

Echoes of Ecuador:
A Journey into Ecuadorian Narratives

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LIVEWORKSHEETS

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INTRODUCTION

A variety of captivating stories is found in Ecuador, a small but surprisingly diversified South American country. Ecuador, which is surrounded by the Pacific Ocean, the Amazon Rainforest, and the Andes Mountains, has a diverse range of sceneries that reflect its prosperous cultural diversity.

Ecuador's rich history, shaped by historical events like the Independence of October 9th , the battle of Pichincha, the Cenepa war, legends such as La Dama Tapada, Cantuña, or biographies of iconic Ecuadorian figures whose stories inspire our enduring spirit reflect its deep cultural roots.

This booklet serves as a guide for learning about Ecuadorian culture through interesting narratives and historical context. The purpose of all parts is to introduce you to Ecuador's rich traditions while assisting you in comprehending the nation's identity. This journey will show you the richness and beauty of Ecuadorian culture, whether you're delving into the works, discovering the secrets of old legends, or studying the lives of important historical characters.



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Legends

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The Legend of Cantuña



The decision by Franciscan monks to have a large church constructed in Quito is where this story begins. They hired an **indigenous,** robust and ambitious man called Cantuña to do the job and offered him an important amount of money. The only condition to get the payment was that the church must be finished in six months.

Cantuña worked hard every day, but the huge amount of work, and the unlimited number of **unforeseen** obstacles cause the construction to be delayed. He knew that it would be impossible to complete the task in time as the deadline approaches. On the last day, Cantuña was about to give up when suddenly, the devil **came out of nowhere** and offered him a deal: "*Cantuña, if you give him your soul, the church will be finished before the end of the night," said the devil.* Cantuña stood resolute, staring the demon, meeting it **face-to-face** thinking about the deal, which he finally agreed because he knew he had no other choice.

Thousands of little demons appeared instantly and began effortlessly **lifting** the stones. The church's walls rose quickly, and Cantuña knew the devil would fulfill his part of the deal on time, so he decided to attempt to trick him. Cantuña moved very carefully near to a wall and took out one stone, keeping it under his clothing. As the devil promised, the structure was completed at **nightfall**, so he approached Catuña to take his soul, but surprisingly this didn't happen. Initially, he didn't know why, but then he noticed the stone hidden in Cantuña's clothing. The devil became **enraged** and attempted to get the stone without success, so he was **vanquished** as the sun rose. The monks paied Cantuña after visiting the church to admire it.

Objective: To explore the legend of Cantuña and its significance in Ecuadorian folklore, understanding how it reflects themes of cunning, faith, and cultural identity.

Before reading...

What do you know about legends involving deals with the devil? How do they usually end?

Why do you think people create stories to explain how historical buildings or landmarks were made?

What might someone risk to achieve their goals when faced with an impossible challenge?

How would you feel if you had to complete a task that seemed impossible?

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Post Reading Activity

Activity: ***"Cantuña's Dilemma"***

Instructions:

Work in small groups.

Choose a role: Cantuña, the devil, or the monks.

Discuss and plan:

- Choose between finding a different solution or accepting the devil's deal if you're Cantuña.
- If you're the devil, plan how to convince Cantuña and avoid being tricked.
- If you're the monks, decide how to react if you discover Cantuña's pact.

Present your plan as a short sketch or dialogue.

Reflect: *What did you learn about Cantuña's choices and the story's moral?*

Complete the sentences with the correct words. (Use the Key Words)

Cantuña was an _____ builder who accepted the challenge of constructing the church.

The devil _____ and offered Cantuña a deal to complete the church in one night.

Cantuña decided to confront his problems _____ and accepted the difficult task.

Due to _____ obstacles, the construction of the church was delayed.

The little devils were _____ the heavy stones as if they were weightless.

By _____, the church was nearly finished, but Cantuña had a trick up his sleeve.

The devil became _____ when he realized Cantuña had outsmarted him.

Number the events of the plot in correct order.

(__) The devil's helpers build the church quickly, but Cantuña removes one stone to trick him.

(__) Cantuña accepts the monks' offer to build the church but faces delays due to unexpected obstacles.

(1) The monks decide to construct a large church in Quito and hire Cantuña for the job.

(__) The devil appears and offers to complete the church in exchange for Cantuña's soul.

(__) The monks pay Cantuña after admiring the completed church.

(__) The devil fails to claim Cantuña's soul because the church is technically incomplete.

- **Write** a paragraph (150 words) answering the following question: What would you have done to prevent the devil from taking your soul?

Key Words

Indigenous

face-to-face

unforeseen

came out of nowhere

lifting

nightfall

enraged

vanquished

What If...?

What if Cantuña had not removed the stone from the wall? How do you think the story would have ended?

How might the monks have reacted if they had discovered Cantuña's deal with the devil?

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The Legend of Guayas and Quil

Spanish conquerors, under the command of Sebastián de Benalcázar arrived at the Ecuadorian coast in the 16th **century** with the intention of defeating the native tribes, including the Huancavilcas. Guayas, a valiant and **honorable** chief, and his wife Quil, a valiant warrior who fought with him, were the leaders of the Huancavilcas tribe. Collectively, they represented their people's might and solidarity. The Huancavilcas put up a valiant fight, but the Spaniards ultimately **prevailed**. After being captured, Guayas and Quil were taken before Benalcázar, who asked that in return for their lives, they confess the location of their tribe's riches. Guayas agreed to guide the Spanish to the fortune, but his real goal was not to submit.

The treasures were presumably hidden on a hill that Guayas and Quil were brought to, which is now known as Santa Ana Hill. Guayas requested a **blade** so that the stone covering the **entryway** could be lifted. Eager to get their reward, the Spaniards gave him the blade. Guayas turned to Quil in a heartbreaking act of rebellion and, heartbroken, took her own life to protect her from **slavery**. Then, preferring death to a life of slavery, he committed suicide. Their people and future generations were inspired by this selfless deed, which turned into a potent symbol of freedom and resistance.



Objective: To learn about the legend of Guayas and Quil, examining its role in shaping the cultural and historical identity of Guayaquil and its people.

Before reading...

What do you know about legends involving love, sacrifice, and resistance? How do they usually end?

Why do you think people create stories to explain the origins of cities?

What might someone risk to protect their freedom and dignity when faced with oppression?

How would you feel if you had to make an impossible choice between freedom and survival?

What qualities do you think make a hero in stories about resistance and bravery?

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Post Reading Activity

Activity: "Guayas and Quil's Choice"

Instructions:

Work in pairs.

Imagine you are Guayas and Quil facing the Spanish conquistadors.

Discuss and decide:

- What would you do in their situation?
- Would you choose sacrifice, fight back, or try to escape?

Create a short dialogue or skit showing your decision and its consequences.

Share your skit with the class and explain why you chose that path.

Number the events of the plot in correct order.

(__) Guayas and Quil are captured by the Spanish conquistadors.

(__) Guayas leads the Spaniards to Santa Ana Hill, claiming treasures are hidden there.

(1) The Spanish conquistadors arrive on the Ecuadorian coast, seeking to conquer the indigenous tribes.

(__) Guayas kills Quil to spare her from enslavement, then takes his own life.

(__) Guayas and Quil resist the Spanish invasion but are eventually overpowered.

(__) The city of Guayaquil is named in honor of Guayas and Quil's bravery.

(__) Guayas asks for a knife to lift the stone covering the treasures but uses it to carry out his plan.

(__) The Huancavilcas, led by Guayas and Quil, fight to protect their land and freedom.

Complete the sentences with the correct words. (Use the Key Words)

The story of Guayas and Quil takes place during the 16th _____, a time of great conflict between indigenous tribes and Spanish conquistadors.

Guayas was known as a brave and _____ leader who fought to protect his people's freedom.

Despite their efforts, the Spanish conquistadors _____ and captured Guayas and Quil.

Rather than face _____, Guayas and Quil chose to die as free people.

- **Imagine** you are Guayas and write short poem to Quil

Key Words

Century

Honorable

Prevailed

Blade

Entryway

Slavery

What If...?

What if Guayas and Quil had chosen to surrender to the Spanish conquistadors?

How might their story have been different?

What if the Spanish had discovered Guayas's plan before he could act?

How do you think the legend would have ended?

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Until when, Father Almeida

Almeida reportedly joined the Franciscan order at the age of 17 because he was **devastated** by the rejection of a young woman. Almeida was a tall, talented, and **charming** man who **retained** his love for women even after he became a monk in the San Diego monastery. One day, Almeida joined his fellow monks in a nighttime adventure. They would leap over the walls of the monastery to go to a "house" for dancing, music, and female pleasure.



Manuel Almeida quickly gained popularity among women and developed a "wine, women, and song" addiction. However, when the authorities discovered of what was happening, they **strengthened** the monastery's walls to keep the monks from **fleeing**. Skillfully, Manuel Almeida found a new way out, which involved jumping down to the square below after climbing to the **chapel** window. He had to climb up a statue of the crucified Christ and stand on its shoulders to accomplish this. Like many other nights of **freedom**, Almeida was going up the statue when it opened its mouth and said, "Until when, Father Almeida?" The young monk replied without hesitation, "Until I return, Lord!"

One early morning, after a night of **indulgence**, Father Almeida encountered a funeral procession. When he asked who had died, a mourner replied, "It's Father Almeida—we're burying him." Shocked, Almeida lifted the shroud and saw his own body. Terrified, he ran back to the **monastery**. As he climbed down the statue of Christ, it asked, "Until when, Father Almeida?" This time, he remained silent.

Manuel Almeida became a devoted monk and almost became a saint, according to the legend, and he never again sneaked out of the monastery.

Objective: To analyze the legend of Father Almeida and its portrayal of themes such as temptation, morality, and the blending of religious and folkloric traditions in Ecuador.

Before reading...

What do you know about legends involving temptation, consequences, and redemption? How do they usually end?

Why do you think people create stories about characters who struggle with their morals or faith?

What might someone risk to pursue their desires, even if it goes against their responsibilities?

How would you feel if you were faced with a choice between following your desires or staying true to your commitments?

What qualities do you think make a character memorable in stories about personal

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Post Reading Activity

Activity: "Padre Almeida's Dilemma"

Instructions:

Work in groups.

Read the story of Padre Almeida and discuss:

- What motivated Almeida to sneak out of the monastery?
- How would you react if you were in his place when the statue spoke to him?
- What lesson do you think Almeida learned from seeing his own funeral?

Create a dialogue:

- Act out the scene where Almeida encounters the funeral procession.
- Show how he changes after this experience.

Share your skit with the class and explain the moral of the story.

Write Sentences Using the Key Words

Example:

The **charming** old bookstore **retained** its cozy atmosphere, offering sense of **freedom** to anyone who wandered in.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

❖ **Write** in your own words (120 words) an alternate ending. **Highlight** the key events and the moral of the story

Key Words

Devastated

Charming

Retained

Strengthened

Fleeing

Chapel

Freedom

Indulgence

Monastery

What If...?

What if the statue of Christ had never spoken to Padre Almeida? How might his life have turned out differently?

What if Padre Almeida had ignored the vision of his own funeral? Would he have continued his escapades, or would something else have changed him?

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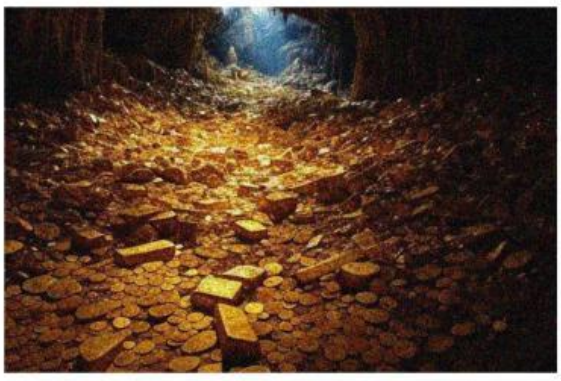
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Legend of the Atahualpa's Treasure

In 1532, after a bloody civil battle with his brother Huascar, Spanish conqueror Francisco Pizarro captured the Inca emperor Atahualpa. Pizarro put Atahualpa in Cajamarca, taking the chance of destroying a **struggling** empire. Atahualpa offered an unprecedented offer: *a room full of gold* in an attempt to gain his freedom. The Inca emperor ordered Rumiñahui, his **trustworthy** commander, to collect the treasures from all around the empire after Pizarro **greedily** accepted. The Spanish betrayal was quick; Pizarro assassinated Atahualpa just because he thought the incoming army would arrange a rescue.

Rumiñahui acted immediately to keep the treasure out of Spanish hands after knowing of Atahualpa's death. He gave the order to hide the treasure deep within the northern Ecuadorian Llanganates Mountains. The **legendary** Inca riches were finally buried in this isolated and dangerous region, which was marked by swamps, thick vegetation, and mist-covered peaks. Despite his inevitable capture and torture, Rumiñahui kept the location of the treasure unknown and carried it with him to his death.

In the search for Atahualpa's treasure, explorers and treasure hunters have faced the hostile Llanganate environment for ages. Expeditions have been dangerous due to the region's rough terrain and harsh **weather**, but the prospect of unthinkable treasure still attracts fortune-seekers today. The legend is still a mystery that sparks people's interest worldwide and an enduring representation of the Incas' resistance to the Spanish conquest.



Objective: To learn about the legend of Atahualpa's treasure, exploring its historical roots and its enduring impact on Ecuadorian culture and imagination.

Before reading...

What do you know about legends involving hidden treasures? Why do you think they are so intriguing?

Why do you think legends often feature secret locations that remain undiscovered for centuries?

What risks would you take to protect something valuable from falling into the wrong hands?

How does the setting of a remote and dangerous mountain range add to the mystery of a story?

What role do you think betrayal plays in shaping the events of legendary tales?

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Post Reading Activity

Activity: "Rumiñahui's Secret"

Instructions:

Work in pairs or small groups.

Reflect on the events of the legend of Atahualpa's treasure and discuss:

- Why did Rumiñahui decide to hide the treasure instead of surrendering it to the Spanish?
- If you were in Rumiñahui's position, what would you have done differently?
- How do you think Rumiñahui's actions impacted Ecuadorian history and culture?

Create or Discuss:

Debate or Reimagine the Ending.

Presentation:

Share your debate points or alternative ending with the class and discuss what this story teaches.

Order the Events of Atahualpa's Treasure

Number the events of the legend in the correct order.

(__) General Rumiñahui is entrusted with gathering the treasure from across the empire.

(__) The legend of Atahualpa's treasure continues to fascinate adventurers and historians.

(__) Atahualpa offers to fill a room with gold as ransom for his freedom.

(__) Upon hearing of Atahualpa's death, Rumiñahui hides the treasure in the Llanganates Mountains.

(__) Pizarro suspects Rumiñahui's army plans to rescue Atahualpa and orders the emperor's execution.

(1) Atahualpa is captured by Francisco Pizarro after a civil war with his brother Huascar.

(__) Rumiñahui is captured and tortured by the Spanish but never reveals the treasure's location.

(__) The Llanganates Mountains have become a mysterious and treacherous site for treasure hunters.

- **Imagine and draw** the scene of the capture of Atahualpa. Then **Explain** your draw.

Key Words

Struggling

Trustworthy

Greedily

Legendary

Weather

What If...?

What if Rumiñahui had decided to surrender the treasure to the Spanish? How might the history of Ecuador have changed?

What if Atahualpa had been released after offering the gold? How might the Inca Empire have fared under Spanish rule?

What if the Spanish had never suspected Rumiñahui's plan to rescue Atahualpa? Could the treasure have been safely delivered to Pizarro?

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The Legend of the Veiled Lady



She is an **enigmatic** woman who shows up at night wearing a veil that covers her face and gorgeous, vintage clothes. She frequently approaches foolish folks in desolate locations like dimly lit streets, bridges, or areas close to rivers. She hooks people in with her **melancholy** and captivating appearance, and her voice is kind and seductive as she begs for comfort or companionship.

She leads folks to a faraway place when they agree to stay with her or go for a walk with her. She then lifts her veil to see her authentic face. The appearance of her face can be a terrifying skull in certain situations, or it can be an empty void in others. When someone sees her actual form, the shock is so extreme that they usually faint, lose their mind, or even pass away right away. In numerous **neighborhoods**, the Veiled Lady has become a symbol of warning and fear because of this terrifying experience.

Although the legend's origins are unknown, it is frequently claimed that the Veiled Lady was a **noblewoman** who met a terrible end. While some believe she committed a severe criminal activity, including infidelity or murder, others claim she was fooled by her lover. Now, her spirit is doomed to roam everywhere in search of revenge or redemption.

Objective: To understand the legend of the Veiled Lady, examining its themes of mystery, love, and tragedy, and its place in Ecuadorian folklore.

Before reading...

What do you know about legends involving ghosts or spirits? Why do you think they are so captivating across cultures?

Why do you think many legends feature tragic figures who are doomed to wander the earth?

How do you think the setting of a story—like a dark, lonely street or a misty riverbank—affects its mood and mystery?

What emotions do you think a veiled or hidden figure evokes in people, and why?

Have you ever heard a local ghost story or legend? What made it memorable?

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Post Reading Activity

Activity: "The Mystery of the Veil"

Instructions:

Work in pairs or small groups. Reflect on the events of the legend and discuss the following questions:

- Why do you think the Veiled Lady continues to haunt the living instead of finding peace?
- If you encountered the Veiled Lady, how would you respond to her request for help?
- How does the legend reflect the cultural values or fears of the society that created it?

Create:

- Write a Diary Entry: Imagine you are someone who encountered the Veiled Lady and survive the encounter.
- Create a Visual Representation: Draw or design a scene from the legend, such as the moment the Veiled Lady reveals her face.

Presentation:

Share with the class and explain the choices you made and how they connect to the original legend. Discuss what this story teaches about.

Read again and then answer the following questions

Describe the Veiled Lady's appearance and behavior. *What details make her seem mysterious or frightening?*

_____

_____

Why do you think the Veiled Lady approaches people at night? *What might she be seeking?*

_____

_____

What happens when the Veiled Lady reveals her face? *Why do you think this moment is so shocking?*

_____

_____

What do you think caused the Veiled Lady to become a ghost? *What clues in the story suggest her backstory?*

_____

_____

- **Act out** with your classmates the legend of the Mystery of the Veil.

Key Words

Enigmatic

Melancholy

Neighborhoods

Noblewoman

What If...?

What if someone showed her kindness instead of fear when she revealed her face?

What if Veiled Lady's curse could only be broken by someone who truly understood her pain?

What if Veiled Lady was not a ghost but a living woman with a mysterious secret?

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