

European Learning Scenario

Title: Healers of Tenerife

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Abstract

In our islands, long before hospitals and the medicines we know today existed, there were very special women who took care of people's health. They were wise and brave, and they knew the secrets of nature. These women were known as healers, blessers, herbalists, and midwives.

Healers used natural remedies and plants; blessers used prayers and rituals to help people feel better; herbalists had a deep knowledge of herbs and their properties; and midwives helped bring babies into the world. All of them played a very important role in the daily life of towns and villages in Tenerife and across the Canary Islands.

In this learning unit, we will discover who these women were, how they helped their communities, and why their knowledge has been so important in our culture. We will also explore how many of their teachings have been passed down to the present day.

Keywords

- *Traditional medicine and knowledge, Cultural heritage, Women's history, inquiry-based learning and Primary education.*

Table of summary

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Subject	<i>This learning scenario can be applied to several subjects as it is interdisciplinary: Natural science and cultural environment, language, art education and civic and ethical values education.</i>
Topic	<i>Traditional healing practices in the Canary Islands: the role of healers, blessers, herbalists, and midwives in local history and culture.</i>
Age of students	<i>10-12 years old</i>
Preparation time	
Teaching time	<i>3 hours</i>
Online teaching	<i>Online tools and resources that can be used in this learning scenario:</i>

material	• Kahoot! – for interactive quizzes and assessment • Google Classroom – for organizing tasks and materials • Canva – for creating posters or presentations • Genially – for interactive activities and presentations • YouTube – for audiovisual resources • Google Docs – for collaborative writing
Offline teaching material	<i>Offline (hands-on) tools and materials that can be used in this learning scenario:</i> • Paper (A4 sheets, card stock) • Notebooks • Pencils, pens, coloured pencils, markers • Crayons or watercolours • Scissors • Glue sticks or liquid glue • Sticky notes • Printed images of curanderas, plants, and traditional life in the Canary Islands • Reference books or encyclopaedias (school library resources)
Europeana resources used	– Women healers https://www.europeana.eu/en/search?query=women%20healers

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Integration into the curriculum

*This learning scenario fits into the Spanish national curriculum under **LOMLOE for Primary Education**, specifically within the area of **Natural, Social and Cultural Environment**. It addresses the study of local history and cultural heritage by exploring the role of traditional healers in the Canary Islands, helping students understand how past communities lived, cared for health, and passed on knowledge.*

The topic also contributes to the development of key competences, especially cultural awareness and expression, citizenship competence, and personal, social and learning to learn competence, by encouraging students to value women's historical roles and local traditions. In addition, it promotes inquiry-based learning through the analysis of historical sources and the connection between past and present ways of life.

Aim of the lesson

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to identify and explain the roles of healers, blessers, herbalists, and midwives in traditional Canarian society, and understand their importance in local cultural heritage. They will also develop respect for traditional knowledge and reflect on how these women contributed to the well-being of their communities.

Outcome of the lesson

The lesson will result in a collaborative class exposition titled "Healers of the Canary Islands," where students create a book with all the remedies to heal different illnesses and care from the interviews to grandmothers and mothers. This final product will showcase their understanding of traditional healing practices and their cultural importance.

Trends

Here are the relevant trends your lesson clearly incorporates:

- Cultural heritage education – exploring traditional Canarian knowledge and women's roles in history.
- Inquiry-based learning – students investigate historical roles (healers, blessers, herbalists and midwives) using questions and sources.
- Project-based learning (PBL) – final creation of a class exposition about traditional healing.
- Digital learning / EdTech integration – use of tools such as, Kahoot, Genially, and Europeana resources.
- Gender and inclusion in education – highlighting the historical contribution of women in local society.
- Multimodal learning – combining storytelling, research, and digital creation
- Collaborative learning – group work and shared digital boards.
- Use of open educational resources (OER) – integration of Europeana materials for primary source analysis.
- Cultural identity and local knowledge systems – valuing Canary Islands heritage and traditional medicine.

Key competences

This learning scenario promotes several Key Competences for Lifelong Learning by engaging students in an interdisciplinary and inquiry-based exploration of traditional healers in the Canary Islands.

It develops Linguistic Communication Competence through reading, discussing, and producing oral and written texts about healers, blessers, herbalists and midwives. It also strengthens Citizenship Competence by helping students value cultural heritage, gender roles in history, and community knowledge systems. Cultural Awareness and Expression Competence is fostered through creative tasks such as role-play and exhibitions that express understanding of local traditions.

In addition, the scenario promotes the Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Competence through collaborative group work, reflection, and project-based learning, while Digital Competence is developed through the use of educational tools and Europeana digital resources for research and creation.

Activities

Phase	Activity	Description	Resources
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1. Introduction / Motivation	“Who helped people in the past?”	The teacher introduces the topic through images and guiding questions: How did people take care of their health before hospitals? Students share prior knowledge using a class discussion.	Europeana (traditional search)	images medicine	45min
Brainstorming about the topic.					
2. Exploration of sources	Discovering women healers	In groups, students explore selected images of women healers, midwives, and rural life. They describe what they see, roles and activities.	Europeana History & search	Women's midwives	30min
Thinking routine: I see-I think and I ask.					
3. Guided analysis	What did each healer do?	Students watch a video of healers of Canary Islands and teachers will present a power point with all the important information about this topic.	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=InqDEYOkORA		90 min
Students are assigned to interview their families (grandparents and parents) for natural recepies.					
4. Creative production	Create a meditalnal book	Students create a book including drawings, short texts.	Paper, colours, Canvas (optional support)	digital	40min
5. Collaboration task	Build the class museum	Groups organize their work into a classroom exposition. They prepare short oral presentations explaining their healer type.	Cardboard, images	printed	30min
6. Digital reinforcement	Kahoot review quiz	The class completes a quiz to review key concepts about traditional healers and their roles.	Kahoot!		15min
7. Reflection	What have we learned?	Students reflect individually: What surprised them? Why were these women important? They write a short reflection in their notebook.	Notebooks		10min

Assessment

The learning scenario uses a formative and summative assessment approach, combining observation, student products, and an interactive quiz. The goal is to assess both knowledge acquisition and skills development (interpretation of sources, collaboration, and cultural understanding).

1. Formative Assessment (throughout the lesson)

The teacher will use:

- Observation checklist (group work participation, collaboration, use of vocabulary)
- Oral questioning during source analysis (What do you see? What might this tool be used for?)

Criteria assessed:

- Identifies types of traditional healers
- Understands their role in Canarian society
- Uses basic historical vocabulary
- Participates actively in group work

2. Summative Assessment (final product)

Meditinal book and Museum of Healers exposition.

Students are assessed based on their group poster and oral presentation.

Rubric criteria:

- Accuracy of historical information
- Creativity and visual presentation
- Clarity of explanation
- Teamwork and participation

3. Kahoot (Final Review)

A short interactive quiz will be used for reinforcement and assessment:

4. Self-Assessment (Reflection)

Students complete a short reflection:

- What did I learn about traditional healers?
- What activity did I enjoy the most?
- What was difficult for me?

***** AFTER IMPLEMENTATION *****

Student feedback

Student Feedback and Lesson Discussion Method

Students will provide feedback and reflect on the lesson through a combination of *oral, written, and collaborative methods* to ensure that all learners can express their opinions and experiences.

1. Final Circle Discussion (Oral Feedback)

At the end of the lesson, students will sit in a circle and participate in a guided conversation. The teacher will use simple prompts such as:

- What did you enjoy most about today's lesson?
- What surprised you about healers and herbalists?
- What would you like to learn more about?

This encourages active listening, respect for others' opinions, and oral communication skills.

2. Teacher Reflection

The teacher will review student feedback and notes from observation during activities to adjust future lessons, reinforce concepts, or extend learning on topics that generated more interest (e.g., medicinal plants or women's roles in history).

Teacher's remarks

After implementing the learning scenario, the lesson proved to be highly engaging and meaningful for students. They showed strong curiosity about the lives of, healers, blessers, herbalists and midwives especially when working with visual Europeana resources and real-life historical images.

Students were able to correctly identify the main roles of traditional healers and connect them with their importance in Canarian cultural heritage. The use of group work and creative tasks (poster creation and classroom museum) encouraged collaboration, participation, and oral expression. The Europeana sources were particularly effective in helping students infer information from historical images, although some groups needed more support in interpreting older visual material.

The main difficulty observed was related to historical vocabulary and distinguishing between different types of healers. This will be reinforced in future lessons through more structured scaffolding and vocabulary activities.

Overall, the objectives were achieved successfully, and the final exhibitions demonstrated a good level of understanding, creativity, and teamwork.

About the Europeana DS project

[Europeana](#) is Europe's digital platform for cultural heritage, providing free online access to over millions of digitized items drawn from Europe's museums, archives, libraries, and galleries. The Deployment of a common European data space (DS) for cultural heritage project builds on and expands the existing functionalities and services of the Europeana Digital Service Infrastructure (Europeana DSI). This initiative works towards the development and operation of the data space infrastructure, the integration and of high-quality data in the data space, the capacity building of professionals, the reuse of existing resources and the improvement of the digital services for the public. .

[European Schoolnet](#) (EUN) is the network of more than 30 European Ministries of Education, based in Brussels. As a not-for-profit organisation, EUN aims to bring innovation in teaching and learning to its key stakeholders: Ministries of Education, schools, teachers, researchers, and industry partners. European Schoolnet's task in the Europeana DS project is to facilitate the reuse of high-quality data and expand the community of users of Europeana for education.

Annex

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lnqDEYOkORA>

<https://create.kahoot.it/share/curanderas-and-different-types-of-nurses/a327b1d7-9ffc-4e0a-a12f-13e6a81e2a28>

Question 1

Who were curanderas?

- A. Sailors who travelled between islands
- B. Women who healed using natural remedies and plants
- C. Teachers in schools
- D. Farmers

✓ Correct answer: B

Question 2

What did yerberas mainly use?

- A. Magical objects
- B. Herbs and medicinal plants
- C. Books
- D. Animals

✓ Correct answer: B

Question 3

What was the role of parteras?

- A. They built houses
- B. They helped deliver babies
- C. They painted pictures
- D. They wrote stories

Correct answer: B

Question 4

Santiguadoras were known for...

- A. Using prayers and rituals to heal
- B. Sailing ships
- C. Growing crops
- D. Teaching mathematics

✓ Correct answer: A