

Growing up in the South

Level: Intermediate

Topic: Blogger's Post.

Key vocabulary: Bilingual lists in PDF and boxes (Teachers can download this material from the latest online version of the magazine.)

Preparation: You will need a copy of the article for each student as well as internet access, pictures from the thirties, and a map of the southern United States.

Objective: Students read the article about the life of a woman who grew up in the 1930s and compare it to modern day life in the present. Concepts emphasized are the value of family and the places in which they live.

Warm up

Show your students a map of the southern United States and have them identify the location of Mississippi. Tell them that this is where the woman they are going to read about is from. Ask them if they know something about the southern US.

Give them some information to arouse curiosity. You can start with some interesting facts such as:

Did you know that Thomas Edison chose Louisville's Southern Exposition to demonstrate his incandescent light bulb for the first time in 1883?

Did you know that Biltmore House, a large house near Asheville, North Carolina has served as the set for many movies? These include: 'Forest Gump,' 'Patch Adams', 'Hannibal', 'Last of the Mohicans' and 'Richie Rich' to name a few.

You can also give students some historical facts about the Southern States.

- It has a unique cultural and historic heritage which include English, Scottish and German influences.
- It is the home of many Native Americans.
- There is a large population of African Americans, due to the importation of enslaved Africans.
- Slavery

Due to the facts mentioned above, the South developed its own customs, literature, musical styles and varied cuisines that have shaped American culture.



Main Activity

1. Give each student a photocopy of the article.
2. Allow the students to read in pairs and do cooperative work, such as helping each other with vocabulary they don't know. Encourage them to guess meaning from context clues before using a dictionary or asking you.
3. You can always prepare comprehension activities and hand them out to students while they are reading.
4. Ask students to find specific information in the text.
 - What types of food does the writer mention? Is there anything like that in your country?
 - What does she mean when she says 'it makes my mouth water'? Is there a saying in Spanish that is similar in meaning? (Se me hace agua la boca.)
 - Did children work back in the thirties?
 - What were Mama's activities around the house?
 - Did they have much entertainment in the thirties? What did they do for entertainment?
 - What did they use to do for Mama's birthday?
 - Did they always live in the same place?

Follow up

Pair work.

Interviewing someone that lived in the thirties would be interesting. Encourage students to interview their grandparents or any other elderly relative. (Interviewing them in English may not be possible, so you'll have to ask students to do their best translating the answers they get.)

Allow some time in class for writing the interview questions. Give them some sample questions like.

- What did you do for entertainment when you were younger?
- How did you used to get to school?
- Did you have to work when you were a kid?

Ask students to do some research about life in the thirties in their own countries.

Allow students to share with the class the interviews and also their research.

As an optional activity and since this is pair work you can allow students to choose how to present their interviews. They can do it as a class presentation or as a role play in which one student plays the role of the interviewer and the other one plays the interviewee.

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