

Gitano/Spain

WORD FOR TODAY: OPPRESSED: A condition of being held down by outside forces, browbeaten.

1. While nearly all the stories presented in the KaTS program attempt to focus on the positive traits of cultural groups represented, this one also focuses on some negatives. It is up to the children's programmer, parent, or teacher whether or not this story gets included in the curricula. The story here—especially the parts about wife-beating and female subservience—comes directly from the Blasco ethnography.
2. If the decision is made to include the story, you might tell the students from the onset that a lot of cultural groups have practices that may seem out of whack to the outsider, but often these practices were developed because the ethnic group was denied access to the larger, more powerful society on the outside, hence never had an opportunity to become enculturated in the norms of this society. For example, Spaniards in general are very supportive of women's rights. But Gitanos were always discriminated against and never played much of a role in Spanish society, hence could not be expected to have absorbed the more contemporary societal attitudes about women and treatment of wives.
3. Let the students know that they will have to critically discuss the decisions of the heroine at the end of the story, so they should listen carefully.
4. You should tell the students that the term Gitano also has a feminine form—Gitana, so it's like Latino/Latina or Filipino/Filipina.
5. Another word for "gypsy" is Romany or Rom—usually more socially accepted than gypsy (but the students will likely be more familiar with the term gypsy).
6. Remind the students about patrilineages (where descent is reckoned through the male line, etc.).

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