Hiking through the Historical Village of Humåtak

Group Project

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Introduction

The village of Humåtak (Umatac) sits at the southern end of Guam below towering mountains alongside a serene bay known as Humåtak Bay. Humåtak village is home to many historical sites stretching from ancient or pre-contact era through our modern day era. Humåtak village although small in square footage and population, is at the center of Guam’s history with its dedication to the preservation of its treasures to promote Guam’s Chamorro language, culture and traditions for the island children to carry on.

There are seven historical sites that are currently accessible to the public and are managed by the Humåtak Community Foundation. There is Fuha Rock, the site of the creation of Guam; the San Dionisio Church, one of the eldest churches on the island; the Outdoor Library, representing the village pride; the F.Q. Sanchez Elementary School, designed by world renowned architect Richard Neutra; the Forte Santo Angel, Humåtak Bay point lookout; the Forte Nuestro de la Soledad, the Spanish garrison fort protecting the village; and the original San Dionisio Church ruins. Each of these sites can be reached by hiking through terrain ranging from easy to moderate. The residents of Humåtak, old and young, created a group of tour guides called docents. At each site these docents provide rich oral history presentations embracing the pride of Humåtak village and its people.

In addition, Humåtak village also holds the Discovery Day annual presentation just as the earlier residents have established throughout the years---alongside the beautiful dark sandy shores. The ceremony highlights the event that took place when the Spaniards arrived on the Humåtak Bay March 6, 1521.
About this Lesson:

This lesson will provide leisure recreation and exercise for the participants visiting while also exploring the rich history of Humåtak Village. This lesson was written by Jerard A. Lujan, Health Department at George Washington High School, Francisca C. Blanco and Gregorio C. Sablan Chamorro Language & Culture Program (CLCP) Okkodo High School, Guam Department of Education (GDOE).

The seven (7) historical sites are located within the village with tour guides available by the Humåtak Heritage Docents.

Where the Lesson fits into the Curriculum:

This Lesson can be used in American History, Guam History and Chamorro Language & Culture Studies, Social Studies, Geography, Physical Education and recreational clubs/camps of Guam.

Standards:

GDOE Common Core Standards for Social Studies High School (CCSS)

Standard 1: Culture

Students learn about the systems of beliefs, knowledge, values, and traditions of various cultures and how those aspects influence human behavior.

GH.1.1 Analyze patterns for preserving and transmitting culture, including the following:
• Its function as it relates to customs, traditions, beliefs, language, values, and behavior
• Cultural ethnocentrism
• The reasons for and values of diversity and unity

Standard 2: History

Students learn how human beings view themselves in and over time.

GH.2.1 Examine and interpret primary and secondary source documents.
GH.2.2 Use concepts, such as time, chronology, causality, change, conflict, and complexity, to explain connections and patterns of historical change and continuity.
GH.2.3 Identify and describe historical periods and patterns of change during the eras of Guam history, including the following:
• Ancient Chamorro Society
• Spanish Colonization
- U.S. Naval Government
- Japanese Occupation
- Post World War II
- Modern Guam

GH.2.4 Analyze and discuss how historical knowledge leads historians to be selective and subjective in their writings.
GH.2.5 Explain how and why development in Europe contributed to the exploration and settlement of the Marianas.

**Standard 3: Geography**
Students learn to create spatial views and geographic perspectives of the world by studying people, places, and human environment interactions.
GH.3.1 Draw conclusions and make inferences using maps, diagrams, tables, charts, graphs, and spreadsheets.
GH.3.2 Evaluate the uses and conservation of the environment and resources.
GH.3.3 Use ideas, theories, modes of geology and geography to explain the formation of islands, including Guam, and the effects of plate tectonics.

**English Language Arts Standards History/Social Studies for Grades 9-10**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1
Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2
Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.3
Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.5
Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis.

**Objectives:**
1. Application of physical conditioning promoting a healthy lifestyle.
2. Analyze and predict the mental, emotional, and physical aspects of the people pre-contact through modern day.
3. Investigate historical sites and its contribution to Guam’s history.
4. Analyze and apply conservation and preservation techniques in regards to environment.

**Materials for Students:**

1. 2 readings: The first reading is on San Dionisio Church by Omaira Brunal-Perry. The second reading is on Fuha Rock by Lina Taitingfong and Kelly G. Marsh, MA.
2. 2 maps: A aerial map of Guam from GuamPedia an a village site map from the Guam Preservation Trust.
3. 7 photos: San Dionisio Church, Forte Nuestra de la Soledad, Forte Angel, Outdoor Library, Fuha Rock, Ruins of San Dionisio Church, Humatak Village.

**Visiting the Humatak Historical Sites:**

The Humatak historical sites can be accessed through the Humatak Mayor’s Office, the Humatak Foundation, or the Guam Preservation Trust.
Teaching Activities

Getting Started

Inquiry Questions

1. What do the two pictures above have in common?
2. Describe the details seen in each of the pictures.
3. Do the photos give clues as to what era they are from?

(Courtesy of Joe Quinata, Humatak Foundation)
Setting the Stage

There are three time periods in Guam’s history that were very influential to the land, culture and language that we all experience today. Those periods are the Pre-Contact era, the Spanish era, and the American era.

Pre-Contact era:

Ancient Guam or Pre-Contact Guam is believed to have been around since 2000 BC. The ancient Chamorro people were separated by classes: the Matao or upper class, the Achaot or middle class and the mana’chang or lower class. It is believed that the Chamorros were rich in religion and medicinal practices. Ancient artifacts and traditions passed down through the centuries also suggest that the Chamorro people were also seafarers and hunters.

Ancient stories, beliefs and traditions are still evident in the modern culture of the people of Guam. The stories of the taotamona or ancient spirits are still told and people still consult the local doctors called suruhâna or suruhânu.

Spanish era:

Ferdinand Magellan, a Portuguese sailor sailing under the King of Spain made Spain’s first landing on Guam in the year 1521. The island was not colonized by Spain until the year 1668 when Jesuit priests arrived on the island to spread Christianity and trade. Soon after, Christianity was established and the church became the focal point of the island activities and a regular port of call by the Spanish Galleons. From the colonization of Spain, Guam and its Chamorro people inherited the Spanish culture, language, foods and surnames.

American era:

The American era began in 1898 during the Spanish-American war. The United States acquired the island through the Treaty of Paris and Spain ceded the island of Guam to the United States. The Island of Guam was under military governance until 1950. Guam became the hub to the Philippines where telegraph lines and shipping routes traveled through from the United States.

During WWII, Japan invaded Guam in 1941 and occupied the island until 1944 when the United States regained the Island. Many of the island villages were destroyed on the west and northern side, most of the southern villages were untouched during the war.
Soon after the war, Guam was reconstructed and became a strategic operation base for the United States. The island still remains the United States hub to the pacific for both shipping and support to the military.

Locating the Site

A map of Guam showing where Humatak is located on the island of Guam.

Question for Map 1:

1. What do you see in this map in concerns to topography?
2. What directional orientation is Humatak on the island of Guam?
Locating the site

This map is a screen shot from the Humåtak Village pamphlet courtesy of the Guam Preservation Trust, Mr. Joe Quinata.

Questions for Map 2:

1. What do you think could be the reason why all these sites are in one village?
2. How do you think the villagers were able to preserve all these sites?
Visual Evidence

Fort Nuestra Señora de la Soledad.

Fort Nuestra Señora de la Soledad was one of the last Spanish Forts constructed in the 19th Century in support of the Spanish Galleon trade. Sitting on the cliff just to the South of Humátak, Fort Soledad has a commanding view of the Bay and all Ocean approaches. The Fort was restored in 1995 and today the canon of Fort Soledad still point out over the Pacific Ocean and Humátak Bay where Magellan landed in 1521 to make the first contact between Guam and the West.

Questions for Site 1

1. Why do you think the Spanish would put a forte overlooking the Humátak Bay and village?
2. Do you think the Chamorro people had the skill to construct fortes like this?
3. Where do think the Spanish got the material to build these types of structures?
Visual Evidence

Fort Santo Angel

Fort Santo Angel was one of four Spanish forts in the Humåtak area and the oldest still in existence. Perched on a rock on the Northwest tip of Umatak Bay, Fort Santo Angel served more as a watchtower than an armed fortification. Today only some of the walls remain. A third and smaller lookout, San Jose, was constructed closer to the water’s edge on the Northern tip of Humåtak as Fort Santo Angel started to deteriorate near the end of the Galleon era. By the 1850's, both forts were in ruins.

Questions for Site 2

1. Why would the Spanish build two forts for the same bay?
2. Being the lower of the two forts, what could have been the reason for this look-out?
3. Why do you think this look-out was built so close to the ocean?
Determining the Facts
Reading 1: San Dionisio Church

Construction of the first San Dionisio Catholic Church in Umatac began on November 12, 1680. On that same day a strong typhoon struck the island. The typhoon hit the southern part of the island producing a storm surge, which caused severe flooding to the islet where Don Joseph de Quiroga and the militia had been cutting wood to build the church of San Dionisio el Areopagita of Umatac.

The Jesuits reported that if (Quiroga and the militia) had remained in the area two hours longer they would all have been swept into the sea. The prolonged force of the wind and the furious beating of the waves washed away a portion of the islet and carried off all the logs the men had cut to build the church.

After the typhoon, residents built new houses in Umatac rather than repair their old homes, as the destruction was so great. Construction of the new church continued and was finished on February 15, 1681.

The early church buildings were of wood with a palm-thatch roof. In the year 1769 the wooden structure was replaced by a stone building using masonry techniques, but it still had a palm-thatch roof. This building crumbled in the earthquake of 1779, was then rebuilt and destroyed again by an earthquake in 1849, reconstructed and crumbled again by an earthquake in 1862. The last reconstruction lasted until the earthquake of 1902. After this the original church building was never rebuilt. Today only the ruins, partially covered with vegetation, remain as one of the legacies of the Spanish era on Guam.

The old San Dionisio is located on lot No. 163, which was formerly a property of the Roman Catholic Church, but it was acquired by the Naval Government of Guam on November 15, 1933. This transaction was recorded in Volume 2 of Certificate of Title No. 681 page 557, Department of Land Management. In 1950 this property was transferred to the Government of Guam, as mandated by the Organic Act of Guam.

The current San Dionisio Catholic Church building in Umatac was constructed by the Spanish Capuchins between 1937 and 1939, under Fr. Bernabe de Cáseda, who was also responsible for the building of San Jose Church in Inarajan.

The San Dionisio church structure was completed and dedicated in 1939. It is regarded as an example of pre-war church architecture, and is a registered landmark of historical sites. The latest restoration of San Dionisio Church was funded by the Guam Preservation Trust and dedicated on 11 February 2001.
Named for the first bishop of Athens
The first name that was given to the church in 1681 was in honor of San Dionisio el Aeropagita. St. Dionysius the Aeropagite was converted to Christianity by St. Paul in his speech at the Aeropagus in Athens (Acts 17:34). He became the first Bishop of Athens. A later legend has confused him with the holy martyr of Gaul (France), Dionysius who was the first bishop of Paris.
Ernest J. Burrus, S.J., an historian, says that “San Dionisio el Aeropagita” was the preferred saint of the Duchess of Aveyro y Maqueda who was a generous supporter of the Jesuit missions, especially the Mission of the Mariana Islands. Francisco Garcia, S.J. dedicated his book The Life and Martyrdom of the Venerable Father Diego Luis de San Vitores (Spanish edition 1683), to the Duchess of Aveyro. Garcia praised the Duchess’s spiritual and economic support for the Jesuit missions.
February 15, 2011 marked 330 years since the construction and dedication of this Catholic church in Umatac. Though the structure has been built and rebuilt many times, one thing remains certain – the devotion to San Dionisio that people of this parish have embraced. Every year residents of Umatac celebrate his feast on October 8.

By Omaira Brunal-Perry

Reading 1 is from Guam Pedia last revised July 3, 2014

1. Who built the first church and what happened in the process of gathering materials to build the church?
2. How many times was the church rebuilt and why?
3. Who was responsible for building the church in its current location and when was it built?
Determining the Facts
Reading 2: Fuha Rock

Fuha Bay, located just north of Umatac on Guam's southern west coast at the mouth of Fua River, holds thousands of years of meaningful history. It is one of many sites Chamorros believe to be spiritually powerful. The bay and river are also referred to as Fua, Fu’a, Fuha or Fuja. Some have also called it Fu’una (Funa, Fuña, Fuuna, Fu’una or Fuuña). Fouha/Fu’a may be a derivative of Fu’una. Guam Chamorros traditionally consider Laso Fu’a, or Lasu Fua, the rock pillar that juts out of the ocean reaching toward the sky in Fouha Bay, the cradle of creation for the people of the Mariana Islands, and in some accounts, for all of humankind. Laso’ Fu’a, the remains of Fu’una in the creation story of Puntan and Fu’una, is considered one of the most important Chamorro oral traditions. It provides an explanation for how the Chamorro people came to be, while providing moral and societal messages as well, such as the importance of family working together. Chamorros in the Northern Mariana Islands have their own creation points, though the creation story is the same. There are well-known outlines of a man and a woman in the Saipan landscape, for example, which is interpreted as Puntan and Fu’una as well. Rota was also documented to have a town of Fua. Archaeological artifacts that line the bay are signs of a vibrant ancient Chamorro presence and usage of the area, including some of the earliest examples of ancient Chamorro pottery. These reminders of the lives and times of ancient Chamorros are especially concentrated north of Fua River which flows into the bay. Given the area’s prime coastal location and rich resources, such as fresh water, marine resources, and coconuts and pandanus, it is easy to envision the lives and activities of the ancient Chamorro that were once there. Modern Chamorros speak of feeling the presence of ancient Chamorros and the area’s spiritual significance while at Fuha Bay. Ancient Chamorros set aside a time each year to gather and pay homage to their creators and creation point, as documented in early Spanish accounts. There is some disagreement as to whether one or two such respected places existed. Some now interpret known information to mean that there were two separate places—one ‘female’ and one ‘male’—that were respected and paid tribute to in ancient Chamorro times. There are also others who interpret Laso
Fu’a as actually Fu’una near Agat. Though the location of Fu’a has been contested by a few recent academics, Chamorros follow the oral traditions nested within their cultural system.

Early European maps and documents from the 1600s and 1700s, note that a rock/isle/islet and a town (village) of Fuuña existed near Agat. Some of these early accounts state that Fu’una was “looked upon…with a sacred dread, as the birth-place of the human race.”

This so-called “pagan” activity was stomped out by the Spanish missionaries in the 1600s. The missionaries destroyed places considered spiritually significant to ancient Chamorros and at times constructed their own missions on those sites to demonstrate the power of Christianity and the Catholic Church, as they documented doing to the respected place of Fu’una.

These types of efforts of the Spanish had some success but never fully erased the Chamorro belief in and respect of their spiritually powerful places or their belief in the presence and power of their taotaomo’na or ancestral spirits who protect and watch over the people and the land.

There are many examples where Chamorros intermingled the introduced Catholic faith with their ancestral beliefs and practices. Some Chamorros tell of ancient traditions that have continued into modern times, such as the 1954s account by Bill Lujan that noted when ‘people make the pilgrimage to Umatac on San Dionicio Day, in honor of the patron saint of the village, they usually include (a stop at) Laso Fu’a in their itinerary’.

Not only does Fuha Bay have ancestral significance to the Chamorro people, but it is also part of the area according to oral tradition where ancient Chamorros first had contact with the Spanish colonizers, an encounter that is re-enacted and commemorated each March in Umatac on Discovery Day. The southern village was a relatively busy and important port for receiving foreign vessels from the time of early Chamorro-Spanish contact through much of the Spanish rule over the Mariana Islands.

Fouha Bay was a part of the road system that linked the people and goods that came in through Umatac to Hagåtña. The early Spanish San Jose Church and the Battery of San Jose are associated with Fuha Bay as well. Chamorros have begun to venture once again to Fuha Bay to pay homage to Laso Fu’a. In one recent example the sound of conch shells being blown and chants filled the air when the Hawai’ian deep sea voyaging canoe, the Makali‘i passed through the Mariana Islands in 2001. A respected Chamorro chanted, recognizing that “the rock in front of us is the birthplace of all people," at the welcoming ceremony.
People left offerings such as katupat, a diamond shaped woven coconut packet of cooked rice, while paying homage there and asking for permission to enter Guam. Lasso Fu’a is growing as a symbol of a returning to and a respecting, validating, and revitalizing of ancient Chamorro and their belief system and cultural practices.

By Lina Taitingfong and Kelly G. Marsh, MA

**Reading is from Guampedia last revised July 6, 2014**

1. What was the Fuha Rock considered to be in ancient Chamorro beliefs?
2. If you were a native during the Spanish era, how would feel about strangers that destroyed a part of your religious belief?
3. How did the Chamorros embed ancient beliefs within Christianity?
Visual Evidence

(Courtesy of Joe Quinata, Guam Preservation Trust)

The Humatak Outdoor Library constructed by F.Q. Sanchez in 1933 as a place for the villagers to share and check-out books. The books were not limited to athletic accomplishments, general announcements, village information and town meetings.
Fuha Rock, the site where Ancient Chamorros believed where the creation of life began.
Ruins of the original San Dionisio Church

Putting it all Together

Activity 1: Making Posters

Have students design a poster choosing a Humatak historical site. On that poster they should have:

1. The name of the historical site
2. A brief history of the site
3. And at least three things that could be done to preserve that site for future students to see and learn.
4. An oral presentation of the poster.

Points or credit can be given for color, description accuracy, art and creativity.

Activity 2: 3 min. Skit

Have students arranged in groups of 4 to 5 people and have each group choose an event within the history of a Humatak historical site to portray. Every member must have a part within the skit.

Points or credit can be given for creativity, humor and length of the skit.

Activity 3: Scavenger Trek

Field Trip: Have students hike through the actual sites to match, find or confirm important aspects from the historical sites. Not to limit type of structure, material
make up, and concrete evidence making that site historical. Have students prepare a short write up on their findings.

**Activity 4: Hike Rating and Mapping**

Field Trip: Have students measure distance, time and degree between each of the Humatak historical sites. Distance can be measured in feet, meters, miles or kilometers. Time can be gauged by minutes, hours or days. Degree can be judged as easy, moderate, hard or extreme. Proper preparation and Hydration must be done before activity. Have students prepare a poster of the hike or trail containing the data they have collected.

Points or credits can be given for presentation of the map.

**Supplementary Resources**

GuamPedia Foundation, Inc.: Website: [www.guampedia.com](http://www.guampedia.com)

Guam Preservation Trust: Website: [www.guampreservationtrust.org](http://www.guampreservationtrust.org)

Guam Humanities Council: Website: [www.guamhumanitiescouncil.org](http://www.guamhumanitiescouncil.org)

Humatak Community Foundation: Email: humatak.community@gmail.com

MARC, University of Guam: Website: [www.marc.uog.edu](http://www.marc.uog.edu)