

# THE NATIONS AS OUR NEIGHBORS

LESSONS FOR MISSION MINDED KIDS

LESSON 6

ABE MONTANEZ IN EPHRATA



# The Nations As Our Neighbors

## Lesson 6: Abe Montanez in Ephrata, PA

### Goals for Lesson 6:

- Students will be introduced to Jeff and Dawn Martin and Abe and Abby Montanez and understand their work as they minister together to all of their neighbors in Ephrata.
- Students will understand that God's children are all brothers and sisters, and He asks us to serve our neighbors, no matter where in the world they were born.
- Students will be very familiar with Psalm 86:9-10 and be able to recognize and repeat it quickly and easily.

### Verse for "The Nations As Our Neighbors":

"All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, O Lord; they will bring glory to your name. For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God." Psalm 86: 9-10

### Before Class:

- Read through lesson and decide what you will use according to your age group and time allotted.
- Make a copy of the cryptogram for each student, or plan to divide your group into pairs or teams to work on the puzzle together. The answer to the puzzle is our "Neighbors" verse, Psalm 86:9-10.
- Obtain map of the Caribbean Sea from Lesson 2 on Rolando Diaz. Prepare it as a transparency or back it with paper for stability. Also, obtain a map or globe showing the eastern United States. Find the approximate location of Ephrata in eastern PA, and mark it with a star sticker.
- Make copies of the coloring pages you will be using.
- Make preparations to play "Neighbors" game as directed.

## Lesson Plan:

- Begin with prayer.
- Give each student, (or pair or team of students) a copy of the cryptogram puzzle. The words of the puzzle will be our “Nations” verse. Students should fill in words that they remember, using the corresponding numbers to fill in the space under each letter of the alphabet. Numbers and letters that have already been filled in can then be used to give clues to help fill in more words in the puzzle. Five letters will not be used in the words of this verse (j,k,q,x,z) and will have no corresponding number. All other letters of the alphabet should have a number assigned when the words of the verse are correctly written in the blanks. When the students are done, or almost done, have them read aloud what they figured out, helping all students to complete their puzzle.
- Read or tell the story, using the maps to show Pennsylvania, Ephrata and Puerto Rico, discussing as necessary.
- Play “Neighbors” game as directed for as long as time and interest allow.
- Use coloring pages as a class activity, discussing each picture as desired, or pass them out to take home.
- End your class time by saying the verse out loud together, and praying for the two E. C. congregations in Ephrata, PA and Pastor Martin and Pastor Montanez who lead them.

## **Lesson 6 Story: Abe Montanez in Ephrata, PA**

Abe Montanez was the youngest of nine boys. His parents had both been born in Puerto Rico, but had moved to Pennsylvania before Abe was born. **(Show globe or map of eastern U.S. Point out Puerto Rico in the Caribbean, and then point out Pennsylvania.)** When Abe was very young, his father died. Left with nine sons to raise, Abe's mother took her family back to Puerto Rico for several years. **(Show the Caribbean map and take a closer look at where Puerto Rico is. Ask them if they recognize another island country next door to Puerto Rico. Discuss the pastors you have already "met" who grew up in Dominican Republic, and talk about the similarities of all of these pastors growing up on Caribbean islands.)** Abe and his brothers and mother had to work hard to help the family to survive without their father. Abe went to school, and then helped his mother around the house, learning how to clean and cook and do laundry for the family. After some time, Abe's mother moved back to Pennsylvania, and Abe was able to graduate from high school there. At home, the family spoke Spanish, but Abe also learned to speak English very well at school. Although his parents had been Christians, and took all of the boys to church, Abe and his brothers never really had a friendship with Jesus Christ. It was not until he was 21 that Abe finally realized that he needed Jesus as his Savior.

When Abe was 15, he met a girl named Abby at his high school in Pennsylvania. Abby's parents had also been born in Puerto Rico, but spoke English as well as Spanish at home with their six children. It was Abby's grandparents who took them to church and taught her to recite the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. Although her grandparents moved away, and her parents separated, Abby remembered the peace and love she had felt at her grandparent's house, and always recited the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm before going to sleep at night. After high school, Abe and Abby married and soon, through a local pastor, both of them received the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Together, they attended the Ebenezer

Bible Institute in Pennsylvania, and felt God calling them into a full-time ministry to Spanish speaking people. Abe and Abby now have four boys of their own, and are raising them with the peace and love of Jesus that they both sought after as young people.

One day, Abe walked into Grace E.C. Church in Ephrata, PA. **(Show the map of Pennsylvania again and point out the star indicating Ephrata. You may also want to point out where you live in relation to Ephrata.)** There he met Jeff Martin, who had pastored that church for the past 14 years. That day, Jeff and Abe started a conversation that would result in the building of two congregations within that church, one worshiping God in Spanish, and one worshiping God in English. Pastor Jeff Martin and his wife, Dawn, have four grown children, and Pastor Jeff has attended an E.C. church his whole life. (He grew up at Akron E.C. Church near Ephrata)

God has used Ephrata Grace to reach out to their neighbors and use their church building in ways they could never have dreamed. The Spanish and English congregations share VBS and other children's ministries, as well as inviting each other to shared meals and other church programs and events. Together, they are hoping to use their church building as an overnight winter shelter for the homeless people in the area. God has truly shown them how to love people who are different, and to help their neighbors in many ways.

Please pray for Jeff and Dawn as they lead their English congregation in sharing their building and God's love. Pray also for Abe and Abby as they lead their Spanish congregation. They need leaders in their group who will teach children and lead worship times. Pray that their presence in the community will draw the Spanish speaking people in that area to Christ, and inspire other groups to reach out to their neighbors in similar ways.

# CRYPTOGRAM

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	

4 24 24   
 13 16 20   
 1 4 13 17 25 1 10   
 15 25 14   
 16 4 23 20

26 4 7 20   
 18 17 24 24   
 19 25 26 20   
 4 1 7   
 18 25 22 10 16 17 9

6 20 12 25 22 20   
 15 25 14 ,   
 25   
 24 25 22 7 ;   
 13 16 20 15

18 17 24 24   
 6 22 17 1 5   
 5 24 25 22 15   
 13 25   
 15 25 14 22

1 4 26 20   
 12 25 22   
 15 25 14   
 4 22 20   
 5 22 20 4 13

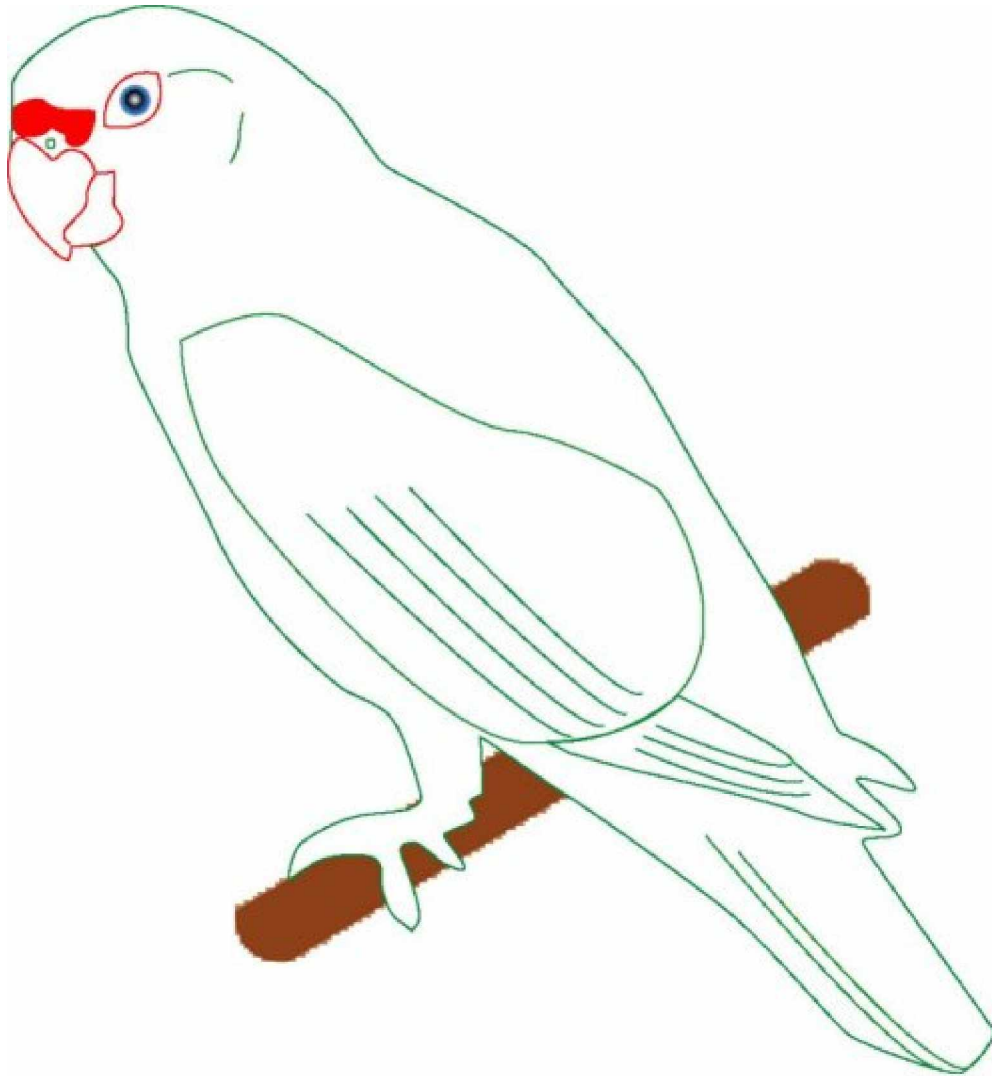
4 1 7   
 7 25   
 26 4 22 23 20 24 25 14 10   
 7 20 20 7 10 ;

15 25 14

4 24 25 1 20

4 22 20

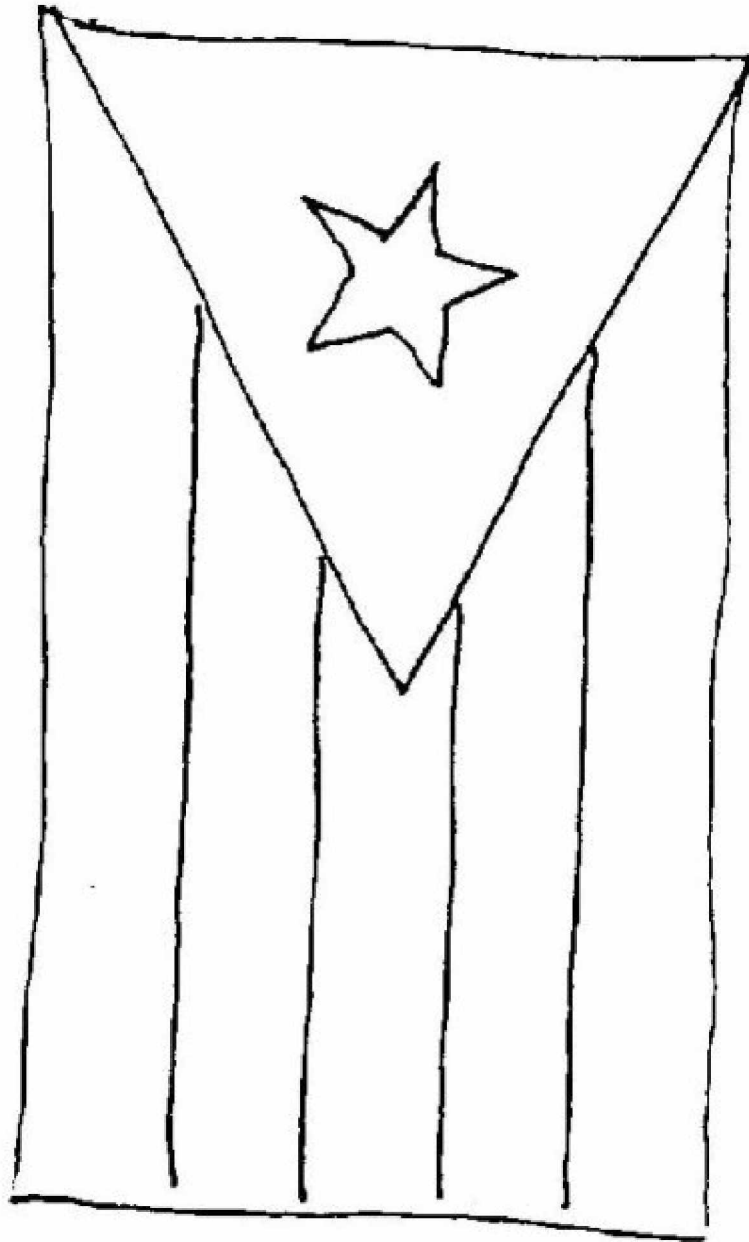
5 25 7



### **The Puerto Rican Parrot**

This small parrot lives in the Luquillo Mountains on the island of Puerto Rico and is an endangered species. The inside tip of the wings is blue. The overall color of the Puerto Rican parrot is green. It has a white ring around

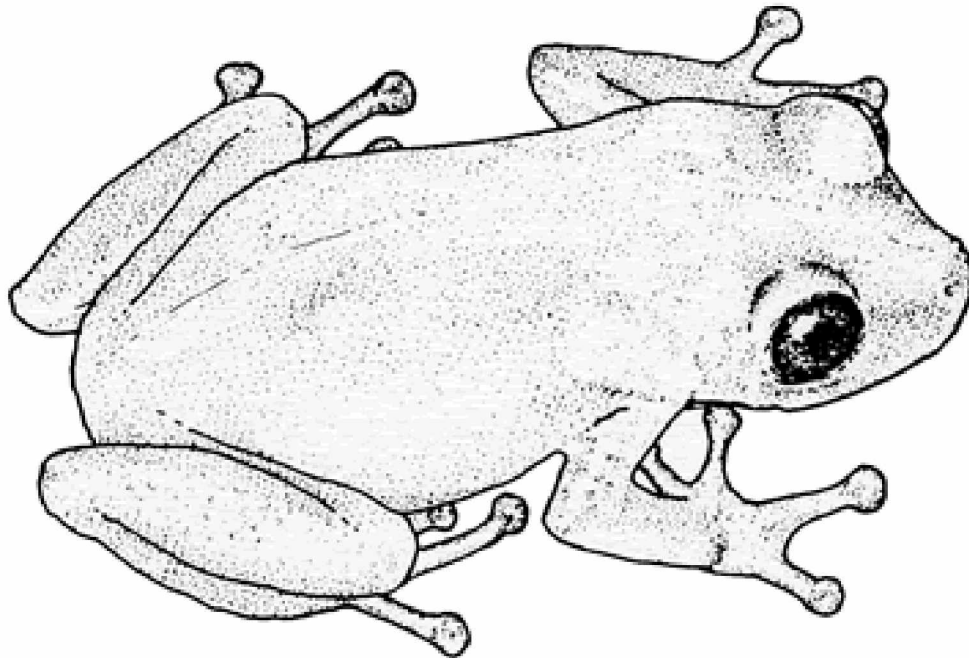
the eyes and a red blaze above its beak. There are only about 50 parrots known to exist today.



**Puerto Rican Flag**

The Puerto Rican flag was designed in 1895. The star is white. The triangle is blue. The stripes are colored from the top down: red, white, red, white, and red.

The coquí is a very tiny tree frog only about one inch long with a high pitched voice. It is only found in Puerto Rico and it is the island's mascot. Some coquíes look green, some brown, and some kind of yellow. Actually they are translucent. The coquíes begin to sing "co-quí, co-quí, co-quí" when the sun goes down and don't stop until the morning when their song changes to "co-quí-quí-quí-quí, co-quí-quí-quí-quí, co-quí-quí-quí-quí." Puerto Ricans love the sound of their beloved coquí.



## **“Neighbors” Game**

**Preparations:** *On a blackboard or a large poster board, draw 24 “stick figure” houses. This will represent a neighborhood. The houses can be different colors and sizes, or all the same, but each should be approximately large enough to encompass one of the answer cards printed on the following page. Attach a small piece of sticky tack or a roll of tape to the center of each house. Make a copy of the answer card sheet and cut the cards apart. Cut out the two “neighbor” figures. You may want to copy them onto cardstock to make them sturdier. You may also want to draw facial features or color them, showing differences in hair color, skin color and clothing. They are meant to be anonymous figures, representing every child in the world. Draw a long line across the bottom of a blackboard, marking 24 short lines across it to indicate steps the neighbors will take toward each other. Position one neighbor figure at each end of the line, holding the figure in place with sticky tack or a tape loop. With each right answer, a figure will move toward his neighbor, advancing one “step” each time.*

**Directions:** *Divide your class into two teams, having them sit in huddles where they can share answers. Assign one of the neighbor figures to each team. Distribute the answer cards randomly to your students, giving one or more to each child on each team. Using the question sheet, ask one question at a time. (The questions have been taken from the first six lessons. If you have not done all of these lessons, you will need to make up other questions, or otherwise adjust the game.) Each team will look at all of the answer cards among themselves, and decide if they have the correct answer to your question. You may want to leave a map or globe of the United States and Caribbean Sea in the room for the children to check their answers to some of the questions. The child who has the correct card will bring it up and attach it to any of the empty houses in the neighborhood. That child will then move the paper neighbor figure one step toward the other figure. As you continue playing, your students will begin to see the neighbor children moving toward each other, eventually meeting in the middle, and each house in the neighborhood will become filled. As the game progresses, stop and discuss what is happening. Remind your students that all of the homes in each of their neighborhoods needs to know of the love of Jesus, and they can step toward the children around them*

*by being kind and friendly, by praying for those they meet, and by sharing the story of Jesus with their neighbors. Playing the game together is a visual picture of Christ's Great Commission, and the part each of us can play in stepping one step closer to each of our neighbors.*

### **Questions for "Neighbors" Game**

1. Dominican Republic shares an island with the country of \_\_\_\_\_. (Haiti)
2. Haiti and Dominican Republic make up the island called \_\_\_\_\_. (Hispaniola)
3. A small island right beside Hispaniola is called \_\_\_\_\_. (Puerto Rico)
4. The people of Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico speak the \_\_\_\_\_ language. (Spanish)
5. The islands of Hispaniola and Puerto Rico are in the \_\_\_\_\_ Sea. (Caribbean)
6. There are 10,000 \_\_\_\_\_ speaking people living in the Lehigh Valley in Eastern Pennsylvania. (Arabic)
7. These people come from an area of the world called the \_\_\_\_\_. (Middle East)
8. The Bible says that, "All the \_\_\_\_\_ you have made will come and worship before you, O Lord." (nations)
9. Some people from other nations might be my \_\_\_\_\_. (neighbors)
10. The Bible says that, "All the nations you have made will come and \_\_\_\_\_ before you, O Lord." (worship)
11. Some of my neighbors might worship God in a different \_\_\_\_\_. (language)
12. Some of my neighbors might worship God with different \_\_\_\_\_. (music)
13. Some of my neighbors might eat different kinds of \_\_\_\_\_. (food)
14. Some of my neighbors might have different hair and skin \_\_\_\_\_. (colors)
15. The Bible says that all of God's people from all of the nations, "will bring \_\_\_\_\_ to your name." (glory)
16. I can bring glory to God's name by \_\_\_\_\_ God in my own language. (praising)
17. I can also bring glory to God's name by being \_\_\_\_\_ to my neighbors. (kind)
18. \_\_\_\_\_ for my neighbors will also bring glory to God's name. (Praying)
19. I can also tell my neighbors about \_\_\_\_\_. (Jesus)
20. My \_\_\_\_\_ determines how I am most comfortable living and worshipping. (culture)
21. What I like to \_\_\_\_\_ is part of my culture. (eat)
22. God made each of the nations \_\_\_\_\_. (different)
23. I can learn about other cultures so that I can show God's \_\_\_\_\_ to people who come from other nations. (love)
24. I can \_\_\_\_\_ my neighbor's life, whether we are from the same culture or a different culture. (touch)



<b>nations</b>	<b>Haiti</b>	<b>Hispaniola</b>
<b>worship</b>	<b>Spanish</b>	<b>Puerto Rico</b>
<b>Arabic</b>	<b>music</b>	<b>Caribbean</b>
<b>food</b>	<b>colors</b>	<b>neighbors</b>
<b>glory</b>	<b>praising</b>	<b>language</b>
<b>kind</b>	<b>praying</b>	<b>Middle East</b>
<b>Jesus</b>	<b>eat</b>	<b>culture</b>
<b>love</b>	<b>touch</b>	<b>different</b>

