

¿Dónde se habla español?

Tap Background Knowledge

Before reading, ask students to share what they think of when they hear of Costa Rica. What have they heard about this country? Have any of them visited Costa Rica or know anyone who has? What do they think the name means?

Build Vocabulary

Discuss the meaning of the following words: **situado** (*situated*), **se pone** (*turns*), **lugares** (*places*), **impresionante** (*impressive*), **protegidos** (*protected*), **sendas** (*trails*), **picaflores** (*hummingbirds*), and **orquídeas** (*orchids*). Point out that **picaflores** is a compound word. Encourage students to identify the meaning of the two separate words **pica** (*peck*) and **flores** (*flowers*).

Presentation Suggestions

- Have students observe a map of Central America and identify Costa Rica. Have them note its neighboring countries (Nicaragua and Panama) and its two distinct coastlines (Pacific and Caribbean coasts).
- Costa Ricans often greet each other and visitors by saying **¡Pura vida!** which literally means *Pure life!* Encourage students to adopt this greeting—a celebration of life, good health, and happiness.
- **Tico** is the national nickname of Costa Ricans. It comes from the habit of forming diminutives with the ending **-tico**.
- **La carreta tica** is one of Costa Rica's distinctive symbols. It is a handpainted oxcart decorated with flowers and geometric designs. Students may enjoy drawing and coloring their own symbols to display in the classroom.

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Costa Rica

When you think of nature and conservation, think of Costa Rica. This small Central American country has many nature preserves where you can hike and see protected animals and plants. About 27 percent of the country is set aside to protect nature in one form or another. Costa Rica

has the largest number of the magnificent **quetzal** bird of any country, as well as many other species of birds, mammals, reptiles, and insects. You can also find beautiful beaches, volcanoes, hot springs, and mountains to climb. White-water rafting is popular, too. This is the perfect place for nature lovers.

Datos
Capital: San José
Ciudades importantes: Cartago, Puerto Limón, Puntarenas, Alajuela
Idiomas: Español y lenguas indígenas
Moneda: El colón
Población: 3.9 millones



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Toward Cultural Understanding

- Costa Rica has been a democracy since the 1800s and is known as a very peaceful nation. In 1949, Costa Rica abolished its army. Since then, the money that would have been budgeted for defense has been used for schools and health services. Some people call it the Switzerland of the Americas because of its peaceful reputation.
- There are about 1,200 varieties of **orquídeas** in Costa Rica, more than in any other Central American country.

¿Donde se habla español? is an almanac section that provides interesting information about a particular Spanish-speaking region of the world. Explicit strategies accompany readings in Spanish and English.



¡Léelo en español!

El volcán Arenal y la Reserva Monteverde El volcán Arenal está situado¹ en el centro de Costa Rica cerca del pueblo La Fortuna. Es un volcán activo y puedes ver las erupciones. Por la noche, el cielo se pone² anaranjado con sus fuegos. La lava sale del volcán y el volcán echa piedras del centro al aire afuera. No puedes subir el volcán, pero hay lugares³ donde puedes caminar para verlo mejor.

La Reserva Biológica Monteverde es otro lugar impresionante⁴ en Costa Rica. Es una de las muchas reservas, que son parques especiales donde las plantas y los animales están protegidos⁵. Hay muchas sendas⁶ donde puedes caminar. Allí ves muchos pájaros y con suerte puedes ver el magnífico quetzal. También puedes ver mariposas, serpientes, picaflores⁷ y jardines de orquídeas⁸. Es un paraíso natural.

¹ situated ² turns ³ places ⁴ impressive
⁵ protected ⁶ trails ⁷ hummingbirds ⁸ orchids

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Reading Strategy

Using Visuals Look carefully at the pictures. What do you see in them? What do you know about volcanoes? What do you know about nature preserves? Use this information to help you understand the reading.

Recognizing Cognates What do you think these words mean: **volcán, erupciones, lava, paraíso**? Use these cognates to help you understand what is being said about Costa Rica.

¡Comprendo!

Answer in English.

1. What are three things you learned about the country of Costa Rica?
2. Describe Monteverde. Would you like to hike there? What would you expect to see?
3. Describe the live volcano Arenal. Would you like to see it? Why?
4. List ten things you might be able to see in Costa Rica.

Compare and Contrast

Ask students to compare and contrast the natural resources of Costa Rica with those of the United States. Are there any points of interest in the United States as well for nature lovers? Have students name them.

Cooperative Learning

Divide the class into groups and have each group select a specific topic about Costa Rica to research, using classroom or library resources or the Internet. Have groups report back to the class. Topics might include flora, fauna, population, geography, climate, natural hazards, or any other they might suggest. Make sure topics are not repeated.

Differentiated Instruction

The Heritage Speaker Ask heritage speakers to read aloud the ¡Léelo en español! section. Different volunteers might take turns reading the sentences.

Workbook

Have students complete **Workbook** pages 59 and 61—62 as a culminating activity.

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Teacher Resource Book

A map of Costa Rica can be found in the map section of the **Teacher Resource Book** (Master 148) and in the Culture Resource Book (Master 31).

ANSWERS

¡Comprendo!

Answers will vary, but should include information presented in the text, as well as student preferences.

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