

Lesson Plan

Vaqueiros of the Backlands

Grades 9-12

Objectives:

Students will:

- discuss the vaqueiros’ lives in the sertão or the backlands of Northeast Brazil.
- identify three art prints that represent the life style of the sertão. Write a response to each of the artists’ work.
- analyze the similarities and differences of Brazilian Vaqueiros and American cowboys.

Social Studies Content Expectations

K1.4 Understand historical and geographical perspectives.

Materials:

Student Information Sheet: The Vaquerios & The Cowboys

Student Information Sheet: Story of Lampião (pronounced Lahm-pee-OUN)

“Let’s Investigate” under the “Learn More About Brazil”

Vaqueiros Venn Diagrams

Words to Know

caatinga	(ka-ting-ah)	thorny underbush
retirantes	(hey-chee-RAHN-TES)	people who leave the Northeast during drought
sertão	(sehr-TOUN)	dry backlands
vaqueiros	(va-KEHR-ohs)	cowboys of the Northeast
secas	(SEH-kahs)	droughts
nordestinos	(nor-des-CHEE-nos)	people of the northeast

Introduction:

Have students review the **Words to Know** and read the Student Information Sheet: The Vaqueiros & The Cowboys. Discuss the information.

Activity 1:

Students will click on “Let’s Investigate” under “Learn More About Brazil” on the banditsandheroes.org website. They will identify two works of art that they feel represents the *sertão* (the backlands). After reading the information on each picture, they will do a think/pair/share with a partner for five minutes for each picture. Each partnership answers the question:

- What’s happening in this picture?
- What more do you see in the picture?
- What message is the artist trying to convey?

The partners choose a new partner for the second picture and continue writing the answers to the questions.

Activity 2:

- Have students read and take notes on the Student Information Sheet: The Vaqueiros & The Cowboys. Students will then fill in both Vaqueiro Venn Diagram Sheets noting the differences and similarities between the landscapes of Northeast Brazil and the U.S., as well as the Vaqueiros and the American Cowboys.

Assessment/Reflection

- Does the art of the people of Brazil’s Northeast reflect their unique identity in the face of the hardships of the *sertão*? Explain.
- Read the story of Lampião, and respond with a short essay on whether he was a hero or a bandit.
- The Nordeste subsistence farmers and sharecroppers from the *sertão* sought relief from severe drought and poverty. They moved south, looking for work, to urban areas like Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo and lived in shantytowns called favelas (fa-VEL-as).

- African American sharecroppers and poor farmers left the southern U.S. and migrated north to cities like Chicago and Detroit. They also lived in poor housing and sought a better quality of life. This movement began in the late-1800s. Compare the similarities and differences in the movement and settlement of these two large groups of people. For example, what kinds of jobs could they find? Was health care and education available? Were social services provided? How were they discriminated against? What changes have occurred in both countries regarding equal rights for all citizens?