



A TEACHER'S RESOURCE GUIDE

# JUAN BOBO'S TALES

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Dear Teacher:

SEA would like to bring to the classroom a wonderful world of imagination created through the theatrical puppetry production of **"Juan Bobo's Tales/Cuentos de Juan Bobo."** This production provides the opportunity to meet a hilarious character, Juan Bobo, from Puerto Rico who shares with audiences his language, values and culture.

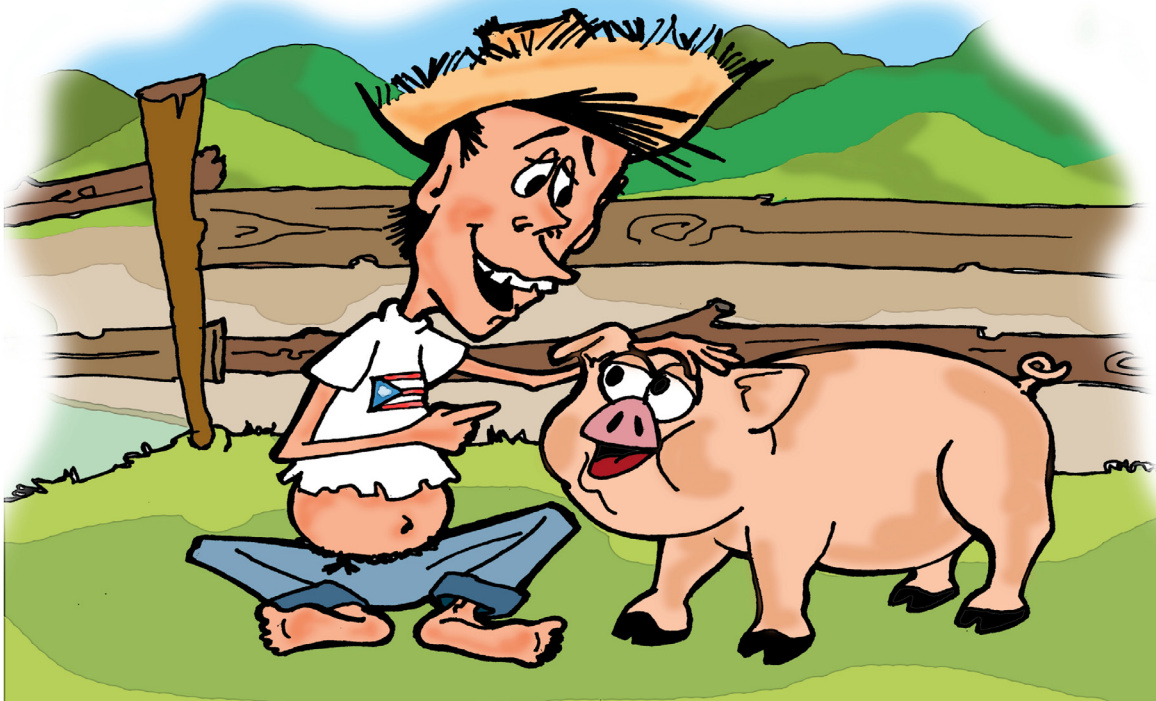
This Resource Guide will guide the students in remembering and understanding the story. Some students will be exposed to aspects of their own culture that they might not know too well. Other students will enjoy the culture and language for the first time, Either way, your students will have an educational, cultural and creative experience that will enhance their knowledge and will contribute to their acceptance of other cultures as well as their own.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE SHOW

A charming character from Puerto Rico learns to value honesty, hard work and friendship while making the most out of his playful adventures.

## ABOUT JUAN BOBO

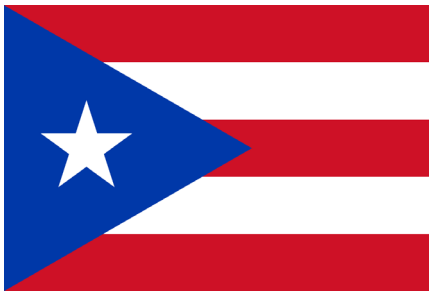
Juan Bobo (Simple John) is portrayed by a silly "noodle head." He is Puerto Rico's most popular folk character and favorite fool who has been the mainstay of jokes and laughter for generations. Juan Bobo is a *bobo*—a young, naive, airhead boy who does nothing right. He is an ignorant and awkward person who does not learn from experience. There is a bobo in every village around the world. The tales about bobos originated in India, and were later brought to Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas. Juan Bobo stands for the honest, simple and uncorrupted life of the country folk (el jíbaro) against the excess of those living in the city.





## ABOUT PUERTO RICO

Puerto Rico is a beautiful island in the Caribbean discovered by Admiral Cristóbal Colón (Christopher Columbus) on November 19th, 1493. Puerto Rico was inhabited by the Taino Indians. They used to call it Borikén, which means *The Great Land of the brave and noble master*. Poets, writers and singers have also called the island Borinquen, Isla del Encanto and Perla del Caribe. Its capital is San Juan. Puerto Ricans refer to themselves as Puertorriqueños or Boricuas. Boricua is used as a term of endearment and cultural affirmation. In 1898, Puerto Rico became a territory of the United States of America. Their political, economical and cultural relationships have grown under the Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico or The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico established in 1952, Puerto Ricans are citizens of the United States of America.

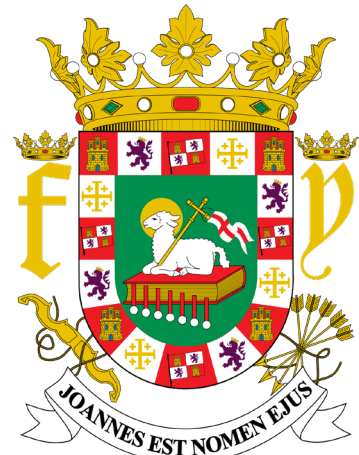


### THE FLAG

- **Red Stripes:** stands for the “blood” that nourishes the three branches of the government: legislative, executive and judiciary.
- **White Stripes:** represents individual liberty and the rights that keep in perfect balance the form of government in Puerto Rico.
- **Blue Triangle:** stands for the “Republican Government” represented by the three branches.
- **White Lone Star:** represents “The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico”.

### THE COAT OF ARMS

The Coat of Arms uses symbols of the history, culture and religion of Puerto Rico. It was first recognized by the Spanish Crown in 1511, but it wasn't until March 9th, 1905 that a law, establishing the official Coat of Arms was signed. Within the background there's a lamb on top of the Book of Revelations, holding the seven seals of The Apocalypse. The lamb symbolizes peace, purity, humbleness, integrity, and holds a white flag with a red cross. The flag means “truce,” or knowledge to stop fighting. Both the lamb and the flag are symbols of “John The Baptist” or San Juan Bautista, the original name given by the Spanish settlers. The rim is covered by 16 symbols: castles signifying the “Kingdom of Castilla”, lions representing the “Kingdom of Leon” and a flag, with both lions and castles, representing the unity of both kingdoms. The rim also shows the “Cross of Jerusalem” used by the Monarchs to expel the “non Christians” from the Spanish peninsula. The crown on top symbolizes the “Royalty” who authorized this shield. To the right, an “F” for Fernando, to the left, a “Y” for Ysabel, the King and Queen of the Spanish Empire. The motto reads: “*Joannes Est Nomen Ejus*”, it means “*John is its name*,” the original name of the island.



Main Language:	Spanish
Second Language:	English
Population:	3,9 million
Location:	The Caribbean
Capital:	San Juan
Discovered:	November 19, 1493
Discovered by:	Christopher Columbus
Natives inhabitants:	Taino Indians
Today's inhabitants:	Puerto Ricans or Boricuas
Folkloric Music:	Bomba, plena, aguinaldos
Musical Instruments:	Cuatro, guitar, congas, güiro
Dance:	Folkloric dance, Salsa
Citizenship:	USA
Political Status:	Commonwealth of Puerto Rico



## CULTURE AND HISTORY

The Taino Indians inhabited Puerto Rico. In 1493, the Spaniards arrived and conquered the Island. African slaves were brought to work the land. The mixture of Tainos, Spaniards and Africans gave life to what is today, the Puerto Rican. In 1898, Puerto Rico became a territory of the United States of America and in 1952, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico was created. In the 1930's, many Puerto Ricans immigrated to New York looking for better living opportunities. They settled mainly in the Bronx and Spanish Harlem. Today, around 3 million Puerto Ricans live in New York. During the month of June, New York celebrates Puerto Rican culture with the Puerto Rican Day Parade.

### FOOD

- Rice and beans
- Pork
- Green plantains (tostones)
- Fried alcapurrias
- Pasteles
- Asopao de gallina
- Yellow plantains (amarillos)
- Fried bacalaitos

### SPORTS

- Baseball
- Fishing
- Running
- Surfing
- Basketball
- Swimming
- Dancing
- Wind surfing

### CLIMATE

- Mainly warm and humid
- Tropical Rain Forest called El Yunque

### ANIMALS

- The Coquí: a small frog that makes a loud sound
- Tropical birds and insects

### PUBLIC PERSONALITIES

- Luis Muñoz Marín, Former Governor
- Roberto Clemente, Baseball Player
- Antonia de Coello, Former USA Surgeon General
- Rita Moreno, Oscar, Tony and Emmy Award Winnner
- José Ferrer, Academy Award Winner
- Benicio del Toro, Academy Award Winner

- Julia de Burgos, Poet
- Jaime Vasallo, Gold Medal Swimmer
- Raúl Juliá, Actor
- Pablo Casals, Musician
- Rafael Hernández, Composer
- Ricky Martin, Grammy Winner



# JUAN BOBO'S TALES

## SPANISH/ENGLISH VOCABULARY

Match column A with column B

### Column A

1. \_\_\_\_ viuda
2. \_\_\_\_ campesino
3. \_\_\_\_ Dios te bendiga...
4. \_\_\_\_ pollos
5. \_\_\_\_ batey
6. \_\_\_\_ corral
7. \_\_\_\_ puerca
8. \_\_\_\_ gruñir
9. \_\_\_\_ mai
10. \_\_\_\_ mantilla

### Column B

- a. \*[pol'lyos], chicken just hatched nestling.
- b. \*[cor-rahf'], it could be a square made of a metallic fence that keeps the chickens saved. A poultry-yard.
- c. \*[man-teel'-lyah], a veil. It is used by very Catholic traditional women as a sign of respect for the Temple. They put it over their heads before they enter the church.
- d. \*[ve-oo'-dah], a widow. A woman who has lost her husband due to his death.
- e. \*[my"-e], the short pronunciation for "mami" which means mother. It is like instead of saying: "I love you"; people might say: "I love YA". *Ya* replaces *you*.
- f. \*[cam-pay-see'-no], a peasant.
- g. \*[groo-nyeer'], to grunt like a hog.
- h. \*[poo-err-cah], a female pig. It is the opposite of "puerco" or male pig.
- i. \*[bah-te'h-ee], a word used by the Taino Indians from Puerto Rico which means sacred ceremonial square. It was also used to name a sacred baseball game.
- j. \*[Dee-os', te'h, benh-dee"-gah], "God bless you". A cultural expression based on Christian traditions. Sons and daughters ask for their parents' blessing before they go out of the house.



Answers:

1)d 2)f 3)j 4)a 5)i 6)b 7)h 8)g 9)e 10)c  
\*[Spanish pronunciation]

## JUAN BOBO'S TALES

### SPANISH/ENGLISH VOCABULARY

Match column A with column B

#### Column A

1. \_\_\_\_ arete
2. \_\_\_\_ adi3 caray
3. \_\_\_\_ madre del verbo
4. \_\_\_\_ chillar
5. \_\_\_\_ comai Petra
6. \_\_\_\_ caldero
7. \_\_\_\_ lodo
8. \_\_\_\_ patrona
9. \_\_\_\_ yarda
10. \_\_\_\_ melao

#### Column B

- a. \*[lo'-do], mud.
- b. \*[cal-day'-ro], a caldron or boiler in the form of a bucket.
- c. \*[yar"-dah], an English yard, equal to 91 centimeters.
- d. \*[co-mye, Peh-trrah], "Comai" is the short for "Comadre". The literal translation is co-mother. "Petra" is a proper name for a woman. The male version is Petro. Petro means rock or Peter in Greek language. Comadre is the name used to identify a child's godmother by the child's parents.
- e. \*[cheel-lyar'], to shriek, to mewl.
- f. \*[ah-dee-o", ka-ra'-ee], a popular Puerto Rican phrase which is used to express surprise, a realization or doubt. It depends on the circumstances.
- g. \*[ah-ray'-tay], ear-drop, earrings.
- h. \*[may-laoh], the juice of sugar cane converted into honey after being boiled down.
- i. \*[mah"-dre, dell", vehr'-bo], the literal translation is "mother of the verb" which refers to the Virgin Mary mother of Jesus. It is also used to express an emotion based on any given circumstance.
- j. \*[pah-tro-nah], patroness, a female patron.



Answers:

1)g 2)f 3)i 4)e 5)d 6)b 7)a 8)j 9)c 10)h

\*[Spanish pronunciation]

A. jarra

[har'-rah], jar, pitcher of earthenware.

B. mabí

C. candungos

According to the *American Heritage Dictionary*, "culture" is defined as "the arts, beliefs, customs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought created by a people or group at a particular time."

## QUESTIONS

1. Who is Juan Bobo?
2. What does he like to do?
3. Mention the instructions Juan's mother gave to him.
4. What did Juan Bobo think the pollos were telling him?
5. Juan Bobo's mother was crying. Why was she crying?
6. Why did Juan Boho think that the moscas were the widows?

## PRE-PERFORMANCE UNIT: EXPLORING FOLKTALES

### Goals

- Students will learn what a folktale is
- Students will become familiarized with an American folktale
- Students will become familiarized with folk tales from different countries
- Students will learn about character and action in a story
- Students will use their bodies and voices to present a story
- Students will gain script writing and performance skills

### Introduction

- The teacher introduces the definition of a folktale. This definition or a simplified version of it should be posted somewhere in the classroom for the rest of this unit: an anonymous, timeless, and placeless tale passed on orally by people in a cultural group.
- Teacher reads an American folktale aloud to the class. Suggested collection: *Classic American Folktales* by Steven Zorn. Students and teachers will discuss the characters and actions in this story and how it has been passed down from generation to generation in our country. Also, teachers should discuss how different countries have different folk tales.



## MAIN ACTIVITY

### Into the Folktales

- Students will be split into groups and assigned different folktales from different countries. The teacher should choose the folktales according to the cultural representation in their classroom. However, the students working on certain folk tales do not need to be from the countries of the folk tales they are working on.
- Groups will read the story together and generate a poster-size list of characters and actions in their assigned story. These lists will be posted around the classroom. The teacher may start the list off by creating a chart like the one below for each group:

[Title of Folktale]

Characters	Actions

- Students will create a drawing/painting/mask of their favorite part of the story being sure to include a character and an action. These pieces should be displayed next to the poster-size list of their corresponding stories.

### Characterization

- The class will stand in a circle, and one by one, each student will choose a character and action from the list they generated with their group and create a pantomime of the character in the action. They will perform this movement and the rest of the class will repeat it.
- In their groups, students will create a frozen picture of a part of the story that they all agree upon. In the interest of time, the teacher may want to use one of the drawings to aid the children in the decision of which part they want to focus on. The teacher may ask students to re-create one of the drawings in their groups.

### Scripting

- In their groups and with the help of the teacher, students will begin to write a script of their assigned folktale. They must decide what characters are going to be represented and how they will tell the story using their bodies, voices and the space available.
- Students will work together to create set pieces and costumes for the folktales. They will decide what each student will have to bring from their own home in order to complete the props/costumes needed, Students should be reminded to get permission from their guardians before bringing in something from home.
- Performances! Students will perform their folk tale as they wrote it for their class and other invited classes.





## POST-PERFORMANCE UNIT: CELEBRATION OF CULTURE

Note: The following unit can take place over several weeks, since there may be many different cultures to celebrate in the class. The teacher may designate a day of the week where the celebrations take place. For example, if the celebrations are to take place on Friday afternoon, he/she can decide that every Friday for the next six weeks or so will be Cultural Celebrations Day.


### Goals

- Students will learn about the different cultures represented in their classroom.
- Students will teach their classmates about their own cultural background.
- Students will create and take part in a cultural celebration that involves theatre, music, food and language.
- Teacher will encourage parent involvement in the cultural celebration.

### Introduction

- When starting this unit, the teacher should reach out to the parents of the students to make them aware that there will be a cultural celebration to celebrate the ethnic diversity of their classroom. Parents will be asked to bring in a dish or item on a designated day that represents their cultural background for the cultural celebration.
- The teacher will ask students to interview their family members at home about his/her cultural background, being sure to gather information about music, food and language. Children should try to bring in musical samples of their culture, or get information on music from their culture so that the teacher may obtain samples. Students who are not first generation Americans, or whom are not close to their cultural roots can use the American culture as their basis for this project. It is important to remind students that there are many different cultures *within* the American culture as well, i.e. People from the South have different traditions than those from the Midwest, Southwest, Northeast, etc.

### MAIN ACTIVITY

- In pairs or trios, students will begin to put together a research project on each other's cultural backgrounds. Each student will choose sayings, music and food that they would like to use for a final presentation.
  - In their small groups (pairs or trios), students will generate scripts of a performance inspired by *Juan Bob's Tales*. They will interact on stage, introducing one another to their own culture and traditions. The scripts should incorporate as much music and dance as possible.
  - Students will construct props and costume pieces in class. If possible, students should bring in items from home that they can use in their presentations. Students should be reminded to get permission from their guardians before bringing in something from home.
  - Celebration! Students will present these performances for their class and parents. The performances will be part of the Cultural Celebration Day and will be accompanied by food or a display of cultural items that parents have brought in.
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### **About SEA**

Founded in 1985, Society of the Educational Arts, Inc. / Sociedad Educativa de las Artes, Inc. (SEA) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the empowerment and educational advancement of children and young adults. SEA is one of the few, if not the only, Bilingual/Latin American Arts-in-Education organizations in New York City.

Through an array of effective, comprehensive, and highly powerful Arts-in-Education programs, SEA provides opportunities for children and young adults to examine, challenge and create possible solutions for current educational, social and community issues while fostering their talents, potential and self-esteem.

SEA is responsible for reviving the tradition of doing Children's Theatre in Spanish in New York City, a tradition that was abandoned for more than 18 years. For the past several years, SEA has toured professional theatres, schools, city parks and communities reviving this tradition by performing to audiences of over 75,000 per year.

SEA has also been instrumental in the introduction and education of non-Spanish speaking audiences to Latino Arts and Culture through cultural exchanges with many other ethnic groups and communities. As a result, SEA has been recognized as a leading theater company that offers a repertory of high quality works exemplifying wholesome and educational value, as well as providing a link to Latino Arts and Culture, multicultural understanding and self-esteem for all ages.

In celebration of its 25th Anniversary, SEA opened a brand new state-of-the-art performance space at the Clemente Soto Vélaz Cultural and Educational Center in Manhattan's Lower East Side.



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