

# InsideART

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**Title**

An introduction to Karlo Andrei Ibarra: The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico

**Estimated Time for Completion of Lesson**

2 class periods plus time for project

**Concept/Main Idea of Lesson**

This lesson is an introduction to the work of Puerto Rican artist Karlo Andrei Ibarra and the geography, history, and complexities of the commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

**Intended Grade Levels**

Grades 9-12

**Infusion/Subject Areas**

Visual Arts  
Social Studies

**Curriculum Standards****Next Generation Sunshine State Standards**

- Visual Arts:

VA.912.C.1.4: Apply art knowledge and contextual information to analyze how content and ideas are used in works of art.

VA.912.C.3.1: Use descriptive terms and varied approaches in art analysis to explain the meaning or purpose of an artwork.

VA.912.C.3.3: Examine relationships among social, historical, literary, and/or other references to explain how they are assimilated into artworks.

- Social Studies:

SS.912.G.2.1: Identify the physical characteristics and the human characteristics that define and differentiate regions.

SS.912.C.2.1: Evaluate the constitutional provisions establishing citizenship, and assess the criteria among citizens by birth, naturalized citizens, and non-citizens.

SS.912.W.6.4: Describe the 19th and early 20th century social and political reforms and reform movements and their effects in Africa, Asia, Europe, the United States, the Caribbean, and Latin America.

National Standards for Arts Education

Anchor Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

National Council for the Social Studies

Culture

Time, Continuity, and Change

People, Places, and Environments

Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

Power, Authority, and Governance

Global Connections

Civic Ideals and Practices

Instructional Objective

The student will:

- Explore the geography (physical and human characteristics) and history of Puerto Rico;
- Reflect on Puerto Rico's relationship to the US as a commonwealth of the US;
- Discuss the complexities surrounding statehood for Puerto Rico;
- View and analyze selected works by Karlo Andrei Ibarra;
- Describe the correlation between individual vs national identity;
- Create an artistic medium representing his/her/their stance on statehood for Puerto Rico.

Day 1Learning Activities Sequence**Pre-Active Teaching**

Review the information provided in the "Notes View" of the PowerPoint and then view the PPT in "slide show" mode to become acquainted with the lesson.

Activate PPT before class and display slide 1.

**Attention-Getter: Stand & Share**

At the beginning of class, advance to slide 2. Ask students to engage in a Stand and Share activity based on the following question:

- What do you know about Puerto Rico?

Process for Stand and Share: Based on the question, each student is to write down all that comes to mind. Once done, students are to stand, if able, or raise a hand to signify they are done. One at a time (volunteers) students are to share one thing on their list that addresses the question and then sit down/lower hand. If a student has the same response as the one shared and does not have anything else on the list or all responses are shared, that student can sit or lower hand once the response is shared. This continues until all responses from all students are shared aloud. The teacher (or a peer) writes down all responses on the board so all can see the complete list of responses. Once done, have a student read the list aloud to the class.

Please Note: there may be some fallacies on the list. Depending on the nature of the fallacy, the teacher can address the fallacy now or wait and circle back to it, when appropriate.

Advance to slide 3.

### **Learning Activities**

#### **Puerto Rico: Geography**

Where is Puerto Rico Located?

Ask for a volunteer to locate Puerto Rico using Google Earth. Have the student click on the Google Earth link (first link on the slide or the link here:

<https://earth.google.com/web/@54.09805983,10.44935383,-87508.58735471a,40433632.68223286d,35y,0h,0t,0r>) to attempt to locate Puerto Rico.

Let's Zoom in on Puerto Rico

Then tell students that we will use Google Earth to learn more about Puerto Rico (click on the second link on the slide or the link here:

<https://earth.google.com/web/@18.3407753,-66.63206115,343.25303825a,901343.81046608d,35y,0h,0t,0r/data=CmQaYhJcCiUweDhjMDI5Njl2MWI5MmE3Zjk6MHhmMzM2ZWMyODE4MDQ5YjFhGajg8IKIODJAIRixTwDFpVDAKiHguYDguJvguK3guKPguYzguYLguJXguKPguLTguYLguIEYASAB>).

Click the (-) button in the bottom right corner to zoom out to show Puerto Rico in relation to the surrounding countries etc. Click on the box labeled "Puerto Rico" and advance through the images of Puerto Rico to help prime students on Puerto Rico's physical and cultural geography.

Engage students in a discussion on Puerto Rico's geography and history. Websites to aid the discussion of Puerto Rico's geography are included in the notes section of the PowerPoint presentation and below:

<https://www.livescience.com/60792-puerto-rico-facts.html>  
<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/geography/states/article/puerto-rico>

Have students organize into groups of 4. Pass out a copy of the scholastic article titled, "All About Puerto Rico" (Link to article is on the slide or here:

<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/all-about-puerto-rico/>). In small groups, have student volunteers take turns reading the article aloud to their group.

Advance to slide 4.

Ask a volunteer to read the quote from Ibarra aloud: "It may be considered a non-place—a political experiment, a failed national project, living uncertainty in the imaginary of its inhabitants."

In their groups of four, have students discuss their responses to the following questions:

- What do you think Ibarra is referring to?
- What would lead him to say this?

Advance to slide 5

### **Commonwealth of Puerto Rico**

Pull up the history article, “Why Isn’t Puerto Rico a State?” and have students take turns reading the article aloud. Use the embedded links to explore key aspects of Puerto Rico’s history and relationship to the United States (e.g., Spanish-American War, Foraker Act, Jones-Shafroth Act). Have the class watch the embedded video, “Commonwealth vs. Free Associated State.” End class talking about the complexities surrounding statehood for Puerto Rico and the recent vote for statehood.

## **Day 2**

### **VTS: *Brújula Ciega***

Activate PPT before class and display slide 6.

Using a combined **Visual Thinking Strategies** (Yenawine, 2013) approach. Ask the following questions, probing and prompting as required:

- What’s going on in this picture?
- What do you see that makes you say that?
- What more can we find?

Explain to students that *Brújula Ciega* (which translates to Blind Compass) is a sculptural that shows a compass that is blank and has no surrounding information at all.

Advance to slide 7.

### **About the Artist: Karlo Andrei Ibarra**

Introduce the artist, Karlo Andrei Ibarra (information about the artist can be found on the notes section of the corresponding PowerPoint slide). Ask for a volunteer to read the following quote by the artist aloud:

“I employ a wide variety of media that refer to conceptual art and mass media while addressing issues of social, political, cultural and geographic boundaries. My practice relies on social and political cognitions gathered from personal investigations, which draw correlations between individual and national identities and make larger observations respective to a global community.”

Engage the class in a conversation about ways art can serve to address issues of social, political, cultural, and geographic importance.

Pass out the handout, “Karlo Andrei Ibarra *Brújula Ciega* (2012-2018)” (directly taken from: [http://lionelcruet.com/doc/natalia\\_viera\\_isla\\_imaginaria\\_2018.pdf](http://lionelcruet.com/doc/natalia_viera_isla_imaginaria_2018.pdf)). Have student volunteers take turns reading the handout aloud to the class.

Advance to slide 8.

### ***Mano Brújula***

Have a student volunteer read the quote on the slide aloud, “Thematically, [with these pieces] I try to examine the current situation of Puerto Rico, which, after the hurricane, and before also, has remained like a totally failed project and a country somewhat adrift.”

Explain to students the image on the screen is titled *Mano Brújula* [translation is Compass Hand] which also addresses the social limbo of Puerto Rico.

Explain to the students that the quote by Ibarra elaborates about these pieces in relation to Puerto Rico’s current situation as a commonwealth of the United States.

Ask students, “Why may Ibarra view Puerto Rico as a ‘failed project’ and a ‘country somewhat adrift’?”

Advance to slide 9.

### **Individual & National Identity**

Ask students what the artist may mean by “...draw[ing] correlations between individual and national identities and make larger observations respective to a global community.”

Engage students in a discussion on:

- What can make up one’s individual identity and what can make up a national identity.
- Puerto Rican’s individual vs. national identity and how being a commonwealth of the United States may support/contradict these identities.

Advance to slide 10.

### **Closure: Taking a Stance on Puerto Rico**

Explain that the project for this lesson is to take a stance on the topic of statehood for Puerto Rico. Using their informed opinion, students are to create an artistic piece that reflects their stance.

### **Evaluation**

Ask students to take stance on Puerto Rico Statehood. Reflect their informed opinion using an artistic medium of their choice. Options include, but are not limited to:

- Creating a poem
- Composing a song or piece of music
- Drawing
- Photography
- Recording a video
- Creating a 3-D representation

### **Optional Extension Activities**

- Review the Bill proposed in the US House of Representatives on March 2, 2021 to admit the State of Puerto Rico into the Union:  
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1522/text>
- Assume that the state you live in was no longer a state and is now a commonwealth like Puerto Rico. Would you want to remain independent or become a state again? What are the pros and cons of independence? Statehood? Defend your answer.

### **Materials and Resources**

- Computer
- Projector
- Screen
- PowerPoint presentation: *Karlo Andrei Ibarra*
- Paper, pencils or pens
- Handout: Karlo Andrei Ibarra *Brújula Ciega* (2012-2018)
- Reading: Scholastic's *All About Puerto Rico*

### **Special Learner Accommodations**

- Articles read aloud in class or in small groups
- Translation dictionaries for ELLs
- Visually-rich PPT
- Small group discussions
- Alternative assessment options

### **References**

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