

# El desfile del Yipao

Color, cut, glue and load!



Easy and super fun “Cultura”

## **El desfile del Yipao**

Colombia is full of culture but nothing really compares to the Yipao parade! This “fiesta” is celebrated in the coffee region and it’s a way for the Colombian coffee farmers to pay tribute to their “Iron mule”. After WWII the U.S. had a surplus of Willys Jeeps and started selling them to developing nations. The Willys was perfect for the narrow pack-animal dirt roads. Farmers would drive uphill into the mountains, cross rivers half submerged, and then head back down the mountain fully loaded with coffee, plantains, yucca or oranges to sell in town.

The term “Yip” is simply how Colombians spell in Spanish the sound of the English word “Jeep” and a “yipao” means a Jeepload, the term used to refer to whatever could be carried in a “yip” and still allowing someone to drive it. Farmers there have a pretty good idea of how much can be carried in a “yip” and a Jeepload or “Yipao” eventually became a unit of measure.

Later the roads were paved and widen and bigger trucks replaced the Willys Jeep but today it remains as a folkloric figure of the coffee region and many of them can be seen in the annual Yipao parades.

The Yipao Parade is celebrated in different months of the year (each municipality has a different date). The first edition of the parade was organized by Joan Jaramillo, headmistress of protocol of the Quindío Governor’s office in 1988. The event now has several categories usually separated according to the products carried in the vehicles:

- Agricultural products
- Coffee
- Furniture
- People
- Institutional advertisement
- Piques

“Piques” usually refers to daring tricks preformed by the drivers of these yips. Some of these tricks include going up and down steps, spinning the yip in two wheels and watching the driver get out of the driver’s seat while the yip continues to spin faster and faster with no driver. While the yip spins the driver climbs on the roof and dances or hangs from the front bumper with his head inches away from the pavement and yes, the yip continues to spin in two wheels while the nervous crowd shouts, cries and laughs.

**Check out the parade and some daring piques:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yQNwird-pX4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=87cBIEhRCqA>

The Willys Jeeps are driven by the main streets of the city and the Yips with the largest amount of objects carried and the most harmonious arrangements earn prizes. The best “piques” also earn prizes.

**Cool fact:**

In February 2006, a Guinness World Records was established for the “Longest Jeep Parade” in Calarca, Colombia with a caravan of over 370 Jeep Willys vehicles.



## Images of el Desfile del yipao:

















## **Create your own Desfile del Yipao!**

Print paper model on cardstock, cut out, fold and glue. Transparent tape may be useful to hold the jeep together while the glue dries.

# Color



# Cut out shape



## Fold and glue



**Start loading the Yipao with colorful cereals, marshmallows... be creative.**

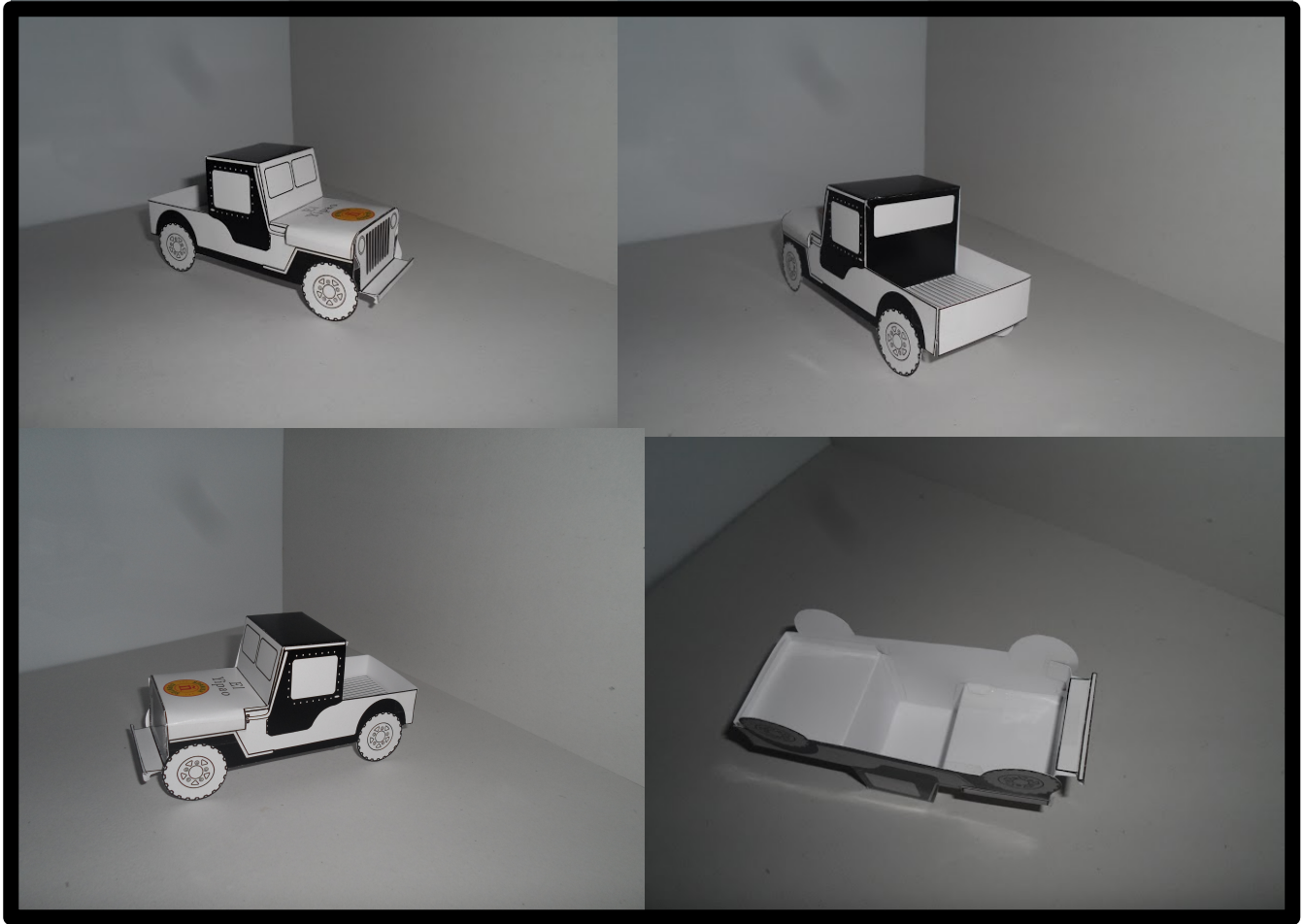




**TA DA!**



## Unadorned “Yip” sample:



**An idea:**  
**Introduce the Yipao parade with**  
*Peter va a Colombia.*

**The main character of the story visits the Colombian coffee region and runs into the Yipao parade.**

*An engaging, action-packed read, Peter va a Colombia is a short novel that first-year Spanish students can easily grasp. Written in the present tense, the book is built on a list of 350-plus*

*Spanish nouns, verbs, and common expressions. As they read, students acquire basic vocabulary and grammar while gaining confidence with the target language; they also learn about fascinating places and people in Colombia.*



*The main character is 12-year-old Peter from Des Moines, Iowa. A video-game enthusiast and avid reader, Peter learns about Colombia from his Spanish teacher and decides to visit. But once there surprises meet him at every turn: chilly Bogota contrasts with tropical Cartagena; stunning multicolored jungle birds contrast with scary piranhas; and a kind man with books contrasts with rural poverty and isolation. Drawing readers to Peter's adventure, Peter va a Colombia keeps students engaged and involved. As they read, they will wonder: What is Bogota like? What foods do Colombians enjoy? Will the piranhas eat Peter? Do poor Colombian children enjoy books as much as they do? In this book students will find answers to these and other questions.*



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By Craig Klein

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