



Parrots Over Puerto Rico Mini-Unit Plan

Contents:

- * The mini-unit designers
- * Introducing the mini-unit
- * Contextualizing the mini-unit
- * Learning experiences
- * Standards
- * Next steps for your learning

Meet the Designers:

Rebecca Kossman, Teacher, 3rd grade
Hiram L. Dorman Elementary, Springfield, Massachusetts

As a new teacher I am always looking for opportunities to learn more about my teaching practice and how to make it better. I love looking for a variety of different texts to use in my classroom. I am so excited to have a new lens with which to evaluate books for my students.

Kelley Wiswall, Teacher, 3rd grade
Hiram L. Dorman Elementary, Springfield, Massachusetts

Through Doors to the World I have learned a new appreciation for adding multicultural texts into my teaching practice. The experience has opened my eyes to different multimodal experiences and how the students will take ownership and will be more engaged in the learning process.

Mini-Unit plan created July 2016

Introducing the Mini-Unit:

This is for a third grade classroom. This mini-unit will take between 5-7 days depending on the activities planned and what is being taught in Science. We will be focusing on the ELA standards of determining sequence of events and cause and effect. We will also be using this text to connect to

our science unit of Animal Habitats and Classification. Many of the videos and other resources will be used within the Science block.

Students may have personal knowledge of Puerto Rico. The story will provide historical knowledge of what happened to the parrots and about Puerto Rico itself. This will be a good opportunity for students to share information they already know and open their minds to new information about a relatable topic.

We think that it will be very engaging for students and teachers to learn more about Puerto Rico—a place that is very important to many of our students. We are also very excited about taking time to focus on the artwork in this book, and use the art style in our ELA practice.

Having the parents/family/friends come to observe the work that their student has been working on, as well as seeing the “play” that the students will be performing, creates the opportunity to open up lines of communication and build family engagement.

Contextualizing the Picture Book:

Title: *Parrots Over Puerto Rico*

Authors: Susan L. Roth and Cindy Trumbone

Collages by: Susan L. Roth

Publisher: Lee & Low Books Inc., New York: January 1, 2014

Genre: Informational

Summary:

“A combined history of the Puerto Rican parrot and the island of Puerto Rico, highlighting current efforts to save the Puerto Rican parrot by protecting and managing this endangered species.”

—Provided by publisher (Susan L. Roth and Cindy Trumbone (2013). Library of Congress Summary. *Parrots Over Puerto Rico*. Illustrated by S. Roth. New York: Lee & Low Books Inc.).

The book provides an in-depth historical background of not only the fight to save the parrots, but also of the history of Puerto Rico. The in-depth information is excellently presented and is very easy to follow.

About the authors and illustrators:

Authors Cindy Trumbone and Susan L. Roth collaborated on this piece as well as two other picture books. Cindy is an award-winning author and editor who has been working in the children’s book business for 25 years. Along with writing children’s books Cindy writes and edits materials for historical groups, critiques children’s book manuscripts, and teaches writing.

(Cindy Kane Writer/Editor. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://cindykane.net/moreaboutcindy.html>)

Illustrator Susan Roth did the collages for this book. She has done collages for many children’s books, many of which are non-fiction. They also represent a multitude of topics and cultures. (Roth, S. L. (2014). *Susan L. Roth*. Retrieved from susanlroth.com/index.htm)

In *Parrots Over Puerto Rico*, Susan Roth uses a mixture of fabrics and paper to create her collages. In an interview Susan stated that she had a hard time throwing away “beautiful” scraps. (Roth, S. L. (2014). *Susan L. Roth*. Retrieved from susanlroth.com/index.htm) She uses a mixture of materials in her work which helps create “movement” in her collages.

Geographical Region: Puerto Rico, specifically the areas San Juan and the rainforest of El Yunque.

Cultural Themes: This book tells two stories. One is that of the parrots living on the island. We learn how their population shrunk, and how people worked to help revitalize it. At the same time, we learn about how the island of Puerto Rico became what it is today through the people that moved there.

Media Illustrations: Collaged pictures, made from different fabrics and papers with photographs added at the end.

Learning Experiences:

Learning Experience Design #1: Approximately 60-90 minutes

At their desks students will be asked to write something they know about Puerto Rico onto a sticky note. (These sticky notes can be revisited after reading the story and we can explore what new information they learned.)

Students will come to the rug, share what they know, and put their sticky notes on a chart.

Introduce that we will be reading a book about Puerto Rico—more specifically some very special parrots that live there.

Show the book cover. Ask:

- * What kind of book do you think this is? (story, fiction, information, etc.).
- * Why no title?
- * What do you think the title should be?

Write down the students’ ideas. At a later date ask students if their titles still make sense.

Explain that it is an informational text, but instead of photographs it has illustrations. Then ask:

- * What is different about the way I’m holding this book?
- * Why do you think the book is set up that way?

These questions will help facilitate a discussion about the book being held vertically (which was chosen in order to give Roth plenty of room to show the flight of the parrot) instead of horizontally.

While we read, we will be stopping to write down important events.

As part of this lesson the students will lead the chart about important events. After modelling several examples of finding an important event and writing it on the chart, the students will then finish the chart. Write the important facts down for sake of time.

On the first day only read half of the book since there is a lot of text and information. Here are some stopping points:

- ✱ **Vocabulary words throughout section:** flock, vanished, kapok trees, Tainos, slaves, flocked, nesting holes, invaded, territory, citizenship, thrashers, defending, independent, struggling
- ✱ On the page (*Long before people...*):
 - Ask “What do you notice about this illustration?” (illicit observations about space and lots of birds, no people, etc.)
- ✱ On the page (*Around 5000BCE...*):
 - Add event: 5000BCE—people came to the Island (stop at this point to ask, get them to come up with what should be written down)
 - Add event: 800 CE Tainos came—they kept parrots as pets and gave them the name “iguaca”
 - Look at illustration—what has changed from the first illustrations to this one?
- ✱ On the page (*Christopher Columbus sailed...*):
 - Add event: Christopher Columbus and other settlers (which will be a great topic to be brought up in Social Studies) from Spain came to the island and Africans were brought to the island to be slaves.
- ✱ On the page (*In the treetops...*):
 - Ask “What is going on this picture?” Some observations could be: the island being more crowded, fewer parrots, diversity of people.
- ✱ On the page (*In 1898, the United States declared war...*) with picture of American soldiers on the island:
 - Ask “What is going on in this picture? How is it different from the other illustrations so far?”
 - Add event: Parrots’ nesting holes were invaded by creatures from other countries.
 - Highlight the event: 1898—The United State went to war with Spain and won Puerto Rico, and the island became a US territory.
- ✱ On the page (*The parrots began to disappear...*):
 - Add event: By the 1940s Puerto Rican parrots were only living in the rain forest called “El Yunque”.
 - Add event: Parrots’ trees were cut down and parrots were hunted and trapped.
- ✱ On page (*In the 1950s...*):
 - Ask “What is going on in this illustration?” (Students may bring up: other birds, birds fighting, not a lot of forest space, lots of buildings, two flags.)
 - Add event: Pearly eyed thrashers (another type of bird) moved into the rainforest.

This is where we'll stop reading for day one. Ask students what they think will happen to the parrots. How are the people living on the island and the birds connected?

Independent Work:

Using a printed copy of the page that begins "Above the treetops of Puerto Rico..." highlight the words that describe the parrot. Using those highlighted words now color the picture of the parrot.

Families and Communities Connections (All three days included below):

- * After the first day, the student's homework will be to ask family and friends what they know about Puerto Rico and parrots.
- * Have students share the information that they learned from their families and friends.
- * Invite parents in to see their students present their work. Parents will be invited to bring in traditional Puerto Rican foods.

Additional Multimodal Opportunities (All days listed):

- * Crayola (2016). *Puerto Rican Parrots*. Retrieved from <https://www.crayola.com/lesson-plans/puerto-rican-parrots-lesson-plan/>. Project idea to make a parrot.
- * Kane, C (2013). *Cindy Kane Writer/ Author*. Retrieved from <http://www.cindykane.net/parrotsoverpuertorico.html>. Information about one of the authors.
- * Roth, S.L. (2014). *Susan L. Roth*. Retrieved from <http://susanlroth.com/index.htm>. Information about the collage artist and co-author.
- * *Saving Puerto Rican Parrots* (video). Retrieved on July 14, 2016 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3sOrM4oFSY>. Video on the saving Puerto Rican Parrots.
- * Read *The Mangrove Tree* by Cindy Trumbone during Science when discussing Plant Life and discuss the author and artist (collages) to prepare for reading *Parrots Over Puerto Rico*.

Drawing Interdisciplinary Opportunities (All days listed):

Science:

- * Watch video on rain forests in the resources.
- * Discuss prey/predator, habitats, and endangered species.
- * Watch the video on the Puerto Rican parrot.

Art:

- * Art added into the lessons through coloring, collages, and creating a book.

Learning Experience Design #2: Approximately 75-90 minutes

Discuss the information that the students learned from their families and friends (which will be a homework assignment the night before).

Discuss what was already read by going over our charts we began making the day before.

- * Summarize the information. Is there anything else we can add to the chart?

Continue reading where we left off, again focusing on vocabulary (already written on index cards) and the important events in the story.

- ✱ **Vocabulary words throughout this section:** aviary, squawked, incubators, captivity, rare, discarded, wiped out, wrecked, humid, aggressive, captive-bred
- ✱ On the page (*The flock of Puerto Rican parrots...*):
 - Add event: 1967 only 24 parrots lived in El Yunque.
 - Add event: 1968 the governments of the US and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico worked together to create the Puerto Rican Recovery Program.
- ✱ On the page (*Parrots squawked as scientists...*):
 - Add event: 1973 Luquillo Aviary opened in El Yunque.
- ✱ On the page (*Once hundreds of thousands...*):
 - Add event: 1975 only 13 parrots were left in the rain forest.
- ✱ On the page (*Wild parrots squawked as...*):
 - Add event: 1979 the very first chick raised in the aviary was placed in the rain forest.
 - Add event: 1979 there were 15 captive parrots.
- ✱ On the page (*Hurricane Hugo roared...*):
 - Add event: 1989 Hurricane Hugo hit Puerto Rico.
- ✱ On the page (*Rio Abajo Aviary opened...*):
 - Add event: 1993 Rio Abajo Aviary opened.
 - Add event: 1999 Rio Abajo Aviary had 54 Puerto Rican parrots.
- ✱ On the page (*In 2000, ten captive-bred...*):
 - Add event: 2000 ten captive-bred parrots released in El Yunque.
 - Add event: 2001 the next 16 parrots released.
- ✱ On the page (*The scientists were ready to create...*):
 - Add event: 2006 22 parrots released into the Rio Abajo Forest.

When finished reading, ask:

- ✱ What are some other steps you think could be taken to protect the parrots?
- ✱ How do the collages help support the sequence of events? Do they add anything to it?

Whole Group Post Reading Activity:

Play a game of “I have, who has” with the vocabulary words that were discussed throughout the text.

How it works:

- ✱ Each student will get a card that says “I have _____ (in the blank will be a vocabulary word). Who has _____ (in the blank will be a definition of a different vocabulary word)?” Then whichever student has the vocabulary word that matches the definition will say “I have _____,” and the process will continue.

- ✧ As students finish their turn, they will put up their cards so students will see each word with its definition.

Independent Work:

Using the teacher made worksheet with a vocabulary word written in the center, have the students find the definition in the dictionary and write it down. Then find the word in the book and write the sentence under the definition. Lastly, using magazines and drawings find, draw, and make a collage of the meaning of the word.

- ✧ **Vocabulary words:** hurricane, inspected, artificial, captivity, invaded, aggressive, colonies, territory, independent, and self-sufficient

After the students look up the vocabulary words and definitions that they can act out (using gestures or body movements) the word. By doing this the other students will have a better understanding of the word as well as the students acting out the word.



Learning Experience Design #3: Approximately 75-90 minutes

Cause and effect activity:

- ✧ Hand out cards with a cause or an effect to the students (based on the events from the chart we have created in prior lessons).
- ✧ On two walls place signs labelled “Cause” on one and “Effect” on the other. Once the students have determined whether they have a cause or effect, they can stand by the correct sign.

Discuss the student's choices.

Have a "cause" student volunteer to read his/her card. Now have the "effect" students reread their card and see if they match with the cause.

Discuss.

As students match have them tape cards together on the board labeled with "Cause and effect".

As we go along we will discuss any changes that we decide to make (example: more than one effect for the cause).

After our discussion about the causes and effects, break the students into predetermined pairs/groups. Each pair/group will then choose a cause and matching effect to work with.

- ✱ Each pair/group will be provided: chart paper, pencils, cause/effect cards, crayons/markers/colored pencil.
- ✱ The pairs/groups will make a poster representing the cause/effect provided.

Share out the posters and the explanation of the cause/effect.

By doing this activity the students will see the relationship of humans'/animals' actions to the dwindling population of the parrots. There are so many reasons that caused the dwindling of the parrots that it can be an overwhelming concept to understand, so breaking it down into a fun activity will allow students to see the relationship.

Summative Learning Experience:

We have been reading an informational text. The information in this book is no longer current. Since the book has been published things have changed and information needs to be updated. What is the status of the Puerto Rican parrot now? We are going to, as a group, explore some resources that will help us learn the latest information on the Puerto Rican parrots.

Now you are going to choose an animal that is close to becoming endangered and do research on that animal. You will then write your own book about this endangered animal, answering the questions:

- ✱ How do/did people effect the animals becoming endangered?
- ✱ What other causes led the animal to become endangered?
- ✱ What steps are being taken to help this animal?

Once you have finished your writing you will create collage pictures just like the ones in *Parrots Over Puerto Rico*.

Standards:

3.RI.3.3 Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

3.RI.3.4 Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area.

W.3.2a Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension

Next Steps for Your Learning:

Have families/parents/friends come in to see what the students have been working on. When parents come in have the students act out the cause and effects discussed throughout the book that led to the Puerto Rican parrot's endangerment. These "plays" will be written by the students as a way to reinforce the relationship between the human/animal actions and the dwindling population of the parrots.

Continue the conversation and lessons in science about the animal habitat and classifications.

Students who are not from Puerto Rico will gain an understanding of an island that they are not from. This can be done through conversation throughout the story, especially in the beginning "sticky note" activity. The students who are from Puerto Rico or who have knowledge of the area will share their thoughts and ideas. Again, this will be reinforced after the homework assignment on day one.

This is a teacher's guide for the book *Parrots Over Puerto Rico* by Susan L. Roth, Cindy Trumbore. In this compelling book, Roth and Trumbore recount the efforts of the scientists of the Puerto Rican Parrot Recovery Program to save the parrots and ensure their future. Woven into the parrots' story is a brief history of Puerto Rico itself, from before the first human settlers to the present day. The educator's guide includes a book summary, background, discussion questions, vocabulary, reader-response and other writing prompts, ELL support, and interdisciplinary activities. *Parrots Over Puerto Rico* is a Junior Library Guild selection that teaches about the history of the Puerto Rican parrot and the island of Puerto Rico, highlighting current efforts to save the Puerto Rican parrot by protecting and managing the endangered species. The heavy, dark, single-column font that stretches across the bottom of each two-page spread may be unpleasant from a purely aesthetic viewpoint, but it is easy to read against the colorful backgrounds that Susan L. Roth designed.