

CATEGORY: ARGENTINA: NOW

CONCEPT: FOLKLORE, language, life style

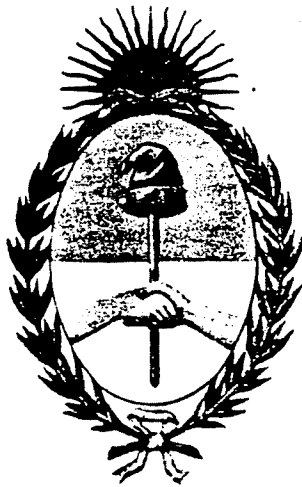
ACTIVITY: LEARNING AND USING PROVERBS. Since proverbs or "refranes" are such a vital part of Latin American language, it is important to introduce students to their importance and variety.

OBJECTIVES: The student will understand the importance of proverbs in Argentina, and be able to use the given proverb appropriately. The students will also learn about the folk wisdom that many popular proverbs convey.

MATERIALS: Copies of the "refrán" reading and worksheet

PROCEDURE: Hand out the reading and worksheet. Students can either discuss answers in class or write down the answers. It is a good idea to have a Spanish teacher come and teach the proper pronunciation of the "refranes."

VOCABULARY: refrán, folk wisdom



Coat of Arms of Argentina

LEVEL: MIDDLE GRADES
Source: Gibbs, Virginia G. *Latin America: Curriculum Materials for the Middle Grades*. Center for Latin America, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. 1985/1989.

"Refranes": Reflections of Folk Wisdom

One of the best ways to learn about the people of a different culture is to study its sayings and proverbs. Much of the folk wisdom of a country like Argentina is found in a collection of proverbs. For many, these proverbs represent a philosophy of life. They are also part of a shared culture all over Spanish-speaking America since many proverbs have very old roots in Spain.

In our modern North American culture the proverb has lost a good deal of its prominence. The same is not true in Argentina. There (as well as in other Latin American countries) the language is rich in proverbs. In the Spanish language, the proverb remains a vital aspect of communication. Some experts say that unless a speaker uses "refranes" frequently, s/he is really not speaking Spanish. The folk wisdom of the proverb is important for all people of Argentina, be they rich or poor, well educated or not.

The following is a list of popular Spanish proverbs that one is likely to hear in Argentina (as well as in other Latin American countries). Each is followed by a literal English translation and, where possible, an equivalent English proverb.

<u>REFRAN</u>	<u>TRANSLATION</u>	<u>ENGLISH PROVERB</u>
1. A quien madruga Dios le ayuda.	God helps the one who arises early.	The early bird gets the worm.
2. En boca cerrada no entran moscas.	Flies don't enter a closed mouth.	Silence is golden.
3. No hay mal que cien años dure.	Nothing bad lasts a hundred years.	
4. Agua pasada no mueve el molino.	Water that has passed can't move the mill.	It's water under the bridge.
5. Ojos que no ven corazón que no siente.	If eyes don't see the heart doesn't feel.	Out of sight out of mind.
6. Mientras en mi casa estoy, rey soy.	While in my home, I'm king.	A man's house is his castle.
7. Zapatero, a tus zapatos.	Shoemaker, stick to your shoes.	Mind your own business.
8. Dime con quien andas, te diré quien eres.	Tell me with whom you go, and I'll tell you who you are.	Birds of a feather, flock together.

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| 9. | A buena hambre
no hay pan duro. | For real hunger
there is no hard
bread. | Hunger is the
best sauce. |
| 10. | Más vale estar
solo que mal
acompañado | Better to be alone
than in bad company. | |
| 11. | Si quieres vivir
sano, acuéstate
y levántate tem-
prano | If you want to be
healthy, go to bed
and rise early. | Early to bed, early
to rise, makes a man
healthy, wealthy, and
wise. |
| 12. | Casa sin mujer
pobre ha de ser. | A house without a
woman will be poor
indeed. | |
| 13. | Los niños y los
refranes dicen las
verdades. | Children and proverbs
tell the truth. | |
| 14. | Hay más refranes
que panes. | There are more refrains
than loaves of bread. | |

Questions

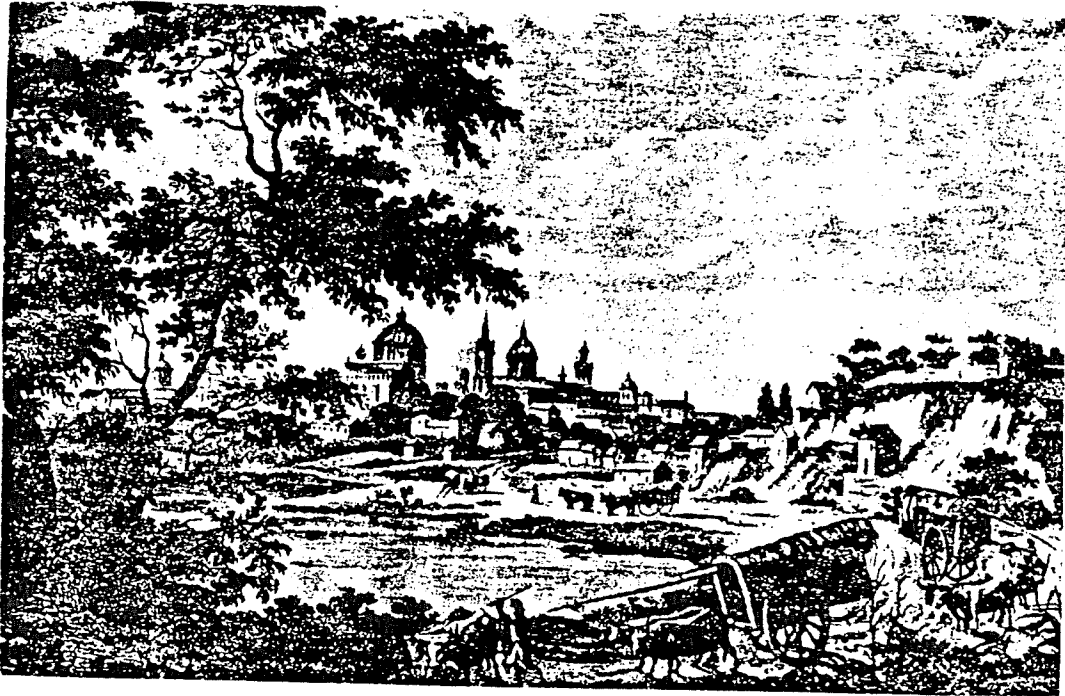
1. Many of these refrains have a similar refrain in English. Why do you think this is so?
2. Much folk wisdom is called common sense. How do these refrains fit in with this idea? Give an example or two.
3. What do refrains #13 and #14 say about the role of refrains in Hispanic culture?

As the Saying Goes...

From your list of "refranes" write the appropriate Spanish proverb that would be used in the following situations:

1. Pablo, who has never studied medicine, gives you unwanted advice about curing a cold. You might say
2. María is invited to a party but she decides to stay home because she thinks the other people at the party are troublemakers. She explains her decision to spend a dull evening by saying
3. Felipe explains why he and his girlfriend broke up after he had been away at school for a year, saying
4. Señora Pérez tries to convince her unmarried son to find a good wife. She says

5. Carmen is always causing trouble by spreading gossip. A good friend tells her
6. The Suárez family and the Yepes family have had a feud for years. Antonio Yepes and Francisco Suárez go to the same school and decide to ignore the old feud and be friends. As Antonio says
7. Juana thinks it is the end of the world because she wasn't accepted at the university of her choice. Her mother tells her that in time this will not even seem important and that



BUENOS AIRES, 1810