



Level IV-Cultural Component



Bullfighting_____

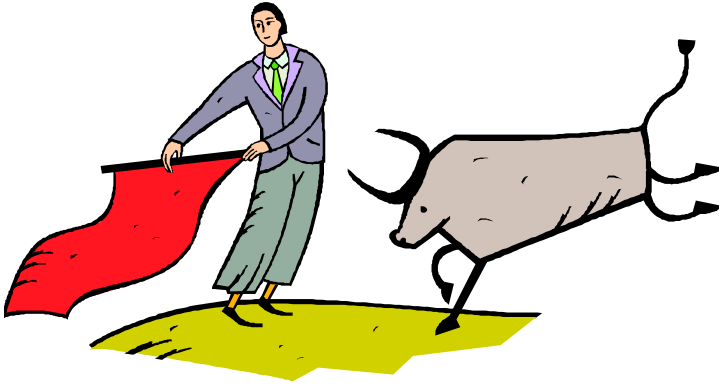
Introduce important vocabulary to your class and then read them the story about bullfighting. If you have time, you can also have them draw a picture of what they think a bullfight looks like.

Follow up the story with the following questions:

- 1.) Do you think it is okay to kill a bull for fun?
- 2.) Why or why not?
- 3.) Would you want to see a bullfight?
- 4.) Do you think there are other countries which also have bullfights?
- 5.) Do you think that the matadors get hurt very often?
- 6.) Bullfighting began in the 18th century-why do you think it has stayed so popular?

Important Vocabulary:

- Toro - bull
- Plaza de toros - bullring
- Corrida - bullfight
- Matador - star bullfighter
- Torero - bullfighter



What is a Bullfight?

Bullfighting is a popular sport and cultural activity, primarily in Spain. There are six bulls and three matadors, or star bullfighters, in each fight. They don't use just any old bull! These are very special ones used only for bullfighting. They weigh anywhere from 1100-1800 lbs. Also, they must have never fought with a man before they enter the bull ring. The bullfighters or toreros are chosen by their age. If a bullfighter is injured, the next most experienced torero will take his place.

There are three twenty minute stages per fight. The corrida (bull fight) starts with a parade where everyone wears costumes from the 17th century. When the trumpet sounds, the first matador and bull enter the ring. At the beginning there are helpers in the bull ring who test the bull's strength using colored capes. This helps the matador see if the bull uses one horn more than the other or if it does not like to fight. Secondly, there are many men on horseback who stick swords into the bull's neck in order to make it mad and weaken its muscles.

When the bull seems weaker, darts with colorful ribbons are placed into the bull's neck. The bullfighter (who is on foot) charges the bull with a wood stick. When the bullfighter sees the bull is even weaker, he will salute the president and ask for permission to kill the bull. Often times the matador will toss his hat. If it lands upside down, it is bad luck! He then passes a red cape forty times over the bull, so that it will come closer to the man. The crowd yells, "Olé" with each pass.

The bullfighter will reach for his sword and stab the bull behind his horns. If the matador has killed the bull, he will clap and the audience will throw flowers and hats to him. They will also wave white handkerchiefs. The matador's trophy is the bull's ear or tail! If the bull, however, puts up a good fight and doesn't die quickly, the audience will also treat the bull with honor. If the matador is unable to kill the bull, the bull is considered to be exceptionally strong and brave and is allowed to return to live on a farm, in peace.