

**Book:** *Latino Arts and Their Influence in the United States: Songs, Dreams, and Dances*

**Chapter One: Expressions of Identity: The Bond Between Culture and Art**

**Subject area(s): Social Studies**

**Amount of time needed: One 40-minute period**

**Objectives:** At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- 1) Identify the relationship between culture and art.
- 2) Create a poster that reflects the culture of their class, school, or community.

**Materials needed:**

- ✓ 12" x 18" construction paper
- ✓ Markers, colored pencils

**Activities:**

- 1) The teacher will review the information in the text concerning culture and its connection to art.
- 2) The teacher will explain that the students will create poster art for a group with which they are familiar. This group could be the class, the school, the community, or another group they may be a member of (church or other organization). What values/beliefs does the group hold? What traditions do they have? What music, dress, food, or interests do the members of the group have in common? (Remember that not all members will share all of these things.) Is there a symbol that identifies the group? As many of these things as possible should be represented in the poster.

**Assessment:**

- ✓ Does the student identify the group the poster represents?
- ✓ Are as many of the characteristics of a community represented in the poster as possible?
- ✓ Is the poster colorful and eye-catching?

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**Chapter Two: The Many Origins of Latino Art**

**Subject area(s): Social Studies**

**Amount of time needed: One 40-minute period**

**Objectives:** At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- 1) Identify the major cultural influences that led to the development of the unique Latino culture.
- 2) Identify the two Latino cultural movements in the United States.
- 3) Construct a graphic organizer to show the progression of cultural development.

**Materials needed:**

- ✓ Drawing paper
- ✓ Pen, pencil

**Activities:**

- 1) The teacher will review the concepts of cultural integration and acculturation (the process in which a culture absorbs aspects of another culture with which it has contact).
- 2) The teacher will explain that the students will construct a graphic organizer to show how Latino culture developed from these processes and how it continues to evolve today in the United States as Latino immigrants interact with American culture.
- 3) The teacher will instruct students to write the words Latino Culture in the middle of the paper. Using the information from the text, students should write the cultural influences that led to the development of Latino culture across the top of the paper and draw an arrow from each to the center. After they have done this, they should draw an arrow coming down from the words Latino Culture and write United States under this arrow. Using the information from the text, they should identify the two Latino cultural movements that have arisen in the United States in recent years and draw arrows from the United States to those terms. They should also write a definition for those two terms.

**Assessment:**

- ✓ Did the student correctly identify the major cultural influences that led to the development of Latino culture? (Spanish, African, Portuguese, and Native)
- ✓ Did the student correctly identify the two Latino cultural movements in the United States? (Chicano and Nuyorican)
- ✓ Did the student correctly define these two movements? (Chicanos are people of Mexican descent who take pride in their history, language,

and culture and aim to succeed in America; Nuyoricans are people of Puerto Rican descent who also struggle to combine their heritage with their new life in America.)

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**Chapter Three: Body and Soul: The Dances and Music of Latin America**

**Subject area(s): Social Studies, Arts**

**Amount of time needed: One 40-minute period**

**Objectives: At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:**

- 1) Identify and define major Latin music and dance styles that have influenced American culture.
- 2) Create a chart to organize their information.

**Materials needed:**

- ✓ Drawing paper
- ✓ Pen, pencil
- ✓ Rulers

**Activities:**

- 1) The teacher will explain that creating a chart is an excellent way to organize information presented in a text.
- 2) The teacher will hand out drawing paper and instruct the students to divide the paper lengthwise into five roughly equal columns.
- 3) The five columns should be titled as follows: Dance/Music Style; Culture/Country of Origin; Person Most Associated with the Style; Instruments Used; Time When Popular.
- 4) Using the text, the students should fill in their charts. They may need to continue on the back or on another piece of paper attached to the bottom, as there are 11 styles discussed in the chapter.

**Assessment:**

- ✓ Did the student correctly identify all 11 dance/music styles discussed in the chapter? (tango, rumba, mariachi, samba, mambo, calypso, congo, meringue, Latin Jazz, Tejano/Tex-Mex, salsa)
- ✓ Did the student correctly fill in the rest of the chart so as to help define each dance/music style?

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**Chapter Four: Stories and Poems: Latino Writers Capture Culture with Words**

**Subject area(s):** Social Studies, Language Arts

**Amount of time needed:** One 40-minute period

**Objectives:** At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- 1) Identify who Piri Thomas is.
- 2) Write a biographical “obituary” for him.

**Materials needed:**

- ✓ Examples of celebrity obituaries
- ✓ Writing paper
- ✓ Pen, pencil

**Activities:**

- 1) The teacher will explain that large newspapers or wire services will often write obituaries on famous people and keep them on file. When that person dies, they just have to update the information and are able to get it in the paper as quickly as possible. The teacher will share several examples of such celebrity obituaries so students can see what types of information is included—facts such as birth date and birthplace, information on family, education, anecdotes about the person, achievements, and so on.
- 2) The teacher will explain that the students are to imagine they are a reporter on obituary detail for a major wire service. They are to use the information from the text to write an obituary for Piri Thomas to be kept on file.

**Assessment:**

- ✓ Is the student’s factual information complete and accurate?
- ✓ Did the student include other parts of a celebrity obituary such as anecdotes and a list of accomplishments?

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**Chapter Five: Painting Change: Latino Imagery and Its Impact in the United States**

**Subject area(s): Social Studies, Government/Civics**

**Amount of time needed: One 40-minute period**

**Objectives: At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:**

- 1) Come up with a working definition for art.
- 2) Draft community guidelines for muralismo vs. graffiti.

**Materials needed:**

- ✓ Writing paper
- ✓ Pen, pencil

**Activities:**

- 1) The teacher should explain the concept of “community standards,” why they are important, and government’s role in drafting laws and guidelines to uphold those community standards.
- 2) The teacher will break the class into small groups of 5–6 students to begin a discussion on what constitutes art, what is acceptable as muralismo, and what is unacceptable as graffiti. Students should use information and ideas from this chapter and from chapter 1. They should keep in mind community standards and the government’s need to balance that with the people’s right to freedom of expression. Small-group brainstorming should take about 10–15 minutes. One student in the group should act as a recorder for the group’s ideas. The purpose of first discussing this in smaller groups is to encourage participation from as many class members as possible.
- 3) The class will then join together, and the groups will share their ideas. The teacher will act as moderator, and one student may act as recorder for the class. After 10–15 minutes of sharing, the class should start to work on a final set of guidelines for defining muralismo vs. graffiti.
- 4) If the class lives in an area where this is a concern, the teacher could urge students to clearly articulate their ideas and encourage them to share them with their policymakers, whether in the form of a written letter or actually attending a legislative session to express their views.

**Assessment:**

- ✓ Did students working in their small groups record the results of their brainstorming session?
- ✓ Did students as a class draft guidelines to define what constitutes muralismo and what constitutes graffiti?

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**Chapter Six: ¡Acción! Theater, Films, and Festivals**

**Subject area(s): Social Studies, Art**

**Amount of time needed: One 40-minute period**

**Objectives: At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:**

- 1) Define Día de los Muertos and explain some of the customs and traditions associated with the holiday.
- 2) Make either a calacas or pan de muertos.

**Materials needed:**

- ✓ Construction paper or paper grocery bags
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Yarn or raffia
- ✓ Markers
- ✓ Clay (or marzipan or frozen bread dough, thawed)
- ✓ Paint (or frosting colored with food coloring)
- ✓ Glitter (or colored sugar sprinkles)

**Activities:**

- 1) The teacher will review the information on Día de los Muertos on pages 97–98 of the text.
- 2) Students may choose to make either a calacas or pan de los muertos (either edible or inedible, depending on supplies).
- 3) Students making a calacas should cut a mask large enough to cover their face from either construction paper or a paper grocery bag. They should cut holes for their mouth, nose, and eyes. They should use markers to decorate the mask to look like a skull; yarn or raffia should be used to make hair.
- 4) Students making the pan de los muertos should mold a skull from clay, marzipan, or thawed bread dough. They should use the paint and glitter (or colored frosting and sugar sprinkles) to decorate the skulls. Clay skulls should be allowed to dry and harden; bread-dough skulls should be baked, and marzipan skulls may be eaten whenever desired.

**Assessment:**

- ✓ Can the students correctly define Día de los Muertos and identify some of the traditions and customs associated with the holiday?
- ✓ Did the student make a calacas or pan de los muertos according to the directions?

**Note:** There are many good Web sites that can be used for additional information on Día de los Muertos and many have examples of pan de los muertos or sugar skulls for students to look at and get ideas from.

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**Chapter Seven: A New “New World”?**

**Subject area(s): Social studies, Art**

**Amount of time needed: One 40-minute period**

**Objectives: At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:**

- 1) Define ojo de Dios.
- 2) Explain why this Latino art form has become popular in the United States.
- 3) Make an ojo de Dios.

**Materials needed:**

- ✓ Two Popsicle or craft sticks for each student
- ✓ 3–4 different colors of yarn
- ✓ Bells, feathers (optional)

**Activities:**

- 1) The teacher will explain that the object pictured on page 105 is an ojo de Dios (eye of God). This is an ancient symbol of the Huichol Indians of Mexico and the Aymara Indians of Brazil. It was made for a child at birth and was meant to be placed on an altar so that the gods could watch over and protect the child.
- 2) The teacher should lead a class discussion as to why such symbols are popular in the United States (immigrants from these areas bring their customs and traditions with them, and when two cultures interact, there is always some degree of cultural exchange or “cross-acculturation”).
- 3) The teacher will give each student two craft sticks that can be glued together in the shape of a cross for stability. The students will then wrap the yarn around the sticks using different colors to form patterns. Note: there are many excellent Web sites that show examples of ojo de Dios and to get more information on how to wrap the yarn. Some are more complex, so students may want to look at several and choose the one they feel most comfortable with.

**Assessment:**

- ✓ Can the students define ojo de Dios?
- ✓ Can the student explain why this ancient symbol would be gaining in popularity across the United States?
- ✓ Did the student make an ojo de Dios?