

A Century of Challenge and Change: The Filipino American Story

Unit 1: Journey Filipinas Culminating Activity: Celebrating Philippine History and Culture

Background

Immersed in *A Century of Challenge and Change: The Filipino American Story*, the students would have developed a greater understanding of the Philippine Islands and its people, including its historical background, geography, diverse cultures and traditions, the colonization and revolution of its people, American influence, immigration, and contemporary issues Filipino Americans are faced with today. The students can now celebrate and demonstrate their appreciation of their gained knowledge by planning for a Philippine Cultural Festival, allowing them to exhibit the unique history and diverse cultures of the Philippine People at their own school or larger community.

Divide the students into six *barangays* or townships. The group members of each *barangay* will need to work together to create a booth that features the following Barangay Requirements of their selected Philippine Festival. Their booths can include stage set-ups if the groups wish to do re-enactments or demonstrations.

A. Barangay Requirements

1. Background Knowledge
 - a. History and Location of Festival
2. Significance
 - a. What makes the festival important and unique?
3. A Sensory Experience: Products and Performance
 - a. What does the festival look like? What can we observe visually?
 - colors, patterns, artifacts, photographs
 - dances, movements
 - artworks

- re-enactment of the historical event
- b. What does the festival sound like?
 - songs, lyrics, chants
 - musical instruments
 - poetry reading, storytellings: short stories, legends, folktales
 - learn common words and phrases in the local language
- c. What does the festival smell and taste like? What foods are associated or represented at this festival or region?
 - traditional recipes
 - local produce
- d. What does the festival feel like?
 - textures of tools, implements, fabric, clothing
 - game, singing, dancing, cooking, arts and craft demonstrations

The following festivals are just a few of the many festivals celebrated in the Philippines that allow students to experience the diversity of the regional, historical, religious, and cultural aspects of what makes Philippines so remarkable and alive:

B. Overview of Festivals

Festival	Place	Significance
Ati-Atihan	Cebu	Modified Christian Festival
Hari-Raya Puasa	Mindanao	Muslim Festival
Kaamulan Festival	Indigenous Mindanao	Indigenous Bukidnon Rituals
Bonifacio Day	National Holiday	Historical Figure
Jeepney King Festival	National Holiday	American Influence
Binirayan Festival	Cebu	Malay Datu History

A Century of Challenge and Change: The Filipino American Story

Ati-Atihan

Originally a pagan festival, the Ati-Atihan is now celebrated as a modified Christian festival honoring the Christ Child, the *Santo Nino*. It is believed that this celebration derived of Datu Puti, a patriarchal chief of Borneo, who, along with his companions, landed on the island of Panay, and bartered with the island chief or *Ati* named Marikudo. Datu Puti offered Marikudo gold and other gifts for coastal lowlands.

The Ati-Atihan begins its first of three days of parades the second week of January at Kalibo in Panay, the second day of parades in Ibaay, and the third day in Makati the next week. The three days of parades display vibrant and colorful costumes, with tall and impressive headdresses, and faces and bodies blackened with soot resembling the dark-skinned Atis. The streets are filled with singing, dancing, and a rhythmic beating of the drum and tin cans, followed by cries of "*Hala, bira!*," which translates to "*come and join!*" In contrast, the celebration ends with a procession on Sunday. On this day, lighted torches are held as the people begin to quietly walk the streets of the town.

Hari-Raya Puasa

A significant Islamic festival celebrated in Mindanao is the Hari-Raya Puasa, which follows after the end of Ramadan. The Muslims of Mindanao begin this day with a ritual cleansing, then attending a congregational prayer, and listening to the *khut-bak* or sermon. The men wear white headpieces and the women are covered from head to toe in white flowing dresses. After prayer, the town becomes a mass of joyful people freeing themselves of obligation, lavishly enjoying food, drinks, and life!

Kaamulan Festival

Bukidnon's Kaamulan Festival, held during the month of March each year, was created and

celebrated by people with true indigenous genealogical lines. The name "*Kaamulan*" is Binukid for the "social gathering" of the eight indigenous groups of the Bukidnon Tribe: the Matigsalug, Umayamnon, Ilianon, Pulangihon, Talaandig, Tigwa Manobo, Western Bukidnon Manobo, and the Higaunon.

In the Kaamulan Festival, the indigenous Bukidnon people attract the crowds with its traditional rituals. Among the performed rituals include the *pangampo* or general worship, the *tagulambong ho datu* (a political ritual marking one's formal ascendancy to the datanship), the *panumanod* or spiriting ceremony, the *panlisig* (edging away of evil spirits), and a native horse fight called *kagsaba ho kabayo*. In the afternoons, dance classes are offered, which are conducted by the indigenous people who incorporate their native drums and musical instruments in their teachings. As the evening arrives, literary works are performed, as chants of the Bukidnon epic "*Olaging*," recitations of the lyric poetry "*Limbay*," and the singing of ballads called "*Idangdang*."

One is sure to appreciate the authenticity of this celebration as the Bukidnon pride themselves in their direct involvement and participation in the Kaamulan Festival each year!

Bonifacio Day

Bonifacio Day is celebrated every November 30th, in remembrance of the Philippine Revolutionary Hero, Andres Bonifacio. In July of 1892, Bonifacio met with a group of men and formed the *Katipunan*, whose members agreed to fight to their death against Spain. In August 1896, as some members of the Katipunan became fugitives in the hands of the Spaniards, who deciphered their secret codes, Bonifacio, the *Supremo* or leader of the Katipunan, challenged his members to have courage and stay determined to take up arms and overthrow Spanish rule. "Long live the

A Century of Challenge and Change: The Filipino American Story

Philippines!” they cried out at Pugadlawin, Kalookan. This moment marked the beginning of the Philippine Revolution.

Jeepney King Festival

In Post-Liberation Manila, a surplus of American Jeeps in the Philippines were scheduled for disposal, when resourceful Filipinos took over the units and transformed them into ornamental machines on wheels! The Jeepneys are uniquely adorned and are as creative and sentimental as their drivers. For starters, Jeepneys are decorated with colorful paintings, banners, and lights covering its metal frame. Among the more extravagant Jeepneys are ornaments as colorful streamers hanging from the roof, metal horses, bull horns, and wings welded to the front of the hood, crocheted curtains cascading from the windows, and musical horns to proudly alarm one’s presence. The Jeepney has truly become a multisensory experience for everyone in the community and a daily reminder to celebrate and just have fun! Jeepney drivers are honored in April.

Binirayan Festival

The Binirayan Festival is for the Antique people to remember their Malay roots of Antiquenos. It is a presentation of the Bornean Datus and their families’ journey, riding in a fleet of *birays* or ships, until they entered the delta of Sinugbahan and inward to Andona creek. Datu Puti was determined to become friends with the natives and settle permanently on the site of Aeta Chieftain Marikudo’s settlement. As Marikudo and his advisors met to discuss this proposal, a banquet was given and aborigines performed for their guests, with the Borneans responding in kind. Consoled by gifts, Marikudo and his people agreed to relocate hinterland, while the Borneans moved in. However, as Sinugbahan became too small for the settlers, Datu Puti sent Datu Sumakwel northward, to which he discovered the productive plains, mountains, and shorelines the north had to

offer. Soon, the Datus set sail once again, each clan occupying the areas of Hamtic, Antique, Aklan, Iloilo, and Batangas, setting up the first Malayan barangay in the Philippines.

C. Barangay Evaluation

Describe	Interpret	Evaluate
How well did your group use the time for researching your festival? Describe the steps you took to meet your Barangay Requirements. How did you use your resources? What research strategies did you use to help you? How did you feel before you started, during, and after this project?	Were the results as you expected? Why or who not? How do you feel about your final products and presentations? Explain why. What new understandings or appreciations (skills, knowledge, value) did you gain while in the developing and demonstrating processes?	What would you do differently if you had the chance to do this again? Why? How would you rate your group on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the best? Explain why. How can you use what you’ve learned from this experience to make a positive difference in your current situation?

D. References and Resources

1. “Tagalog: Interactive Language and Filipino Culture Resources.”
http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Tagalog/Tagalog_mainpage.htm
2. “Provincial Website of Antique.”
<http://www.antique.gov.ph/provprof/eco.html>
3. “National Commission for Culture and the Arts: Empowering the Filipino Imagination.”
<http://www.ncca.gov.ph/index.php>
4. “Preserving Culture: The T’boli of Mindanao.”
http://www.devcomm.com/tboli_culture.htm
5. “Kalibo Ati-Atihan Festival.” <http://www.ati-atihan.net/>
6. “Andres Bonifacio: Founder of the Katipunan.”
<http://www.collider.bnl.gov/rudy/filipinas/bonifacio.html>