COLOR ME IN!

Puerto Rico is an island located in the Caribbean Sea. Its landscape includes mountains, waterfalls, and tropical rain forests. The capital of Puerto Rico is San Juan which is also its largest city. The two official languages of Puerto Rico are Spanish and English.

ABOUT

Los Bomberos De la Calle is a Puerto Rican Bomba and Plena group from North Philadelphia. They have grown into a family who spreads the knowledge and cultural music of Puerto Rico through educational performances at community events, schools, and workshops. They focus on interactive history lessons of Bomba & Plena as well as class engagement through understanding of the percussion, dance and song for all youth and families. The aim of their performances is to provide a greater understanding of the history and culture of Puerto Rico.

WHERE IS PUERTO RICO?

Puerto Rico is an island located in the Caribbean Sea. Its landscape includes mountains, waterfalls, and tropical rain forests. The capital of Puerto Rico is San Juan which is also its largest city. The two official languages of Puerto Rico are Spanish and English.
Some of the instruments used in traditional Puerto Rican music are the güicharo, or guiro, a notched hollowed-out gourd, which was adapted from pre-Columbian days. At least four different instruments were adapted from the six-string Spanish classical guitar: the requinto, the bordonua, the cuatro, a guitar-like instrument with 10 strings (arranged in five different pairs), and the triple, each of which produces a unique tone and pitch. The cuatro’s graceful body has been revered for decades as the national instrument of Puerto Rico.

Also prevalent are percussion instruments such as tambours (hallowed tree trunks covered with stretched-out animal skin), maracas (gourds filled with pebbles or dried beans and mounted on handles), and a variety of drums. All these instruments contribute to the rich variety of folk music with roots in the cultural melting pot of the island’s Spanish, African, and Taíno traditions.

The cuatro (shown above) is the national instrument of Puerto Rico. The modern cuatro has 10 strings (5 sets of double strings) and sounds like a cross between mandolin and a guitar. The word “cuatro” means “four” in Spanish and comes from the fact that the original instrument (cuatro antiguo) had only four strings. The cuatro is often played by people who live in the countryside of Puerto Rico and is a special part of Christmas festivities when aguinaldos (Puerto Rican Christmas songs) are sung from house to house.

**INSTRUMENTATION**

**THE PUERTO RICAN CUATRO**

The cuatro is a guitar-like instrument with 10 strings (5 sets of double strings) and sounds like a cross between mandolin and a guitar. The word “cuatro” means “four” in Spanish and comes from the fact that the original instrument (cuatro antiguo) had only four strings. The cuatro is often played by people who live in the countryside of Puerto Rico and is a special part of Christmas festivities when aguinaldos (Puerto Rican Christmas songs) are sung from house to house.

**UNSCRAMBLE THESE WORDS!**

1. **O C T U A R**
   Hint: A guitar-like instrument with 10 strings

2. **R O A N U O B D**
   Hint: One of two instruments adapted from the six-string Spanish Classical guitar

3. **S C A M A R A**
   Hint: Gourds filled with dry beans

4. **U O I T Q N E R**
   Hint: One of two instruments adapted from the six-string Spanish Classical guitar

5. **B T R A O S U M**
   Hint: Hallowed tree-trunks covered with stretched out animal skin

6. **A R C U G O H**
   Hint: Notched hollowed-out gourd

**TRUE OR FALSE?**

- Puerto Rico is known as the Island of Enchantments: T F
- Tambour is the national instrument of Puerto Rico: T F
- Puerto Rico is an island in the Mediterranean Sea: T F
WORD SCRAMBLE ANSWER KEY

1. O C T U A R - Cuatro
2. R O A N U O B D - Bordonua
3. S C A M A R A - Maracas
4. U O I T Q N E R - Requinto
5. B T R A O S U M - Tambours
6. A R C U G O H - Gucharo

TRUE OR FALSE ANSWER KEY

Puerto Rico is known as the Island of Enchantments  T  F

Tambour is the national instrument of Puerto Rico  T  F

Puerto Rico is an island in the Mediterranean Sea  T  F