have the opportunity to check their answers using the power point. The second and larger portion of the technology is to have the students use iPhoto to create a web-based fairy tale. The iPhoto will be used as a summative assessment, and must be used to present written as well as oral communication in the target language. Students will create a storybook using the program and must also present this to the class.

### Creative Writing

An essential aspect of demonstration of knowing the foreign language is the ability to think and write using the language effectively. As learners learn, they are given scaffolding techniques that ultimately lead to an end result. When writing, an end result is typically a creative writing activity that allows students to be creative yet uses the grammatical aspect correctly. Therefore, the students will be asked throughout the lesson as well as in their final project to creatively write and think on their own to come up with written output using the grammatical concept.

### Information Gap Activities

In foreign language learning, learners must be involved in a meaningful exchange with someone in the TL. By incorporating an information gap activity students are able to interact with others in a meaningful context. An information gap activity is an activity in which each partner has separate information given to them. One partner will be supplied with information that their partner does not have and vice versa. The students are to work with each other to supply and obtain information needed to make the pieces that they have into a collective work.

### **Classroom Activities**

#### *Lesson One:*

The first lesson is an introduction to the material presented in the unit, focusing on the Mexican legend *La Llorona*, where it originates, and understanding the indigenous groups of Latin America.

The goal of the lesson is for the students to research *La Llorona* in order to become familiar with the legend and to understand the cultural implications of the passage chosen. The lesson will take one class period.

The materials necessary for the lesson are computers, a map, a compare and contrast graphic organizer, and a worksheet for students.

The teacher will begin the class with an explanation of the indigenous groups of Latin America. The teacher will also use a map to show the students where the legend originated and will give the students a brief introduction to legends and storytelling in the Spanish community. To show students that there are variations to legends, the teacher will start by playing a game of whisper down the lane. The teacher will say one thing to a student, and will have it go around the class, and will see as a class how much it has changed throughout the time. This will help to show students that although this is a legend, there are many variations as a result of the oral tradition.

After this introduction, students will be given the rest of the class period to conduct their research on the legend and indigenous groups online. Students will complete a compare and contrast graphic organizer of two of the indigenous groups: The Aztecs and the Mayans. Students will also complete a worksheet answering basic questions about *La Llorona* to ensure that they are on task through the class.

After the research a class discussion will ensue as students are asked to share what they've learned about the indigenous groups and their importance to *La Llorona*.

*Lessons Two and Three:*

The second lesson will focus on review of the conjugations of the preterite tense and the imperfect tense. The lesson will take one day for each tense. The first day the students will work with the conjugations of the preterite. The second day will look very similar to the first day but will focus on the conjugations of the imperfect tense rather than the preterite.

The materials necessary for the completion of these lessons include worksheets for students used to interview other students, and a picture sequence. The teacher will also need to use the blackboard as well as a whiteboard and students will be required to take notes in their notebooks.

The class will start off by having students complete a chart for the correct endings of the regular preterite forms. This will be done on the board and in their notebooks. When finished this, the students will be asked to complete sentence completion in the preterite. There will be 10 sentences on the board with a word bank filled with verbs in their infinitive form. Students will be asked to complete the sentences with the correct verb in the correct conjugation of the preterite tense.

The students will then interview a partner using the target language about what they did this past weekend. The students when asking the questions must use the tú form of the preterite and the students when responding need to use to yo form of the preterite. When the students fill in their worksheet, they must use the él/ella form in the preterite as they are recording what their partner did that weekend. Each partner must then state one thing that their partner did that past weekend to the class.

The final activity will be a picture sequence. This is where the lesson will differ between days. The students will be able to work with partners. The class will all see the same picture sequence, which will include clip-art of a typical weekend day that high school students can encounter. On day one, the students will be asked to write a story based on the picture sequence. The picture sequence will include six pictures. Students must use the pictures

*Lesson Four:*

In the second lesson, the students will complete pre-reading activities in order to prepare for the text. This lesson should take an entire class period.

There are not a lot of necessary materials but the teacher will need to have ready 3 worksheets for 3 groups of different levels of students. The evaluation sheets are also necessary for the lesson.

The class will start by having the teacher split the class into groups of 4. Each group will be previously grouped according to level. The lowest level groups will get a worksheet with a picture relating to the story and students in the group will have to write down words that they would associate with the picture. The middle level groups will get a worksheet and will have to write a paragraph in the target language on what they remember about the legend from the day before. The advanced level groups will get an excerpt from *La Llorona*. They will read the excerpt and will have to write a paragraph describing what they think will happen based on what they've read.

After the groups finish, the class will reconvene and each group will be given the opportunity to discuss with the other groups what they've concluded based on their worksheets.

Their assessment for the day will be their participation within the group and the self/peer/teacher evaluations for the day.

#### *Lesson Five:*

This lesson will focus on the actual reading of *La Llorona* as well as the grammar lesson. The lesson will take three days in total. The materials needed for the lesson include an overhead projector, highlighters, Spanish – English dictionaries, worksheets, and the reading itself.

The lesson will start with the students scanning *La Llorona* for cognates. They will have to circle the words that are cognates. The teacher will go through the words that the students have listed as cognates to make sure that there are no false cognates among them. The teacher will then have students highlight 5 words that they do not know. They will find these words in the dictionary. The students will then pair with another student to discuss what they have found. The students will then be asked to put triangles around the words that are conjugated in the preterite tense and they will be asked to put rectangles around the words that are conjugated in the imperfect tense to show that they know the difference in conjugations.

The teacher will then read *La Llorona* out loud to the class. The class is expected to remain silent as the teacher reads. After the first reading out loud, the students will be given various sentences pulled from the text that include the preterite and the imperfect. They will have to state what tense is being used in each of the sentences and what the sentences mean in English. They will work in groups on this. They will then be given a graphic organizer in which they will have to determine if each sentence was a completed action, background information to the story, personality/physical traits, or an action that occurred repeatedly. After the students complete the graphic organizer they should be

able to determine the rules of use for the preterite and the imperfect. Their preterite rules will stem from the completed action column while their imperfect rules will stem from the background information, traits, and repeated actions columns. The teacher will review each sentence as a class, as well as the graphic organizer, and will conduct a classroom discussion in which the students will share their predicted rules of use.

This will be followed up with a PowerPoint presentation presented by the teacher to the students. The PowerPoint presentation will be the direct instruction portion of the lesson. The teacher will break down the rules of use for each tense. The teacher will then have students look at sentences and determine why they are using the preterite or imperfect from the sentence. For example, a student will see the sentence *Eran las diez.* and will have to state that *ser* is conjugated in the imperfect because it is background information (It was 10 o'clock). This activity will be done individually but will be discussed as a class, and will be followed up with 10 sentences that the students must choose between the two tenses. For example, a student will see the sentence *Ayer (corrí / corría) en el parque por dos horas.* They will have to determine that it is preterite because it is a completed action in the past.

The culminating grammar activity is that students will have be given a handout of *La Llorona* but the verbs conjugated in the preterite and the imperfect will be whited out and all the students will see is the infinitive form of the verb. Students will work in groups to figure out if each infinitive should be conjugated in the preterite or the imperfect and must conjugate the verbs correctly. The class will read through *La Llorona* with the conjugations they made, and will be asked why the chose preterite or imperfect in each case.

After completion of the grammar activity, the students will re-read the story for comprehension. This will be done individually and students will be required to answer comprehension questions that focus on a range of questions from the theme and moral of the story to detailed questions looking for specific answers. The students will read and complete the worksheet for comprehension. They will then be asked to compare answers with a partner and will work through figuring out any questions that they may have answered differently.

To complete the lesson, the students will write their own summary of *La Llorona* using the preterite and the imperfect. The students will then work in groups and present their summaries. As the students are presenting, the group must again fill in a compare and contrast graphic organizer that compares the summaries of two of the group members other than themselves. The summaries as well as the organizers will be collected and graded to ensure that students were on task as they completed their classwork.

The assessments for this lesson will also include a quiz on *La Llorona* based solely on the

reading. The quiz will occur two days after the second, more in-depth reading and discussion of the text.

*Lesson Six:*

This lesson will focus on fairy tales that are familiar to the students for grammar practice and practice with all four skills. This class will be take one and a half to two class periods. The materials needed for the lesson include PowerPoint presentation, an overhead projector, worksheets, the blackboard, and the fairy tales in the foreign language.

The class will start off with a review of the preterite and imperfect rules of use. Students will be given an activity that will be a fairy tale that they are familiar with. The verbs will be blanks with just infinitives. The students will fill in the blanks with the preterite or imperfect. They will then read the fairy tale, and from what they read, they will have to determine what fairy tale it is. When the students are done, some students will be asked to read their fairy tales out loud and the class will have to listen and guess what fairy tale it is as well. This will allow for listening comprehension skills.

The students will then work with a partner to complete an information gap activity. In this activity, each partner will be supplied the same fairy tale but will have different information. The partners will ask each other questions to get information so that they can determine what fairy tale it is. For example one student will have the question *¿Qué comió la personaje?* (What did the main character eat?) and the other student will have a picture of an apple and must say *“Comió una manzana.”* The students will ask each other the questions, and use the answers to determine what fairy tale they have. They will then work together to put the answers to their questions in order to create a summary of the fairy tale.

The final activity for this lesson will be an individual activity. All students will receive a story created by the teacher, but each student will have a missing piece of information. For example, one student may have the beginning and end of the story and will be missing the middle while another student will have the middle and end and will be missing the middle section. The students will take the information that they are given and will create their own version of the story using the preterite and imperfect. The students will be asked to write a minimum of 7 sentences in which they must use both tenses. When the students are done the teacher will use an overhead to show the teacher's story and students will be able to compare their own stories with the original. The students' stories will be collected and graded.



### Assessments

There will be a variety of assessments throughout the lessons as well as at the end of the unit. Every student will take a unit test on the imperfect and preterite. As stated before, there will be a quiz on *La Llorona* which will include not only questions specific to the reading but also cultural connections that were taught in the first lesson. Students must demonstrate through the exam that they know not only about the text itself but also about the context and importance of the legend to the Hispanic world.

Every student will also have to complete a writing assessment at the end of the unit that will reflect on the use of the preterite and imperfect. They will be given a sentence and will have to write a 100 story in the past based on that sentence. They will be allowed to put the original sentence anywhere they want within their story, but must include it. The students will write a first draft which will count for 10% of their grade and will be edited by the teacher who will provide feedback to the students. They will take this feedback and they will rewrite their stories a second time. At the end of the second draft (which will count for 30% of the grade) they will exchange their stories with a partner and will peer edit their stories. They will then have to submit a final draft to be collected and graded for 60% of their grade.

A project will also count towards their grade, although the students will be able to choose an option for what they would like to do as their final project. The students will have one of four options. Each option will be worth a total of 100 points and will contain both a written and spoken component. The first option for the final project will be an iPhoto children's book in which the students will create their own fairy tale or legend. For the students who may have trouble with technology they will be allowed to create an actual book, but the students will be encouraged to take the more modern approach of using iPhoto to complete the book. The book must include a story of a minimum of 20 sentences using the preterite and imperfect as well as artwork that emphasizes what they've written. The second option for students is that they will research a legend or fairy tale from their own background and will create a three part poster. The first part of the poster will be a summary and background information of their legend and also a brief explanation of why they chose this specific legend. This will be done in English. The second part of the poster will be a summary of their legend in the target language using the preterite and imperfect. In the summary they must describe the characters and state what happened. The summary must be a minimum of 10 sentences. The third part of the poster will be a picture or scene depicting a part of the legend. The fourth option is that students will have the opportunity to work in groups to perform a skit on a fairy tale or legend of their choice. The skit must be 10 minutes in length and must include a script. The skit will be done in preterite and imperfect, but will also include present tense conjugations.

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### **Appendix / Standards:**

The Standards for the Foreign Language classroom are based around the 5 goal areas, also known as the 5 C's. Each "C" has its own set of standards. The 5 C's are communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities. The Standards are as follows:

#### Communication

**Standard 1.1:** Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions

**Standard 1.2:** Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics

**Standard 1.3:** Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

#### Cultures

##### *Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures*

**Standard 2.1:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied

**Standard 2.2:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied

#### Connections

*Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information*

**Standard 3.1:** Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language

**Standard 3.2:** Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures

Comparisons

*Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture*

**Standard 4.1:** Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own

**Standard 4.2:** Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

Communities

*Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home & Around the World*

**Standard 5.1:** Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting

**Standard 5.2:** Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.