

Educational Project Brazil in the Primary School

Why Brazil

Brazil is a country which is always in the news. Perhaps that is because of developments in the rainforest, the achievements of its expanding industries, or the exploits of the national football team. It is also a country with huge contrasts in landscape, environments, and cultures and it is changing rapidly. It thus provides a suitable context for pupils to study a wide range of topics which could contribute to the curriculum for children of primary school age.

The two studies which make up the bulk of this School Project are designed as detailed locality studies giving an insight into the lives of ordinary Brazilians and their country. Two studies of urban localities were chosen because over 75% of Brazilians live in towns and cities. Brazilian culture is essentially an urban one, derived originally from the old 'colonial' coastal cities with their peoples of Portuguese as well as African and other European origins. But on to this has been added a vigorous, modern element associated with the growing commercial and industrial centres.

The studies were designed to provide an insight into the daily lives of two children. One lives in Rio de Janeiro, in the busy and prosperous South East of the country. Rio de Janeiro was once the capital of Brazil and is still seen as the focus of the Brazilian life style. It has a spectacular setting as well as an exciting and colorful way of life. But it is also a booming commercial and industrial centre. Manaus, the home of the second family, is on the River Amazon and is best known for its historic links with the rubber industry. Today, Manaus is an expanding city with new manufacturing and services in the heart of the rainforest.

The Highgate School

The Highgate Primary School is the first school to participate in the Brazilian Culture Month by introducing the Brazil in the Primary School educational project to two classes of its second year primary school students.

On 24 October 2007, the children who participated in the project presented their work to their teachers, fellow students and to the Honorary Consul of Brazil in Cyprus and President of the Pharos Trust, Garo Keheyian. Present were also the Brazilian visual artist Anna Maria Maiolino, who was in Cyprus for an exhibition on the occasion of the 4th Brazilian Culture Month and the exhibition curator Michael Asbury, as well as Brazilian artists Angela

Detanico and Rafael Lain who were in Cyprus for the launch of the catalogue following their exhibition during last year's Brazilian Culture Month.

The event included a slide show presentation with live commentary from the children, as well as a presentation of a multitude of challenging learning materials and activities including, among others, paintings, collages and papier mache figures of animals of the Amazon rainforest. The guest speaker, Garo Keheyian gave the opportunity to all the children to ask questions about several aspects of Brazil.

Following the presentation, the children had the opportunity to talk to the Brazilian visitors, ask more questions and learn some Brazilian words! During this time wonderful cupcakes with the Brazilian national colours and flag were offered to everybody.

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The Junior School
On 5 November 2007 the children of three classes of the Junior School, gathered in the presence of the Honorary Consul of Brazil and President of the Pharos Trust, Garo Keheyian, in order to present their projects on Brazil - including detailed studies of Brazilian life, Brazilian food recipes, Portuguese vocabulary, collages and drawings.

Two classes had studied the life of a child and his family in Rio de Janeiro and one class had studied the life of a child and his family in Manaus. After a short speech by Garo Keheyian, the children had the opportunity to ask a multitude of very interesting questions related to the country and explore, among others, issues such as the Amazon forest and its inhabitants as well as the size and geography of Brazil.

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