

Hispanic Heritage Essay Contest

Hispanic Heritage and its Importance

Written by Barbara Arce

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I, myself, am not of Hispanic heritage, however, my children are. I have attempted to instill the importance of understanding and celebrating their Hispanic side since birth. While teaching my children about their Hispanic side, I have grown to love the culture and customs of the Mexican people. The different dialects of Spanish, according to not just country but regions, are absolutely beautiful.

I feel that by teaching my children about their Hispanic heritage I am not only helping them accept and embrace their identity, but it allows for them to understand traditions and participate in them with their Hispanic family members. My children are not Catholics, but they understand the importance of the Catholic religion in so many of their family's traditions. They understand what Ash Wednesday and Lent are and why these days are so important for their family. This has taught them to accept other people's religions and viewpoints unbiasedly.

All of my children are bilingual to a point. The smaller children struggle, but that is due to age. It is important that they be able to speak Spanish, as well as English since they are Mexican American. If I were to only teach them English, I would not only be robbing them of who they are, but I would be doing them a great injustice by not helping to provide them with future career opportunities. What does speaking Spanish have to do with a career? Being bilingual will help them when they progress into the workforce since it is a very desired attribute in lots of employment opportunities, especially in highly Hispanic populated areas.

My children knowing their Hispanic heritage allows them to connect with other people of Hispanic Heritage, bringing a much needed unity. My children look as Caucasian as I do, but they are Hispanic at heart and have proven it time and time again. I love the fact that they can communicate with their grandparents, and appreciate the different customs that observe that my side of the family is unfamiliar with. When my daughter's classmate asked about the purse that

she had, my daughter was proud to say that her Abuela had made it for her and brought it all the way from Mexico just for her.

Hispanic heritage isn't about where you are from. You can be born in Mexico, Puerto Rico, or even the United States. What brings the Hispanic community together is the language, the music, the traditions, and the ever-binding love and support of the people that are tied to your heritage. I may not be Hispanic, but my love for the culture is ingrained in my soul.