SHORTFILE 22 Puerto Rico: the 51st state?

EXPLORE Boricua pride

TB → p. 194 (doc 1) DIFFÉRENCIATION

Puerto Ricans in Philadelphia battle historical inequalities in health services

Ray Collazo looks outside the window, driving past the tightly packed row houses[1] in Fairhill toward Kensington, his old stomping grounds in the area known as North Philadelphia.

When he was 11, his parents moved to Philadelphia for work, as did many other Puerto Rican laborers and families in the 1940s and '50s.

Collazo points to blocks he could never cross, recounting being assaulted by a group of white children the first few weeks in his new neighborhood for crossing North Front Street.

"I could never be over here," he said. "Here" is the other side of North Front Street, where mostly white, Irish families lived. [...]

In the 1970s, rapid gentrification displaced Puerto Ricans from Spring Garden, pushing them into economically disadvantaged neighborhoods. This shift deepened unemployment, poverty, and racial discrimination. [...]

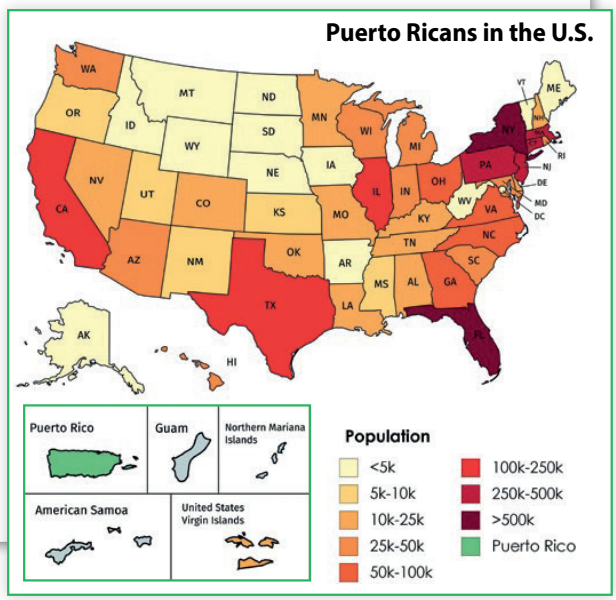
Decades later, Puerto Rican patients exhibit rates of depression higher than white or other Hispanic populations. [...]

Philadelphia-based public-health scholar, Ana Martínez-Donate, attested to this in her research.

"It is not about the person and what they're doing right or wrong. It's about context. It's living in neighborhoods that are more prone[2] to crime. It's being more likely to be unemployed or having to pay a greater proportion of your income on rent, it's not having education opportunities because you are not eligible for certain kinds of financial aid. It's lacking health insurance and not being able to see a health provider[3]. It's not speaking English fluently and not having enough providers in the city that are linguistically and culturally competent to serve the community."

Vicky Diaz-Camacho, *kensingtonvoice.com*, 2025

1. *maison mitoyenne* 2. likely to face 3. medical professional



Center for Puerto Rican Studies, Hunter College, CUNY, 2024

WAY 1

1. a. Observe the map. **Use** space references to indicate where the Puerto Rican diaspora mainly settled: *in the South / West / Northeast ... / on the West coast / inland*.

.....

.....

b. What conclusion can you draw about the Puerto Rican community in the US? **Use** the map and your knowledge of the American territory to tick the correct sentences.

- ❑ It is very unevenly settled.
- ❑ The diaspora is very present on the coast.
- ❑ Puerto Ricans mainly settled in rural areas.

2. Read until l.7 to find information about Ray Collazo and **tick** the information below that is NOT correct.

- ❑ He was born in Philadelphia.
- ❑ His parents were part of the working class.
- ❑ His story is emblematic of the Puerto Rican community.
- ❑ He moved when he was young.
- ❑ He is 11 years old.

3. a. Read the entire text and **focus on** the people involved in the article. **Match** accordingly.

• Ray Collazo •	• researcher •	• speaks from experience
• Ana Martinez-Donate •	• journalist •	• studies the issue
• Vicky Diaz-Camacho •	• Puerto Rican man •	• reports facts and quotes

b. Focus on the difficulties faced by the Puerto Rican community in the U.S.A. **Tick** the elements mentioned in the text.

❑ housing	❑ access to healthcare	❑ discrimination	❑ language barrier
❑ poverty	❑ low wages	❑ violence	❑ lack of political representation

c. Focus on the elements you did not tick and **deduce**. Get ready to **justify** orally.

❑ It makes sense not to mention it because it's certainly not a problem.
❑ Even if it's not mentioned in the text, it's probably true but not really important for the diaspora.
❑ Even if it's not mentioned in the text, it's probably the case and it increases the difficulties of the diaspora.

d. Read the entire text once again **focusing on** time markers and **conclude**. Get ready to **justify** orally.

❑ These inequalities existed in the past but no longer exist today.
❑ Inequalities have become more and more important with years.
❑ Inequalities have tended to decrease.

4. Observe these phrases: *tightly packed row houses* (l.2) and *Philadelphia-based public-health scholar* (l.22) and **translate** them using the hints below:

– Tip#1: the main word is the last one.
– Tip#2: to translate, go from right to left.

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WAY 2

1. Observe the map and **circle** the correct information about the place and importance of the Puerto Rican diaspora in the USA.
Puerto Ricans settled:

Mainly inland *vs* mainly on the coast.
In big cities *vs* in rural areas.
Evenly across the territory *vs* in clusters in specific areas.

2. a. Read the beginning of the text and **complete** the paragraph below with information about Ray Collazo.

He was born in ..... but moved to ..... at the age of 11. In the .....
....., many Puerto Rican workers .....

b. Imagine why these families decided to leave their island at that time.

.....

3. a. Use elements from the text to **account for** the differences between Puerto Ricans and other Americans in Philadelphia. **Help yourself** with the elements below:

• a geographical gap: .....
.....
• an economic gap: .....
.....
• a social gap: .....
.....
• a linguistic gap: .....
.....

b. **Look up** a definition of gentrification if necessary. **Explain** how it emphasised the difficulties faced by the Puerto Rican diaspora.

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4. **Translate** these phrases *tightly-packed row houses* (l.2) and *Philadelphia-based public-health scholar* (l.22) into French. **Pay** particular **attention** to the word order.

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