

LEVEL: MIDDLE GRADES

Source: Gibbs, Virginia G. *Latin America: Curriculum Materials for the Middle Grades*. Center for Latin America, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. 1985. (1991).

CATEGORY: PERU: NOW

CONCEPT: WORK, leisure, lifestyle

ACTIVITY: A READING RELATING TO THE "LATINO" CONCEPT OF TIME FOLLOWED BY A CULTURE CAPSULE AND A ROLE-PLAY ACTIVITY.

OBJECTIVES: The students will understand the differing concepts of time in the U.S. and Peru (as well as other Latin American countries) and be able to relate these differences to each culture. The students will also understand the nuances that are connected to the word "mañana."

MATERIALS: The following reading relating to the concept of time and the culture capsule that follows.

PROCEDURE: 1) The lesson should begin with an open discussion about the American conception of time. The following questions might be asked:

1. To what extent are Americans dominated by the clock?
2. How do we view punctuality?
3. How do we feel about wasting time?
4. What does the expression "Time is money" mean to us?

2) Students are to read the attached sheet relating to time.

3) Students are to read the culture capsule on time. A class discussion should follow during which these questions might be asked:

1. Why was Mr. Jones irritated?
2. What custom was Mr. Jones unaware of?
3. If Mr. Jones had greeted the director courteously, what, most likely, would have happened?
4. What would you have done to increase your chances of selling your product?

4) Students should role-play this situation in pairs. It is recommended that some pairs reverse the situation by changing the locale to a U.S. city.

5) A discussion of the following questions will broaden students' awareness of time as a cultural phenomenon:

1. How is time dealt with differently on a vacation?
2. Is there a difference between the way time would be organized by a farmer and by a business executive such as Mr. Jones?

3. If you isolate one day in your life what is the most important to spend time on: a) earning money, b) being with family or friends; c) learning something, d) watching television, e) relaxing, f) practicing a sport, g) listening to music? Anything else? Remember you have only 24 hours.
4. If you consider your plans for the future (career, marriage, etc.) should you now use your time differently from the way you usually do? (Study more or learn things for a job? Relax more because later you won't have time to relax?)
5. What is more important to you, the present or the future? Could this be different for people from Latin America?

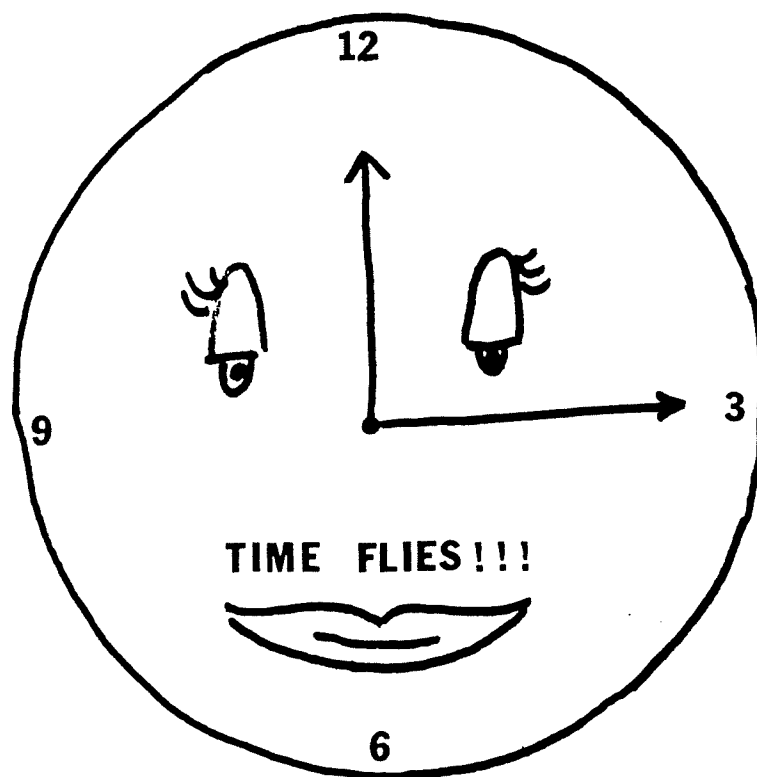
VOCABULARY: "mañana"; "hasta mañana"; "hora gringa"; "hora latina"

¿"HORA GRINGA" (ON TIME) OR "HORA LATINA" (LATE)?

People in the United States appear to be constantly concerned with time and punctuality. The society is tense and fast moving, and great emphasis is placed on meeting appointments on time. Everyone seems to be preoccupied with time -- even the fear of wasting someone else's time. The common saying "Time is money" points out the dominant attitude about time in our country.

Peruvians, as well as most other Latin Americans, have a more nonchalant attitude toward time and do not get upset when people arrive late. A common belief is that what cannot be done conveniently today can wait until tomorrow. Time is seen as something to be enjoyed since it is fleeting and will continue its course whatever we do.

Especially in rural areas, the people tend to have a "mañana" (tomorrow) attitude, which is to say that tomorrow or some vague moment in the future is the time that they will do what they have to do. The rationale is that nothing is so important that it cannot wait. The commonly used Spanish proverb, "Mañana será otro día" (Tomorrow is another day) clearly reflects their nonchalant attitude toward time. If a Peruvian says, "I'll be there at 8:00," it might be wise to ask, "¿Hora gringa?" (at the exact time or gringo time) or "¿Hora latina?" (approximately that time, or Latin time).



CULTURE CAPSULE

Mr. Jones, a business executive from New York, wants to sell his product to a factory near Lima, Peru. The director of the company gives him an appointment for 10:00 in the morning.

Mr. Jones arrives at 10:00 sharp. The secretary greets him courteously and asks him to sit down.

After an hour the director arrives. Mr. Jones, who is very irritated by now, tells the director that he has been waiting for him for one hour.

The director, who is very surprised by Mr. Jones' reaction, does not want to buy the product.

Unfortunately, Mr. Jones leaves with bad feelings.

