

Perspectives On Cultural Identity Among Latinx Immigrants to the U.S. Presented Through Authentic Film, Music, and Literature

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Demographics

St. Georges Technical High School is a 9-12 public vocational-technical school located in suburban Middletown, Delaware. St. Georges is one of four schools in the New Castle County Vo-Tech school district, all of which currently service approximately 4,700 students from urban, suburban, and rural residencies in New Castle County from as far north as Arden to as far south as Townsend. St. Georges' 2018-2019 student enrollment comprised 1,126 students whose ethnic and cultural backgrounds are as follows: 48% white, 33% African-American, 13% Hispanic- or Latinx-American, 3% multi-racial, 2% Asian-American, and .5% Native-American.¹ Of these students, 13% are considered "students with disabilities," 12% are labeled as low income, and less than 1% are English language learners. All students with IEPs or 504 Plans are included in the general education setting.

St. Georges is unique in that, although it is considered a public school, students must apply to New Castle County Vo-Tech school district during eighth grade in order to be considered for admission. Due to the large number of applicants, many students are not admitted. Those accepted are divided between the four schools in the district according to the career interest areas listed on their applications. All four schools are comprehensive high schools offering academic and career-related instruction in the same building. As students work toward graduation, they will take a total of ten career-oriented credits, and most seniors will earn their diploma as well as at least one trade-specific certification. Due to the large amount of credits required by each career area, St. Georges is unable to offer electives related to the arts & humanities, upper-level language courses, and AP classes. Honors courses, Dual Enrollment, and electives for college-bound seniors are all available.

The culture of St. Georges, in this writer's opinion, is overwhelmingly positive. A survey taken by students during the 2018-2019 school year indicated the majority of our

¹Notes

<https://reportcard.doe.k12.de.us/detail.html#aboutpage?scope=school&district=38&school=44>. Accessed April 26, 2019. Demographic information about St. Georges Technical High School

students view St. Georges as having a safe, family-like environment. Of the disciplinary offenses committed by the student population during the 2017-2018 school year, less than 1% were considered in any way violent.² The school's attendance rate is 93%, class sizes are generally kept between 16 and 30 students, with a student to teacher ratio of 15:1.³ Four years ago, 280 freshmen were admitted to the school, and this year's graduating class still consists of 272 of those students, demonstrating St. Georges' high retention rate. Our building facilities are both up-to-date and incredibly clean. Blended learning is easily accessible across all subject areas due to the district's 1-to-1 Chromebook initiative. The school culture is one of encouragement and growth-mindedness, as evidenced by a 97% graduation rate. Of last year's graduates, over 30% successfully participated in Dual Enrollment, 60% moved on to a four-year college, 25% to a 2-year college, and many more continued their career-related education through apprenticeships or by attending a trade school. Several were offered full-time employment through the career-related co-op job they maintained during their senior year.

I am one of four Spanish instructors in the building. Due to career-area requirements, Spanish I is not offered at St. Georges until junior year, and Spanish II is offered online during the summer after junior year or in the classroom during senior year. During junior year, students spend either all morning or all afternoon earning career-area credits, minus one 45-minute period during which they are pulled for Spanish I. Because of this, students generally end up in a Spanish class grouped by career cluster. For example, this year, my second period class is comprised of students from Athletic Health Care and Biotechnology (medical trades), while my eighth period class is a combination of students from Plumbing, Electrical Trades, Auto Tech, HVAC, and Carpentry (construction trades). These career-related class divisions combined with the academic abilities and goals of the students who generally choose those career areas tend to cause a statistically significant difference in class averages.

Additionally, the 45-minute Spanish class serves as a planning period for the career instructors, so even native and heritage speakers are required to take Spanish I, as they are not permitted to remain in their shops during this time. St. Georges does not currently have a test-out option, nor do we offer other languages or any Spanish courses beyond level II during the academic year. These two scheduling nuances result in level I classes comprised of every possible linguistic proficiency ability. Because of this, some of the activities I create for my proposed Spanish I unit will be tiered in order to better accommodate the needs of students at Novice Low, Novice Mid/High, and Advanced proficiency levels.

²Ibid

³Ibid

New Castle County Vo-Tech's existing Spanish I curriculum contains eight units: Unit 1 - Nice to Meet You, Unit 2 - Who Am I?, Unit 3 - What Do You Like to Do?, Unit 4 - Let Me Introduce My Family, Unit 5 - My School Life, Unit 6 - Hanging Out, Unit 7 - I Need Some New Clothes, and Unit 8 - Let's Eat!. I plan to incorporate the activities in my unit either into or between district-required units, spreading them out over the course of the school year. As my students become more familiar with the Spanish language, it is also essential for them to connect not only with the people who speak it but also the ideas, opinions, beliefs, and perspectives those individuals have offered to the world through music, art, literature, and film.

Content Objectives

The overarching objective of this unit is to provide students with the opportunity to analyze and reflect upon a variety of perspectives from Latin Americans who have immigrated to the United States. I have divided the activities into three thematic (although often overlapping) modules: Mexican Immigration, Caribbean Immigration, and Voices of Immigration.

Mexican Immigration

Watching and deconstructing the play-turned-movie "Zoot Suit," written by Luis Valdez, is the major activity from the Mexican Immigration module. In order to fully appreciate the film, one must first grasp some important historical details. Mexico is unique in that many of its citizens became United Statesians not by choice but by force. In 1848, the U.S. and Mexico signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, ending the Mexican-American War and ceding over half of the land comprising Mexico to the United States. With the territory came its residents, and tens of thousands of Mexicans found themselves suddenly living in a foreign country.⁴

Anti-Mexican prejudices already ran deep in the United States and discriminatory practices didn't take long to become the norm. Anglo-Americans forcibly assimilated Mexican-Americans into the "colored" population of the United States, in order to justify barring their entry into a number of establishments, including schools.⁵ Thousands of Mexican-Americans were lynched or killed by mobs throughout the late 19th and early

⁴<https://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/immigration/alt/mexican2.html>. Accessed October 31, 2019. Territorial shifts between Mexico and the U.S.

⁵<https://www.history.com/news/the-brutal-history-of-anti-latino-discrimination-in-america>. Accessed May 15, 2019. Afro-Latinx discrimination in the U.S.

20th centuries.⁶ The economic uncertainty brought by the Great Depression only served to amplify the violence against and hatred of Mexican-Americans and Latinx immigrants in general, and the United States government responded through “repatriation.”⁷ Erin Blakemore, author of “The Brutal History of Anti-Latino Discrimination in America,” states “...the United states forcibly removed up to 2 million people of Mexican descent from the country -- up to 60 percent of whom were American citizens.”

In the throes of World War II, other nations were quick to point out that the treatment of Latinxs and blacks in the United States seemed remarkably similar to what Jews in Nazi Germany were experiencing.⁸ Rather than address the rampant racism in the United States, discriminators shifted the focus from the color of someone’s skin to the cut of their clothes. Zoot suits consisted of long and loosely-fitted suits or a pants and sports jacket combination, the shoulders of which gave women’s clothing from the 1980s a run for its money, often paired with a wide-brimmed hat, an elongated watch chain and thick-soled shoes.⁹ Coincidentally, in the 1940s, this style of clothing was quite popular among -- you guessed it -- Latinxs and blacks. Thanks in part to the media, it was assumed among Anglo-Americans, particularly servicemen, that Zoot Suiters were anti-patriotic criminal rapists, biologically prone to violence, whose excessive use of fabric during wartime completely justified unprovoked strip searches, followed by severe beatings, culminating in naked and broken bodies left in the street, waiting to be arrested for a crime they didn’t commit.¹⁰ Unsurprisingly, these ‘heroic’ acts of vigilante justice did not seem to occur when the Zoot Suiter happened to be white.

The movie “Zoot Suit” is based upon one particular event that prefaced the myriad of Zoot Suit Riots of 1943, and the murder trial that followed. The film clearly shows stylism was nothing more than racism masquerading among United States servicemen, the media, and the criminal justice system in the 1940s. Although this unit’s focus is the Latinx immigration experience, it is essential to understand how discrimination against Latinxs during World War II was just a piece of a very racist puzzle, which included discrimination against individuals who were Japanese, German, Italian, Jew, and of course Black.

⁶Ibid

⁷Ibid

⁸http://link.galegroup.com.udel.idm.oclc.org/apps/doc/A20824121/AONE?u=udel_main&sid=AONE&xid=abd88541. Accessed May 15, 2019. Explanation of zoot culture

⁹Ibid

¹⁰Ibid

Caribbean Immigration

Homing in on the perspectives of immigrants from Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic, one notices a significant amount of similarities between these Caribbean-based groups as well as some surprising differences. This portion of the unit will divide students into three groups, each of which will read excerpts from a work representative of their assigned country. For Cuba, students will read from *Dreaming in Cuban*¹¹ (or *Soñar en cubano*¹² for heritage/native speakers) by Cristina García. For Puerto Rico, students will read from *When I Was Puerto Rican*¹³ (or *Cuando era puertorriqueña*¹⁴) by Esmeralda Santiago. For the Dominican Republic, students will read from *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents*¹⁵ (or *De cómo las muchachas García perdieron el acento*¹⁶) by Julia Alvarez.

In the decades following the American Civil War, the black immigrant population in the United States increased 500 percent, due largely to Caribbean immigration.¹⁷ Many of these nineteenth-century immigrants were well-educated professionals who left their respective islands (namely Cuba and Puerto Rico) for economic or political reasons or due to the abnormally high number of natural disasters in a natural disaster-riddled area of the world.¹⁸ They mainly settled in Southern Florida and New York, and interestingly,

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García, Cristina. *Dreaming in Cuban: a Novel*. Pages 26, 32, 69-73, 136-141, 144, 224, and 235-236

¹²García, Cristina. *Soñar en cubano*. Spanish version of *Dreaming in Cuban*

¹³Santiago, Esmeralda. *When I Was Puerto Rican*. Pages 213-214, 217-218, 225-227, 230-231, 248-250, 251, and 263-264

¹⁴Santiago, Esmeralda. *Cuando era puertorriqueña*. Spanish version of *When I Was Puerto Rican*

¹⁵Alvarez, Julia. *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents*. Pages 7, 9, 98-100, 136-138, 144-146, and 152-153

¹⁶Alvarez, Julia. *De cómo las muchachas García perdieron el acento*. Spanish version of *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents*

¹⁷<http://www.inmotionaame.org/print.cfm;jsessionid=f8302714531571716768453?migration=10&bhcp=1>. Accessed October 31, 2019. Overview of Caribbean migration to the U.S.

¹⁸Ibid

“it has been estimated that by the 1930s a third of New York’s black professionals, including doctors, dentists, and lawyers, came from the ranks of the Caribbean migrants, a figure well in excess of the group’s share of the city’s black population.”¹⁹

At this point, the stories begin to diverge a bit. After the Spanish-American War, Puerto Rico was ceded to the United States, and in 1917 Puerto Ricans were granted U.S. citizenship. Approximately 17,000 Puerto Ricans fought in the United States Armed Forces, and when the war ended, many opted to remain in the continental U.S.²⁰ Post World War II, Puerto Rico’s economy, primarily built on its agriculture, took a turn for the worse, and together with the high demand for cheap labor in the U.S., enticed an additional half-million Puerto Ricans to the mainland.²¹

The majority of these immigrants were both uneducated and unskilled, and these factors, combined with a limited knowledge of English, made easy targets for segregation and discrimination in the job and housing markets as well as access to equitable education. It should come as no surprise that individuals who are barred from certain jobs because of the color of their skin or the accent in their voice are more likely to be unemployed, and thus, welfare dependent. Students who are denied English-language education in an English-speaking country will be vastly unprepared to participate in a competitive job market, and will likely follow in the footsteps of their immigrant parents. Failure to recognize the brokenness of a racist system often leads to stereotyping of the effected groups, hence still today, Puerto Ricans “...are commonly derided as ignorant, lazy, dirty, and stupid.”²²

Cubans and Dominicans were two of the many groups affected by the signing of the Immigration Act of 1924, which severely restricted the amount of immigrants permitted to enter the U.S. The political unrest, assassination of president/dictator Rafael Trujillo, and violent chaos that followed led to a major increase in Dominican immigration to the United States during the 1950s and 1960s. Another wave of Dominicans found themselves on United States soil in the 1980s due to a severe economic crisis in the Dominican Republic, which left many citizens unemployed and without essential public services such as running water, healthcare, and education.²³ Like Puerto Ricans,

¹⁹Ibid

²⁰Ibid

²¹Ibid

²²Ibid

²³Ibid

Dominicans have been labeled a social problem in the United States and are often blamed for "...creating housing shortages and crowded schools...increasing unemployment and crime rates."²⁴ In the media, Dominican immigrants are also commonly blamed for drug trafficking and money laundering, and black stereotypes (and the accompanying discriminatory treatment) often extend to include dark-skinned Dominicans.

Until the 1980s, Cuban immigrants to the United States were often seen as a positive addition to United States culture, and were portrayed by the media as "...hardworking, independent, law-abiding, and successful refugees from Communism."²⁵ Cuban immigration patterns were often dependent on Cuban emigration policies, though numerous unauthorized exits were essentially ignored by Castro's government as many were assumed to be political dissidents.²⁶ Between April 21st and September 26th 1980, Cuba opened the gates to allow over 125,000 Cubans to immigrate to the United States, most of whom were unskilled, male laborers with an elementary education level.²⁷ During this exodus, however, the Cuban government forced those who were leaving the country to take prisoners and patients from mental hospitals to the United States with them. This influx of Cuban immigrants was labeled "...undesirable, economically deprived, and criminally prone aliens," even by their Cuban-American counterparts who had immigrated just a few decades earlier.²⁸

Voices of Immigration

The set of activities in this module includes the interpretation of a song featuring an immigration story - "Un besito más" by Jesse & Joy²⁹ - as well as poems and essays by Gloria Anzaldúa, Aurora Levins Morales, Juan Felipe Herrera, Sylvia S. Lizarraga, and

²⁴Ibid

²⁵Ibid

²⁶<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/cuban-immigrants-united-states>. Accessed May 14, 2019. Facts and charts regarding Cuban immigration experience

²⁷<http://www.inmotionaame.org/print.cfm;jsessionid=f8302714531571716768453?migration=10&bhcp=1>. Accessed October 31, 2019. Overview of Caribbean migration to the U.S.

²⁸Ibid

²⁹<https://www.letras.com/jesse-joy/un-besito-mas/>. Accessed November 7, 2019. Lyrics for the song "Un besito más"

Alicia Gaspar de Alba. Before looking at discrimination directed toward Latinx immigrants to the United States, it is important for the students to understand racism is a world-wide problem, and not one experienced only in the U.S.

Telles and Steele, in their article “The Effects of Skin Color in the Americas,” discussed the idea of Latin America being a “pigmentocracy,” a term created by Chilean anthropologist Alejandro Lipschutz, meaning “where a region’s social hierarchies are ethnic or color-based.”³⁰ Although this idea came about in 1944, it is being reconsidered now, owing to Latin American census data digging deeper into the ethnic roots of its people. In general, this information has confirmed those who identify as indigenous and/or Afro-Latinx rank among the lowest in terms of income, education, and jobs.

In order to further test the pigmentocracy theory, Vanderbilt University designed a study in which researchers categorized Latin American subjects using a skin color palette, which eliminated the possibility of individuals with the same skin tone choosing different ethno-racial categories. When comparing skin color to years of schooling, the study found all Latin American countries, excepting Belize and Guyana, can be considered pigmentocracies, as “the lightest persons generally have the highest mean educational attainment with the darkest persons having the lowest.”³¹ Furthermore, an analysis of the data indicates that race and education level go hand-in-hand independent of social class, which the researchers determined by the occupation of the subjects’ parents.

Although racial discrimination clearly exists throughout Latin America, it is often amplified when Latinxs relocate to the United States. In her article “Racism, not a lack of assimilation, is the real problem facing Latinos in America,” Suzanne Gamboa highlights just a few of the double standards Latinx immigrants regularly deal with. For example, Spanish-language immersion programs are growing in popularity in the United States, and it is often assumed white children who are learning through a world language at their school come from affluent families who emphasize the importance of global citizenship. On the other hand, Hispanic students who speak Spanish at home and are learning new concepts through English at school are stereotyped as “unassimilated, new to the country, or uneducated.”³² Gamboa cites a law suit settled last year in which Motel 6 paid nearly

³⁰<https://www.americasquarterly.org/the-effects-of-skin-color-in-the-americas>. Accessed May 15, 2019. Information about “pigmentocracies”

³¹Ibid

³²<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/racism-not-lack-assimilation-real-problem-facing-latinos-america-n974021>. Accessed May 14, 2019. Article on the double standard Latinxs in the U.S. regularly encounter

\$9 million in reparations for contacting Immigration and Customs Enforcement based solely on the Hispanic last names of their guests. Nearly 60% of adult Latinxs in the United States claim to “have experienced discrimination or been treated unfairly because of their race or ethnicity.”³³ By presenting students with Latinx perspectives on immigration to the U.S., this curriculum unit aims to address discrimination while instilling in the students compassion and empathy for the struggles many Latinx Americans experience.

Teaching Strategies

Mexican Immigration Module

Days 1-2

Prior to beginning the unit, students will take a survey addressing societal problems, discrimination, and students’ personal experiences regarding their feeling of safety and security. These surveys will be sealed and placed into an envelope and will not be opened by anyone other than the students themselves at the end of the entire Immigration Unit. The survey is a compilation of prompts I created and questions found in the “University of Michigan Campus Climate Survey on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion”³⁴ and the “Young People’s Social Attitudes Survey.”³⁵

After taking the survey, the teacher will provide maps of both the United States and Mexico demonstrating territorial shifts between 1835 and 1848. Students will complete an activity in which they make inferences based on the maps and later from a Library of Congress website addressing this theme.

For the next activity, the teacher will instruct students to form groups of four and each group member will be assigned a section of text to read from the article “The Brutal

³³<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/07/02/hispanics-with-darker-skin-are-more-likely-to-experience-discrimination-than-those-with-lighter-skin/>. Accessed October 26, 2019. Data and graphs related to skin-tone-based discrimination

³⁴<https://diversity.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/STUDENT-SAMPLING-SURVEY.pdf>. Accessed November 27, 2019. University of Michigan Campus Climate Survey

³⁵<http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/4231/mrdoc/pdf/4231userguide.pdf>. Accessed November 27, 2019. Youth survey of social attitudes

History of Anti-Latino Discrimination in America,”³⁶ with accompanying questions to answer. After working individually, all four students will come back together to share what they’ve learned and answer reflective questions requiring the combined knowledge of all four individuals.

Days 3-5

As a pre-viewing activity, students will do independent research on Zoot Suits and access a website where they will examine the specifics of the Zoot Suit Riots. Finally, they will view a series of photographs taken before, during, and after the 1943 riots and create a narrative connecting the images into a cohesive story.

As an introduction to the film “Zoot Suit” by Luis Valdez, the instructor may want to discuss the concept of metatheatre, depending on how familiar the students are with this technique, and why it might have been used for the movie. Students will then receive a graphic organizer where they can take thematic notes as they watch the film.³⁷ In my own classroom, I will be skipping over 49:15 to 51:45, as it involves a romantic subplot I believe to be unnecessary to the understanding of the film, and I will also eliminate 1:11:35-1:17:29 as it includes overly foul language and a continuation of the romantic conflict previously mentioned.³⁸

After viewing the movie, the teacher can introduce the following three questions as a whole-class discussion in which students are encouraged to support their answers with evidence they have written on their graphic organizers.

At one point in the movie, the Pachuco tells Henry, ‘Everybody’s looking at you, ese.’³⁹ Afterwards, he snaps his fingers, draws Henry’s attention to the theater audience, and states, ‘Don’t hate your *raza* more than you love the gringo.’⁴⁰ What is the significance of this series of events?

³⁶<https://www.history.com/news/the-brutal-history-of-anti-latino-discrimination-in-america>. Accessed May 15, 2019. Article on Afro-Latinx discrimination in the U.S.

³⁷Gearhart, Jill. 2019. “Zoot Suit” graphic organizer

³⁸Valdez, Burrell, Olmos, Aidman, Daly, Anderson, and Valdez. 1991. *Zoot Suit*. Film

³⁹Ibid

⁴⁰Ibid

During the scene where the Pachuco challenges the media man, the camera takes a moment to focus on a sleeping audience member. What does the audience in the theater represent? What are the writer and director of the film suggesting by drawing attention to the sleeping man?

The movie has multiple possible endings. Why is this important? What might the writer and director be trying to communicate to movie viewers?

Days 6-8

Following the discussion of the film, the class will be divided into two groups. One group will listen and read along with a recording of excerpts from “Statistics: the nature of the Mexican American criminal,” created by one of my colleagues.⁴¹ This item was originally written by Foreign Relations Bureau expert Ed Ayres and given as expert testimony in the Sleepy Lagoon murder trial in 1942. The other group will listen and read along with excerpts from “Letter to Governor Warren,” recorded by another of my colleagues.⁴² The letter was written by the Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee asking Governor Warren for the immediate release of those who had been unfairly sentenced for a supposed murder that took place at Sleepy Lagoon in 1942. Students will be reading along with/listening to edited versions due to both time constraints and the necessity of a one-page document for the culminating activity in this module.

After each group has had the opportunity to listen to their respective recordings, the teacher should allow students to process what they read/heard. This should be done within the separated groups on two different sides of the room and could be an open discussion or guided with questions from the teacher depending on the nature of the students in the classroom. After the groups have discussed what they read/heard separately, the teacher should set up classroom ground rules for a mock trial and allow preparation time for each group to determine roles, evidence, and draft statements. If the teacher is unfamiliar with mock trials, I recommend reading through the “Guide to Conducting Mock Trials” to get a better idea of how to make it a positive classroom experience.⁴³

⁴¹<https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/13030/hb6m3nb79m/>. Accessed November 20, 2019. Ed Ayres’s testimony during the Sleepy Lagoon murder trial

⁴²<https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/13030/hb0k40075c/>. Accessed November 20, 2019. Letter to Governor Warren by the Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee

⁴³<https://www.19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us/1610/Guide-to-Conducting-Mock-Trials>. Accessed November 30, 2019. Instructions and recommendations for holding a mock trial in the classroom

Day 9

Finally, students will be permitted to choose between “Letter to Governor Warren” and “Statistics: the nature of the Mexican American criminal,” and will be asked to turn one of those documents into a piece of blackout poetry that is meaningful to them. If unfamiliar with blackout poetry, I encourage teachers and students to check out the website from my resource list.⁴⁴ Students should provide a title for their poem, and the final products can be displayed around the room. The teacher could extend this activity an additional day by holding a gallery walk either in the classroom or the hallway (where more individuals would have the opportunity to see the poems) in which students examine the different poems and reflect on specific or general questions while identifying favorites or those that speak to them personally.

Caribbean Immigration Module

Day 1

In order to contextualize this module, students will begin by discussing immigration push and pull factors. The teacher will provide a handout where students will individually take 3-4 minutes to brainstorm potential reasons why someone would emigrate from their country of origin and immigrate to another country.⁴⁵ After a few minutes, the teacher should allow students to share their ideas aloud and add to their handouts as they hear new ideas from their peers.

This discussion will be followed by an examination of graphs and infographics about immigration to the U.S., all of which can be found at the websites provided in the worksheets I’ve created. The first infographic will be an interpretive activity, as the information provided is in Spanish. They will answer pre-reading, reading, and post-reading questions about the infographic before moving on to the graphs and infographics in English, which they will analyze through a modified ‘I notice... / I wonder...’ activity.

Afterward, the teacher will randomly assign students one of three countries/authors/novels to become “experts” on: Cuba, Puerto Rico, or the Dominican Republic. All students will watch segments of the fourth episode (“The New Latinos”) of

⁴⁴ <https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/blog-posts/john-depasquale/blackout-poetry/>. Accessed October 30, 2019. Steps for creating and examples of Blackout Poetry

⁴⁵ Soohy, Karen. 2019. Push and pull factor image

a PBS series entitled “Latino Americans.”⁴⁶ Students who have been assigned Cuba will watch: 20:43-25:48, 28:36-31:06, and 31:33-33:48. Those assigned Puerto Rico will view the following segments: 6:33-10:55, 13:12-15:30, and 16:41-17:31. Students assigned the Dominican Republic will view: 1:27-4:35, 47:02-49:25, and 51:04-53:30. For my classroom purposes, I screen-recorded only the necessary segments for each of the three countries and will share these screencasts with my students through Schoology, the learning management system my district utilizes. As the students view the video segments, they will complete a worksheet focusing on the push and pull factors mentioned and other aspects of the immigration experience specific to their assigned countries.

Days 2-3

The students will combine into groups of two to learn more about the authors of the novels they will be reading excerpts from. The author biographies my students will be reading were found through the University of Delaware’s online databases, but the worksheet could easily be adapted allowing students to find their own reliable sources of this information.⁴⁷ Students assigned Cuba will read excerpts from “Dreaming in Cuban” by Cristina García.⁴⁸ Those assigned Puerto Rico will read excerpts from “When I Was Puerto Rican” by Esmeralda Santiago.⁴⁹ The students assigned the Dominican Republic will read excerpts from “How the García Girls Lost Their Accents” by Julia Alvarez.⁵⁰ On the worksheets I’ve created, the small groups of students will answer questions about their authors, read a brief summary of their assigned novel, and then move into groups of

⁴⁶<https://www.pbs.org/latino-americans/en/watch-videos/#2365076190>. Accessed November 28, 2019. Episode 4 of “Latino Americans”

⁴⁷<https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/K1624000564/BIC?u=dove10524&sid=BIC&xid=53df2128>. Accessed November 29, 2019. Biography of Cristina García;
<https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/K1624000660/BIC?u=dove10524&sid=BIC&xid=202b430a>. Accessed November 29, 2019. Biography of Esmeralda Santiago;
<https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/K1631000171/BIC?u=dove10524&sid=BIC&xid=42566474>. Accessed November 29, 2019. Biography of Julia Alvarez

⁴⁸García, Cristina. *Dreaming in Cuban: a Novel*. Pages 26, 32, 69-73, 136-141, 144, 224, and 235-236

⁴⁹Santiago, Esmeralda. *When I Was Puerto Rican*. Pages 213-214, 217-218, 225-227, 230-231, 248-250, 251, and 263-264

⁵⁰Alvarez, Julia. *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents*. Pages 7, 9, 98-100, 136-138, 144-146, and 152-153

four to read their novel excerpts. For heritage or native speakers, excerpts from the Spanish versions of these novels (as well as a Spanish version of the worksheet) could be offered.

In the groups of four, students can decide whether they want to take turns reading the text aloud or each read the text silently, but they will be asked to use three different colored highlighters to identify segments pertaining to three distinct themes. They will use yellow to highlight problems of identity, green for island imagery or island memories, and pink for segments discussing maintenance of original culture, Americanization, and/or synthesizing the two cultures. A fourth, blue highlighter will be provided for group members to use if they see other themes arising within their assigned texts. After reading through the excerpts from their novel, students should discuss what they've found within their group of four and write notes in the graphic organizer provided, knowing they will have to defend their ideas with evidence during a follow-up Socratic seminar.

Day 4

When the small group discussions have finished, the teacher will separate each group of four into two, and then combine the groups of two to form one 'inner' and one 'outer' circle for the Socratic Seminar. This ensures there will be equal representation of each country/author/novel in both circles. If you are unfamiliar with Socratic seminars, I recommend viewing the procedures and hints found at the website "5 Steps to a Successful Socratic Seminar."⁵¹ It is essential for students to understand the process and teacher's expectations in order for this activity to be meaningful and effective. My questions for the Socratic seminar will be based around the three specified themes students were to take notes on, additional themes they may have identified, and connections they are able to make to the Mexican or Mexican-American immigration experience and the movie "Zoot Suit."

To further engage students in the Socratic seminar, a colleague of mine recommended using an online tool called GoSoapBox, which would allow students to use a join code and add themselves to a teacher-created event where the seminar discussion questions have already been posted.⁵² Instead of taking notes about the inner circle's discussion, the students in the outer circle can use the discussion board while the Socratic seminar takes place. When the roles are reversed, and students from the inner circle become the

⁵¹https://minds-in-bloom.com/5-steps-to-successful-socratic-seminar_29/. Accessed November 28, 2019. Socratic seminar instructions

⁵²<https://www.gosoapbox.com/>. Accessed November 26, 2019. Online discussion board tool

documenters in the outer circle, the instructor could choose to let them add on electronically to what their peers have already started or create a separate “event” to start with a blank slate.

Voices of Immigration Module

Days 1-3

This module begins with students taking an online, 10-question quiz from cfr.org entitled “See How Much You Know About Immigration to the United States” in order to assess their prior knowledge on U.S. immigration policies.⁵³ After reflecting on what information surprised them, the instructor will present a set of questions accompanying a video and brief article about statelessness,⁵⁴ which they can complete independently or in small groups. They will then read an article specifically addressing statelessness in Colombia.⁵⁵ With a partner, they will discuss the following questions, which will be projected onto the board:

The children mentioned in the article have been stateless since August 2015. How did that happen?

What did the citizenship laws in Colombia used to be? How are they changing? What about in Venezuela?

This statelessness situation was caused by a major migration of Venezuelan citizens to Colombia. With your partner, do a bit of research to find out the push factors and pull factors that caused (are causing) this influx.

According to the article, there are approximately 3.9 million individuals in the world who are considered stateless. How would you react if the United States changed its citizenship laws and either you or your friends became stateless? How would you and your friends be affected?

⁵³<https://www.cfr.org/quiz/see-how-much-you-know-about-immigration-united-states>. Accessed November 1, 2019. Immigration quiz

⁵⁴<https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/ending-statelessness.html>. Accessed November 17, 2019. “Ending Statelessness” video and short article

⁵⁵<https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/briefing/2019/8/5d4937754/colombia-acts-ensure-children-born-venezuelan-parents-stateless.html>. Accessed November 17, 2019. Article about stateless children in Colombia

The teacher will then rearrange desks into groups of four, facing one another, and ask students to sit at a desk cluster. Each group will receive four copies of two English-language and one Spanish-language political cartoons referencing immigration issues. I recommend using the following six political cartoons found at the “Elimmigrante” website: images 5, 7, 15, 18, 33, and 54,⁵⁶ and also printing each images on different color paper. This will allow each group to have a unique mixture of Spanish and English cartoons to analyze while facilitating the teacher’s job of distributing the images.

Once the images are in students’ hands, ask each group to choose one English-language political cartoon to analyze first. The teacher will then walk the groups through a step-by-step process for analyzing the content. First, students will be asked to identify who the characters featured are and/or who those characters represent by writing that information on the top center of the paper. The teacher will limit this step to 2 minutes maximum in order to establish a pace students will follow on subsequent cartoons. Next, students will be asked to identify the setting (ex: where, when, etc.) and write that on the bottom center of the paper within a one-minute timeframe.

The teacher will then instruct the students to fold their cartoon in half twice, creating four quadrants. They will examine each quadrant individually by folding back the other quadrants so only the one being focused on is visible. The teacher will ask students to write down notable details from the top left quadrant in the top left corner of their paper, then details from the top right quadrant in the top right corner, followed by the same practice in the bottom left and then bottom right quadrants. Students will only be allowed to focus on each individual quadrant for a maximum of one minute and thirty seconds. Afterward, the instructor will project the following three questions onto the board and students will discuss their responses with their group members, ensuring every individual in the group is able to voice their opinion about the last question within a five-minute time limit:

What perspective(s) are provided? (What perspectives are ignored?)

What point is the image trying to prove? Support your statement with evidence.

How do you feel about the political cartoon? How are you affected by what is portrayed?

This 14-minute process will be repeated for the second English-language cartoon and then finally for the Spanish-language cartoon (which may take a bit longer to interpret). As a culminating activity, the instructor will project each political cartoon onto the board,

⁵⁶<https://elimmigrante.wordpress.com/caricaturas/>. Accessed November 30, 2019.
Political cartoons about immigration

one by one, beginning with the English-language ones, asking students to comment on what they found or interpreted. Using visuals, gestures, and very guided questions, the instructor can challenge the class to comment on the Spanish-language political cartoons in the target language. For more information about analyzing political cartoons, I recommend the Herb Block Foundation website.⁵⁷

Days 4-5

Students will participate in a listening activity in which they are to fill in missing lyrics to the song “Un besito más” by Jesse & Joy.⁵⁸ During the first whole-class listening, (do not show students the accompanying video yet) instruct them to fill in all the blanks with something, even if they only catch a syllable. Afterwards, they will respond to two questions (one in Spanish about how they feel when they hear the song and another asking them to identify words from the lyrics they already know or can understand based on context) and then listen to the song a second time as a class. The teacher and students will then co-construct the song, and the teacher will use gestures, visuals, charades, and facial expressions to help the students understand the meaning of the lyrics.

Before viewing the video, students will examine screenshots of the main characters and answer questions in Spanish about what they see. These questions and answers will be reviewed aloud in Spanish for communicative practice. The teacher will then ask the students to put their activity sheet aside for five minutes so the class can be fully focused on listening to the song one more time while watching the accompanying music video, which features a family of immigrants who live illegally for years in the United States before being separated by Immigrations and Customs Enforcement officers. After the full-class viewing, students will be able to access the video through Schoology and can work through the additional questions on the worksheet either independently or as partners. As a culminating activity, students will be asked to respond to the Robert F. Kennedy quote found at the end of the music video by creating their own short video on a class Flipgrid.⁵⁹ They will then view the responses of several peers and respectfully comment on what those individuals said.

⁵⁷<https://www.herblockfoundation.org/editorial-cartooning/how-analyze-editorial-cartoon>. Accessed December 1, 2019. Recommendations for analyzing political cartoons

⁵⁸<https://www.letras.com/jesse-joy/un-besito-mas/>. Accessed November 7, 2019. Lyrics for the song “Un besito más;” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z1EB-fi0JDI>. Accessed November 7, 2019. Music video for “Un besito más”

⁵⁹Kennedy, John F. *Nation of Immigrants*. Original source of Kennedy quote in “Un besito más” music video

Day 6

In order to spark a discussion, students will be invited to sit in groups of three and draw and label as many connections as possible between 5 quotes provided on a graphic organizer by the instructor.⁶⁰ After sharing their ideas in small groups, students will be asked to discuss their thoughts with the group at large. The instructor will eventually point out that many of the quotes contain elements of cultural identity or, perhaps, a lack thereof. This will lead into a whole-class brainstorm of “what makes you, you.” This brainstorm could take place as a live discussion, a post-it note activity, or through an online discussion board like Padlet depending on how comfortable your students are with one another. In my own classroom, I will try to draw out of the students ideas such as: your family, your ancestors, your ethnicity and culture, your religion, your language, where you live, what you’ve lived through, your memories, and the things you value.

Days 7-8

The students will participate in a stations activity, allowing them to reflect upon at least four of the following poems or essay excerpts: “To Live in the Borderlands Means You...” by Gloria Anzaldúa, “Child of the Americas” by Aurora Levins Morales, “Borderbus” by Juan Felipe Herrera, “El otro lado” by Sylvia S. Lizarraga, “La frontera” by Alicia Gaspar de Alba, “nepantla...torn between ways” by Gloria Anzaldúa, and “Puertoricanness” by Aurora Levins Morales.⁶¹ The poems and essays at each station should be color-coded and there should be enough of each for every student to have their

⁶⁰<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46550/the-new-colossus>. Accessed October 31, 2019. “The New Colossus” by Emma Lazarus; <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/chicano>. Accessed October 31, 2019. Quotes by Luis Valdez and Gloria Anzaldúa; <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/young-latinos-born-u-s-carving-their-own-identity-n908086>. Accessed May 25, 2019. Quotes by Jeanette Garzón Terreros and Jason Mero; Gearhart, Jill. 2019. Quote connector worksheet

⁶¹<https://www.powerpoetry.org/content/live-borderlands>. Accessed May 9, 2019. “To Live in the Borderlands,” by Gloria Anzaldúa; <https://studylib.net/doc/8952003/aurora-levins-morales-child-of-the-americas>. Accessed May 9, 2019. “Child of the Americas” by Aurora Levins Morales; <https://poets.org/poem/borderbus>. Accessed October 31, 2019. Poem “Borderbus” by Juan Felipe Herrera; Aguilar Melantzón, Armengol, and Elizondo. *Palabra Nueva*. “La frontera” by Alicia Gaspar de Alba and “El otro lado” by Sylvia S. Lizarraga; Anzaldúa and Keating. *This Bridge We Call Home*. Pages 547-549. “nepantla...torn between ways” by Gloria Anzaldúa; Gillespie, Pipolo, and Fonseca. *Literature across Cultures*. Pages 596-598. “Puertoricannes” by Aurora Levins Morales

own copy of all seven pieces, even though they will not analyze all seven. Student instructions, included in my activity sheets, will be posted at each of four stations.

Students will be instructed to choose one 25-minute-long station and one 15-minute-long station per day, however they will be able to decide which station they visit first. They can also each choose whether to complete the activity individually, in partners, or in groups of up to four members. For each station, students will comment on the language(s) and language structure used, symbols and imagery they noticed, evidence of a struggle with cultural identity, themes present, whether they consider this an “AND” piece (in which the writer feels included in the culture he/she references) or an “OR” piece (in which they feel distant from that culture) and a justification for their decision, the quote which best sums up the essence of the writing, and for every artifact after the first, they will make a connection to the piece they previously examined. If the teacher believes his/her students may struggle with the analytical process, I recommend doing a whole-class practice round using the short poem “Dedication” by Gustavo Pérez Firmat⁶²

Days 9-10

As a culminating project, the students will create a poem from the perspective of an immigrant or first-generation American citizen. I think it is important, at this point in time, to remind the students of all they have done during the course of this Immigration unit.

This journey began by learning about the history of Latinx discrimination in the U.S., fast-forwarding to the Zoot Suit Riots in the 1940s, and watching the movie “Zoot Suit,” which illuminated the discrimination against Latinx youth through a theatrical version of the Sleepy Lagoon murder case. Next, we homed in on the Caribbean immigration experience, where we discussed push and pull factors for why someone might immigrate to the U.S, read excerpts from novels written by Puerto Rican, Cuban, and Dominican authors, and participated in a Socratic seminar based on themes like Americanization, problems of identity, and memories of the island. Finally, we learned about statelessness, and how this problem persists for thousands of people today, examined political cartoons about immigration, and experienced the strong message behind the music video of the song “Un besito más” by Jesse & Joy before analyzing poems and essays written by Latinxs living in the U.S.

For the creation of the poem, I will provide my students the following requirements: (1) They must choose at least one theme as the focus of their poem. (2) They will decide whether to write from an “AND” or an “OR” perspective. (3) They must visually represent (either on, in, or through their poem) a symbol or imagery they feel best

⁶²Lynn and Heyck. *Barrios and Borderlands*. “Dedication” by Gustavo Pérez Firmat

represents their chosen theme and perspective. (4) Their poem requires between 50 and 100 words, all of which must be found in the poems and essays they analyzed during the stations activity. (5) They should, in some way, make the line or phrase they feel most captures the essence of the poem's message stand out.

Poems can be posted in the classroom or hallway for students to do a gallery walk. They could be asked to choose (and justify) their favorites in a variety of categories, like "most representative of the immigrant experience," "most heart-wrenching," "most hopeful," "most creative incorporation of symbol/imagery," "best word choice," etc.

At the close of this unit, the instructor will distribute blank copies of the surveys students filled out before starting the unit. After students have completed a new survey, the instructor should pass back the original surveys, still sealed in envelopes. If students are comfortable, they can comment on how their perspectives may have changed from the start to the end of the unit.

Possible unit extension

In order to make the experience more cross-curricular, students could use their poems as the centerpiece of a digital or physical poster board they create representing the immigrant experience. They can be asked to research and identify songs, artwork, photographs, individuals, movies, quotes, etc. in order to create an online/real-life "museum exhibit." A digital exhibit should be accompanied by a Screencast of the student justifying his/her choice of artifacts, which can be shared with the school's U.S. History teachers. If the poster boards are physical, the U.S. History classes could be invited to visit the Spanish class's "museum" and hear in-person explanations of each artifact and why it was chosen.

Classroom Activities

Mexican Immigration Module

The first section of the attached activities will begin with the anonymous survey students will take at the beginning of the entire Immigration Unit and again at the close of the unit, followed by the maps students are to examine and the accompanying questions, the brief Library of Congress article and questions expanding upon the map activity, the jigsaw activity based on "The Brutal History of Anti-Latino Discrimination in America," web addresses for the Zoot Suit Riot article and photographs with questions, and the graphic organizer for students to complete while watching the movie "Zoot Suit."

Caribbean Immigration Module

The second section of the attachment contains the push and pull factor graphic organizer, the Spanish-language infographic website and guided interpretive reading sheet, the I notice.../I wonder... activity with links to graphs and infographics about immigration to the U.S., questions about the previously mentioned segments from the PBS special, divided by country, a worksheet with questions about each of the three authors covered in this module, brief plot summaries of all three novels, and the thematic reading graphic organizer.

Voices of Immigration Module

The final section of the attachment provides the web address for the immigration quiz along with reflective questions, activities working in conjunction with the statelessness video and article, discussion questions for the article about statelessness in Colombia, a partially complete listening/viewing guide for “Un besito más,” the quote connections worksheet, references for where to find the poems I will be using with my students, instructions for the stations activities and print-outs for station areas, activity sheets designed to help students interpret the poems, an explanation of the guidelines for the module-ending student-created poems, and suggestions for students who have difficulty starting their poems.

Due to copyright issues, I am unable to provide the complete listening/viewing guide for “Un besito más,” but I will explain what I created so teachers can replicate it if they’d like to do this activity in their own classrooms. First, I located the lyrics for the song and then I strategically removed words I want my students to listen for, leaving spaces for them to fill in what they hear.⁶³ As a hint (or perhaps a vocabulary lesson, depending on the student), I inserted Creative Commons images next to the blank space representing the missing word or phrase. For the pre-viewing activity, I took screenshots at particular points in the video and had students answer questions based on what they saw.⁶⁴ The screenshots I captured of the mom, dad, child, and family can be found at 1:57, 2:30, 2:36, and 4:02 respectively.

Resources

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Appendix: Implementing District Standards

In the state of Delaware, world language teachers align their teaching to ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) standards.⁶⁵ Of the five overarching canons devised by ACTFL, this proposed curriculum would focus on the skills of Communication, Cultures, Connections, and Comparisons. More specifically, students would be able to demonstrate the following: Interpretive Communication, Relating Cultural Practices to Perspectives, Relating Cultural Products to Perspectives, Making Connections, and Cultural Comparisons.

ACTFL defines Interpretive Communication as: “Learners understand, interpret, and analyze what is heard, read, or viewed on a variety of topics.”⁶⁶ This would be specifically addressed through the code switching in “Zoot Suit,” the immigration infographic in Spanish, and the Spanish-language poems, should students choose to challenge themselves during the stations activity.

Relating Cultural Practices to Perspectives is when “Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the cultures studied.”⁶⁷ This would most directly be addressed through the lyric training activity and after students have viewed the accompanying music video for “Un besito más.”

Relating Cultural Products to Perspectives is defined as: “Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the products and perspectives of the cultures studied.”⁶⁸ Students would be focusing on this canon when they interpret and comment in Spanish on the political cartoons.

⁶⁵<https://www.actfl.org/publications/all/world-readiness-standards-learning-languages/standards-summary>. Accessed April 22, 2019. U.S. standards for world language teaching

⁶⁶Ibid

⁶⁷Ibid

⁶⁸Ibid

While Making Connections, “Learners build, reinforce, and expand their knowledge of other disciplines while using the language to develop critical thinking and to solve problems creatively.”⁶⁹ Students would make connections to U.S. and Latin American history, politics, current events, and literature.

Finally, when “Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.” they make Cultural Comparisons.⁷⁰ This canon would be a constant throughout the unit, as students naturally compare their own cultural experiences to those they see, read, hear, and talk about.

⁶⁹Ibid

⁷⁰Ibid