

Exploring Identity and Latin(a/o/x/e/@) Culture(s):

Archeology of Self

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Abstract

While learning about a variety of themes and expressions of Latinidad (a word that connotes this wide range of culture) through richly illustrated and superbly written children's books, students will move through five components of a racial literacy development model called Archeology of Self created by educator scholar Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz. The Archeology of Self was conceptualized as a way for teachers to engage in meaningful self-exploration with the express purpose of improving their teaching. The unit also utilizes other online resources including photographic elements, artistic expressions, and online research to explore the variations of Latinidad and to build a sense of personal identity. The unit also has an emphasis on learning the digital skill necessary to produce a final digitized project. Students are guided incrementally through technology lessons. The culmination is a digitized visual display of the components learned and of personal identity representation.

Keywords

Latinidad, racial literacy, digital poster, personal identity, Latinx, culture, expression

Unit Content

This unit will explore Latinidad using a racial literacy development model conceptualized by educator Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz (2021). The model is comprised of six components, each laid out in the form of a pyramid beginning with critical love at the foundation followed by Critical Humility, Critical Reflection, Historical Literacy, Archaeology of Self, and Interruption at the very top of the pyramid. In a later publication (Sealey-Ruiz, 2022) where she revisits James Baldwin's famous 1963 speech "A Talk to Teachers," she visualizes the model in the form of a spade or a shovel driven into the earth with the Archaeology of Self (AOS) occupying the top-center position. Sealey-Ruiz implores educators to do deep excavation of their beliefs and biases to be better teachers to their racialized students. She explains AOS as "an action-oriented process requiring love, humility, reflection, an understanding of history, and a commitment to working against racial injustice" (2020).

Through the use of images, children's books, note-taking with graphic organizers, and class discussion, this unit will use the "spade model" of racial literacy development to frame the lessons. Students will think about themselves and their own lives as they explore Latinx history and culture, in a developmentally appropriate way, for a grades 4 through 6 student population. As implied in the title of the unit, it is impossible (nor desirable) to standardize what it means to be Latinx. "With different racial and cultural makeup, some entirely devoid of colonial influence," author Patricia Engel writes, "some entirely devoid of indigenous rooting, and some

constituting other migratory lineages, all within the manifold traumas and trajectory of colonialism,” (2017, p. 195) any quest to homogenize Latinidad risks essentializing cultures and trivializing experiences. I choose to use the X throughout this unit not only as an acknowledgement of the wounds (Lopez, 2018), the betrayals (J.A.O., 2018), and the complexities the X represents, but also as an invitation for the kind of critical reflection children at upper elementary school levels are just beginning to learn how to do. Teachers of children at this age are in a unique place to guide their students to think and question critically.

Each component in Sealey-Ruiz’s model will serve as a theme for the lesson. More importantly, this unit strives to involve anyone, regardless of cultural background, through self-reflection and personal identity in order to underscore the wide diversity of Latinidad both in the United States and throughout the diaspora. The unit culminates with a digital application of all the student has learned. Each student is encouraged to creatively design a poster that represents not only their learning about Latinidad, but who and how they see themselves within their own community.

This unit’s emphasis on critically learning about the self while attaining new knowledge is in conversation with methodologies like autoethnography, where people have discovered the license to “describe themselves in ways that engage with representations others have made of them” (Pratt, 1991, p. 35). In places of the unit where children’s books, which often navigate between the ordinary and extraordinary, are utilized; or, where there are gaps in understanding and knowledge about the students’ own lives and histories, Gloria Anzaldúa’s “autohistoria” (2015) is a helpful tool that encourages the “writing about one’s personal and collective history using fictive elements” (p. 578). Just as students at the upper elementary level are beginning to hone their reflection skills, they also begin to understand hard evidence and fact-based thinking and writing. Fantasy and imagination, however fleeting, remain even as they become increasingly critical.

Teaching Strategies

Expected outcomes

Given the grade level that this unit is intended for, the outcomes expected are less about learning the regional histories of Mexico, Central and South America, or the Caribbean; or of the varieties of Latinx culture in the United States than they are about using these areas as opportunities for students to think about their own place within their families and as members of a community. That said, the unit offers substantive flexibility for teachers to weave in specific political, cultural, and national histories as it suits their curricular needs. For instance, two children’s books utilized in this unit, *Vicki and a Summer of Change* and *Jovita Wore Pants* speak to specific historical events that occurred, respectively, in the Puerto Rican community in the Bronx in the 1960s, and in Mexico at the turn of the century in the aftermath of that country’s revolution for land reform. They have the potential for an educator to expand into rich, historically-based lessons beyond the racial literacy development component that the lesson addresses. Striking back at a lamentable history of limited and often stereotyped Latinx children’s literature, multicultural education scholar Sonia Nieto (1993) asserted that authentically written literature is “neither sanguinely positive nor destructively negative,” (p. 3) but instead serves the wide range of experiences that is balanced, accurate, and often complex.

To this end, the children's literature recommended in this unit should be viewed as a launch pad for further possible curricular trajectories and goals not otherwise specified in this unit.

The student objectives for this unit are to increase student cultural and personal awareness within a global context; to support critical reading, thinking, and observational strategies; and to communicate emerging ideas both visually and textually using digital tools. While the overall goal is to expose students to Latinx history and culture, the objectives are broad enough so that students are encouraged to think about their own personal identities while exploring specific elements of Latinx culture.

Teaching strategies utilized

Some of the teaching strategies that will be employed in this unit include a variety of modalities that will strive to balance content exploration (Latinx culture) and technical skills (digital learning) with the goal of identity formation through personal reflection. To this end, the teacher will engage the students in read-alouds of children's illustrated books. Although some of the selections may seem below the reading level of some grades, children's picture books offer a compelling visual introduction to subject matter. Stories and literature for children have long been lauded for their power and relevance. "Various times and cultures reveal various attitudes," writes historian Ruth B. Moynihan, "not only toward children but also towards life and society," (1988, p. 93). Children's literature and picture books are powerful tools for "creating a historical, sociopolitical imagination in young readers," (Botelho & Rudman, 2009, p. 9), and when done well, great children's books can make the remote feel very accessible. Additionally, students will analyze photographs and web-based sources, often discussing these resources in partnerships in order to maximize shared understanding. With so many varieties of English both spoken and understood in today's educational landscape, and considering the wide range of experiences students possess when they enter the classroom, it is a good teaching strategy to allow students to work in partnerships or small groups rather than individually so that they can benefit from these social exchanges and learn the social skills they will increasingly need as they mature.

Another teaching strategy is to use written reflection through the use of a graphic organizer. It is important to note here that students should be encouraged to respond in whatever language they know. This includes visual/graphic representations that the teacher may need to help them locate. The next section details the national and state standards this unit meets, but the section takes care to omit direct references to "conventional" or "academic" English. All the standards imply English language mastery. Instead, teachers should be guided by the "Big Ideas" of WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards Framework (2024). Two of the big ideas that anchor all of the standards are helpful here: "Equity of opportunity and access" and "Integration of content and language." Within these big ideas, the 2020 edition of the WIDA ELD standards called educators' attention to multimodality as a means of using multiple ways for language learners to demonstrate and communicate their knowledge. This new introduction to the integration of language and learning "allows all students to use multiple means to engage, interpret, represent, act, and express their ideas in the classroom" (p. 19). In the digital age where gamification of learning objectives is now viewed as a viable education strategy, the chance to demonstrate knowledge and understanding through visual and graphic means via digitized platforms widens the entry point for students into curricular content, regardless of language level.

In line with multimodal teaching and learning, another teaching strategy will include teacher demonstration and student practice. As students prepare to complete their final digital project, the teacher will gradually highlight the different tools of [Adobe Express](#), the platform students will use. There are other digitized content creators available, and an educator may choose to use an alternative. The lesson instructions in this unit are general enough so that any application can be substituted. But Adobe Express, which is free for students to use, will be named throughout this unit. Emphasis again should be made that wherever possible students should be encouraged to work in pairs, at least, as they are learning the different tools of the platform. Learning with a partner along with the incremental, step-by-step approach this unit takes, helps students to understand the digital tool and harness all of its potential while side-stepping the possibility of overwhelming students.

State and national standards

This unit fulfills many Common Core and Pennsylvania State Standards for reading and writing. Since each lesson begins with an appropriate children's book, students will be expected to determine a theme and the author's purpose in writing the book (RL.4.2, CC.1.3.4.C, RL.5.2, CC.1.3.5.C, RL.6.2, CC.1.3.6.C, CC.1.3.6.D). Students will also be responding in writing to what they read and what they see taking care not only to pay attention to the details and facts that they learn (W.4.2, CC.1.4.4.A, W.4.2, Point 2 & 1, CC.1.4.4.C, W.5.2, CC.1.4.5.A, W.5.2a/W.5.2b, CC.1.4.5.C, W.6.2, CC.1.4.6.A, W.6.2.Point 2, CC.1.4.6.C), but to create narratives both real or imagined (W.4.3, CC.1.4.4.M, W.5.3, CC.1.4.5.M, W.6.3, CC.1.4.6.M). By the end of the unit, students will be expected to integrate information in different media formats and to use technology to produce their final project (RI.6.7, CC.1.2.6.G, W.4.6, W.5.6, W.6.6., CC.1.4.4.U, CC.1.4.5.U, CC.1.4.6.U).

The Common Core State Standards for Literacy in History and Social Studies begins with 6th grade. The Pennsylvania State standards echo the common core. Two standards are particularly relevant for this unit. Through photographs and children's literature, students will be thinking about the ideas communicated in both primary and secondary sources (RH.6.2). They will also be asked to integrate visual information when they work on their final product (RH.6.7).

The Pennsylvania social studies standards for students are wide ranging across grade bands. While they tend to heavily focus on United States and Pennsylvania state history, government, and worldview, there are other interesting standard areas that this unit will possibly cover. For example, in the standard area of how international relationships function, students will learn the difference between nation and country (5.4.5.B) and identify how countries have varying interests (5.4.6.A). Under the standard area that covers human characteristics of places and regions, students may also learn to identify the human characteristics of places and regions using cultural and political activities as criteria (7.3.4,5,6.A). Under the standard area of historical analysis and skills development, fourth graders must identify and describe how geography and climate have influenced continuity over time (8.1.4.A). This standard is particularly relevant today as this country thinks about immigration and the migratory choices people have had to make. In this standard area, students also differentiate between fact and opinion, multiple points of view, and primary and secondary sources to explain historical events (8.1.4,5,6.B). Finally, there is a standard area for world history. Specifically, the unit will cover how continuity and change have impacted world history (8.4.4,5,6.C).

Finally, as students will be asked to gather their ideas for presentation using the digital content creation tool Adobe Express, several International Society for Technology Education (ISTE) standards will be met. Students will be transferring the knowledge they gain throughout the unit while exploring an emerging technology (1.1.d). As they curate images (1.2.c) for their final project, they will be learning about intellectual property, demonstrating and understanding the rights of others and the obligations of using the work that others produce (1.2.c). Students will be evaluating the information they find online for accuracy and relevance (1.3.b), sometimes repurposing and remixing digital resources responsibly (1.6.b) to communicate their ideas effectively (1.6.c).

A list of these standards can be found in Appendix A.

Evaluative tools

Students will be evaluated formatively as the unit progresses. Since a variety of sources will be used to think about the material being presented, students will have the opportunity to evaluate their credibility. A resource by Common Sense Education (n.d.) called the “Internet Investigator Checklist” is used to evaluate online news sources. It is adopted and adapted for this unit. For each source, students will read closely and use questions such as “Does it make sense?” and “Is it believable?” to guide their responses. Next, they will analyze the source, where they will think about the question, “Does it come from a credible, unbiased source?” They will then look for corroboration with the question, “Do other credible sources say the same thing?” They will have an opportunity to simply reflect with the question, “What is something new that you read or saw in the source that you did not know before?” Finally, the students will consider the question “Where did the source/author use imagination to create new ideas?” (Appendices B, C, & E).

The culminating project will come in the form of a digital poster/display using the digital content creation tool Adobe Express. Students will learn the components of Adobe Express as the unit progresses. A rubric created by Adobe Spark (2010) for creating an interactive digital poster will be loosely used to evaluate 3 teaching elements. The first is **content** that is critical, well thought out, and accurate. The second is **audience engagement**, where the presentation is engaging, interesting, and captivating. The third element includes **organization and layout** (Appendix F).

Classroom Activities

Three out of the five components of Sealey-Ruiz’s “spade model” for racial literacy development are fleshed out below into three 45-minute lessons (triads). These components are historical literacy, critical reflection, and critical love. The first lesson of the triad begins with a picture book as the source of information, discussion opportunities, and a graphic organizer for note taking. The second 45-minute lesson of the triad utilizes the same graphic organizer to capture notes from a different source. Finally, the third lesson in the triad is the technology work students will need to do in preparation for their final project.

First lesson triad

For Sealey-Ruiz, Historical Literacy is meant to “develop a rich and contextual awareness of the historical forces that shape our communities and society,” (2022, p. 22). Unfortunately, because

so many programs purchased by districts to cover curricular standards are scripted and tightly controlled, what is taught is often not the teacher's choice. Like other subject areas, one can argue that history and social studies in general often follow predictable patterns that rarely challenge the status quo. With this component, Sealey-Ruiz stresses the importance of teachers possessing a deep understanding of the various contexts (cultural, historical, social) that inform our present actions. A racially literate educator will sometimes have to do this extra work herself because so much of our historical knowledge is guided by singular perspectives.

Vicki and a Summer of Change by Raquel Ortiz and Iris Morales is a coming of age picture book that tells about the “garbage offensive” launched by the Young Lords in 1969 in Harlem. Vicki and her sister live in the community, and they join the Puerto Rican Young Lords (co-author Iris Morales was a former Young Lord) and other activist groups to clean the neighborhood. The true historical events in the book will offer a way for students to enter into a conversation about the actions people take and what motivates them. Some of these themes are revisited in the lesson for critical love.

Graphic organizers will help organize thinking as students engage with the books and other source material in the lessons. Appendix B is the location of the graphic organizer for the historical literacy lesson. As indicated above, the “Internet Investigator Checklist” is adapted for the lessons. After students are taught about credibility and bias, they should answer the questions in the top row. They may wait to answer the question about corroboration for the next part of the lesson. The middle row of the graphic organizer asks students to write about something new they learned about, and in the final row, they are asked to think about imagination and creativity with the question “How did the author/source use imagination to create new ideas?” This last question may be challenging. However, by appealing to the natural imagination of children, it could be viewed as an invitation to inquiry and creativity in an effort to stem the knowledge gaps about the subject matter. Vicki and her older sister, Val are fictionalized, but teachers could lead students into thinking about how the illustrations in the book were made, the vivid colors, and the expressions on the characters' faces.

In the second part of the lesson triad, students will review a set of photographs that capture some of the actions the Young Lords took between 1966-1969. One photo in particular is a graphic image of the “garbage offensive” that will be particularly interesting to students after having read *Vicki and a Summer of Change*. These photographs come from a lesson plan developed by the Museum of the City of New York and it is linked in the annotated bibliography below. Students can choose a photograph, and place a screenshot of the photograph in the location of the graphic organizer that says “Source.” The teacher may have to explain what a source is to the students. The students would proceed with the rest of the graphic organizer. Once again, the question about how the source demonstrates imagination to create new ideas may be a challenge for students, but the teacher could direct the students to think about how acts of community good like breakfast programs and the “garbage offensive” were creative forms of activism and protest.

The third lesson of the Historical Literacy triad introduces students to Adobe Express. There is a dizzying quantity of options to choose from, and they can be very distracting. If it is possible, the teacher should demonstrate the basic layout of the platform while students watch. While Adobe Express is free, the layout of the platform may look different if a district (such as

Philadelphia) has a contract with the platform. Students may need to be taught how to access Adobe through their learning management system (LMS). For this first day and for this project, it is best for the teacher to limit the areas for students to focus on. Since there are five components to Sealey-Ruiz's racial literacy model, the "Poster," "Infographic," and "Brochure" templates in the graphic creator sections are the best options. These options have sample templates that help students visualize sections that will help meet the requirements for the project. On this first day of exploration, have students access the platform and simply navigate to those three templates. Have them choose one they like best, practice how to create three to five sections, and how to delete the images and text they see, and to save the template for use later.

Second lesson triad

In Critical Reflection, Sealey-Ruiz urges teachers to "think through the various layers of our identities and how our privileged and marginalized status affect the work," (2022, p. 22). At a more basic level, it is an opportunity to ask questions such as, Who am I? Where do I come from? What am I about? For young children, it may still be too early in their development to answer abstract questions such as these, but they can begin to think about themselves as part of a larger community. They can begin to be encouraged to embrace the choices they make as they formulate their unique identities.

Several picture books offer ideal narratives to help students critically reflect. They are listed in the annotated bibliography. For this lesson, Monica Brown's *Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match* serves as an entry point to talk about identity and the complex ways humans seek personal meaning. Marisol is a self-identified Peruvian-Scottish-American girl who favors many mismatched combinations in life, such as peanut butter and jelly burritos. There are many ways to engage discussion with students about identity using the narrative of the book. Some helpful questions are suggested below. They are taken from a teacher's guide developed by the publisher Lee and Low Books (2018), but as with many teacher guides, the questions are designed to solicit textual responses instead of reader responses. The questions are modified to help students make connections to the book, and to engage students in critical reflection about their own lives:

- How does Marisol feel about being "mismatched?" How do her feelings change? Think about a time you felt "mismatched." How did it make you feel?
- What kind of person is Marisol? How would you describe her? Think about her bedroom and her artwork. If someone saw your bedroom, your home, your artwork, how would they describe you?
- Think about mismatches in your own life. What are they? Can you think about what you could mismatch?
- Why do you think the story is told in both English and Spanish? Does your family speak in different languages at home? What are they? If only one language is spoken, do people in your family speak differently to other people? Can you give an example?

After reading the book, students should use the graphic organizer (Appendix C) to help them think through critical reflection. Like they did with the historical literacy graphic organizer, students will write the name of the source on the top left, and then be asked to answer whether the story made sense to them, and if it felt believable. They are asked to substantiate their

answers. These simple, straightforward questions begin to help students “think through the various layers of [their] identities” (Sealey-Ruiz, 2022, p. 22) in an age-appropriate manner. Students are then asked to apply anything they read/heard from the story that applies to their life, to write about something new they discovered, and again, to think about imagination to write about how the author used creativity to make new ideas.

Students will need access to the internet as they are then invited for the second 45-minute lesson in the Critical Reflection triad to view “[Art of the Americas](#),” a digital collection of works from the permanent art collection of the Art Museum of the Americas in Washington, D.C. The website is very navigable. Images are large and robust—an important feature for younger children who often find fine art unrelatable. In this activity, students will comb through the resource and find at least three art pieces. They will use the same graphic organizer used for the text *Marisol McDonald Doesn’t Match* to critically reflect on the art pieces. This time, after being taught how to perform a screenshot, students will attach the image of the art work in the space for “source” on the top left. This would also be a good place for teacher modeling. In particular, when students are asked to apply the source to their own lives, the teacher may need to demonstrate, such as through a think-aloud, how a work of art would have meaning for one’s life. Some works are straightforward, and easier for students to interpret, but art that is more abstract would need further modeling.

Rounding out this triad of lessons, students will be exposed to Creative Commons licenses. This is very important because they will be searching for media that will represent their varying identities. The [Creative Commons](#) website is an ideal place to learn about the different licenses. Appendix D offers a succinct chart to help students see the icons associated with each license. The icons themselves fall under the Public Domain and can be located in the [Wikimedia Commons](#). Regardless of the license, students should be introduced or reminded about attribution, and should get into the habit of labeling media with the appropriate credit. The chart in Appendix D is an adaptation of one found in the [code.org](#) curriculum. The entirety of that curriculum falls under the Creative Commons License (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0). In short, that license gives users permission to use any part of the curriculum for non-commercial use and under the same license parameters. Give students time to use any of the following websites to conduct an image hunt. Note that using the search fields for the Google Image Advanced Search may require a little more direct instruction by the teacher, especially for younger students:

- [Wikimedia Commons](#)
- [Flickr Creative Commons](#)
- [Wordpress Openverse](#)
- [Google Image Advanced Search](#)

A simple note-catcher adapted from the code.org curriculum is located in Appendix D, beneath the Creative Commons license chart. Have students use the chart to capture their notes for at least three images.

Third lesson triad

When teachers possess a “profound ethical commitment to caring for the communities we live in” (Sealey-Ruiz, 2022, p. 22), they aspire to a higher level of teaching than if they were devoid

of this commitment. In the same way, teaching children the value and power of community engagement and activism offers an opportunity for young minds to think outside of themselves. This is what Sealey-Ruiz refers to as Critical Love. In this third lesson, *Jovita Wore Pants* by author Aida Salazar is the featured picture book. The graphic organizer for this book (Appendix D) is used a little differently. Just the first three parts will be filled in by students. After filling in the title of the source, they will answer three questions about care in the community: “How does this source show care for the community?” “What is imaginative or creative about the way they do it?” and “Where are there other examples of showing care for the community?” These questions may pose a challenge for students. The book recounts the time when a certain area of Mexico began to see revolts by members of small agrarian villages after the socialist government severely restricted activity by the catholic church. Jovita’s own family members, including a favorite brother, were killed. It may be a struggle for the students to see where there is any example of care in a community. Nevertheless, the fact that Jovita herself risked her own life to fight for her own community should be pointed out. Additionally, when Jovita decides to lead fighters against government forces, she is encouraged and supported in a variety of ways by the community she came from – this despite her change in appearance and perceived identity. This should also be highlighted.

For the next lesson in this triad, after the class has recounted the story of Jovita (making sure to emphasize the community connections in the story), students will be broken up into groups of three if possible. Everyone will read the online article “[10 Great Community Service Ideas for Philly Kids](#),” by Lauren Wellbank. The article could be printed out ahead of time. Each group should be assigned one of the ten nonprofits featured in the article. If possible, students should once again have access to the internet to do the research about the nonprofit. They should be able to connect the organizations to ideas of care, service, and even activism the way Jovita demonstrated. For the questions, “Where are there other examples of showing care for the community?” students are encouraged to look at similar nonprofits and organizations that do similar work.

Depending on the grade and capabilities of the students, the last two questions, “What are your communities?” and “Where is there care in these communities?” may need further scaffolding from the teacher. Some students may readily be able to name their communities (family, friend groups, sport/club affiliations, church memberships, etc.), but others may be challenged by this task. An optional idea could be a community mapping exercise where students either locate their homes and consider the groups and organizations that surround them; or, similarly, locate the school at the center of a map and consider the community that surrounds it. The big goal here is to get students to think about their own membership AND responsibility for the community(s) to which they belong. Developmentally, students are within a range of ethnocentrism, so there could be a diversity of responses here.

Finally, in the third part of the Critical Love triad, students will merge what they have learned about Adobe Express and their image searches. For this lesson, have students return to their saved Adobe Express template (“Poster,” “Infographic,” and “Brochure”). Recall from the very first lesson that any one of these templates will have been saved with three to five sections on it. Tell students that they are going to use the time now to design a “Poster,” “Infographic,” or “Brochure” (obviously this all depends on the template they chose), on any topic they choose. It would be helpful to give very easy examples such as favorite ice cream flavors, best pets to have

at home, places I have visited, things I do when I go home after school, etc. Generating a list and posting it in the classroom will help some students. Once students have their topic, their task is to search for the images that best represent what they want to communicate. They will need to add text to explain their visual choices, and they will need to be reminded to include the proper attribution. Although Adobe Express is very intuitive, some students may need more guidance than others on how to insert the photos, text, and adjust size for better fit. The point here is to make this lesson fun, with as little stress as possible, while familiarizing themselves with several tasks they will encounter for the final project while practicing on a fun topic like favorite ice cream flavors.

This unit will not fully delineate lessons for the remaining two components of Sealey-Ruiz's racial literacy model. However, there are two books that nicely fit into each one. First is the component, Interruption. Sealey-Ruiz sees that "interrupting racism and inequality at personal and systemic levels" (2022, p. 22) is not only of foundational importance for any educational endeavor, but the moral imperative of any public school teacher. Upper elementary students are at the beginning stages of understanding many of the inequalities that exist in our society due to racism and bias. To this end, Duncan Tonatiuh's exquisite book, *Separate is Never Equal*, provides an ideal backdrop for this component. It tells the story of Sylvia Mendez and her family who experienced racism and segregation when trying to enroll in school in the state of California. Years later, it became a legal case that reached the supreme court, resulting in the end of segregated education in California. This all happened several years before the famous *Brown vs. Board of Education*.

The second component is Critical Humility. Sealey-Ruiz explains that in order to help students widen their perspectives and for teachers, in turn, to caution against their own parochial thinking, teachers must "remain open to understanding the limits of our own worldviews and ideologies" (2022, p. 22). Given that upper elementary students are still developmentally self-centered, they can nevertheless be introduced to different mindsets and ways of thinking. A fun way to begin conversations about the possibilities outside of ourselves and our own communities is through Isabel Quintero's book *My Papi Has a Motorcycle*. In this story, a little girl named Daisy rides along with her father on his motorcycle through immigrant neighborhoods in Los Angeles. The diverse displays of communities, people, and families, would provide an ideal foundation to begin looking at ourselves and our ways of knowing humbly within the context of urban Latinx diversity.

Culminating project

The culminating project for this unit is for students to visually represent their own archeology of self using as many of the components as possible. Students will be using Adobe Express for this project. The teacher is encouraged to use an alternative digital platform if they find it more suitable for their class. Regardless of what is used, ideally students would be working on pieces of their project as the unit progresses. As mentioned before, since the options on Adobe Express are extensive, it is recommended that the teacher direct students to a specific Adobe resource. A careful balance should be maintained here so that the children's own creativity is supported. On the Adobe platform, the option to "Create a graphic" serves the requirements for this particular unit. Within that resource are several template options. The "Brochure" template option is a good one for students who want to focus on only three of the

five components, but even within this format, there are ways of creatively designing the product to represent all components. As mentioned above, the “Poster” and “Infographic” also serve well.

Whatever layout design is chosen, at minimum, students should focus on three of the five components. They should use their graphic organizers from the lessons to help them organize their thinking and their layouts. Each section should be headed with the component they chose to represent from the racial literacy development model. While the full complexity of each component may not be fully realized by students, the essence of each should be captured as reasonably as possible. This is a personal identity piece, so the very personal nature of this project should be understood as its major feature.

It might be useful for the teacher to review the areas in the evaluative rubric (Appendix E) that the students will be responsible for. Some modeling by the teacher would be helpful. For example, to be rated “Outstanding” in the “Organization and Layout” domain, two features have to be met:

- Content organization is clearly focused and the layout is thought out and very well considered.
- Innovative and creative use of headlines, titles, labels, graphics, colors, textures and direction.

Students may need a few examples to help them understand good layout design and clear focus. Although the evaluative tool is useful, it should not undermine the enjoyment students should have of putting this final piece together. It should represent who they are in light of what they have learned about Latinidad through the beautifully illustrated picture books and the other compelling source material.

Resources

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Annotated bibliography

Historical Reflection Lesson

Martinez, C. (2022). *Still dreaming / Seguimos soñando*. Lee & Low Books.

This book tells the story from a little boy’s perspective about an often overlooked part of American history. In the early 1930s during the Great Depression, the Hoover administration repatriated and deported thousands of Mexicans, most of who were US citizens. They were scapegoated for the troubles of the time. This book tells of the travels of the boy and his family, and the many people they meet along the way.

Museum of the City of New York: Activist New York (n.d.). Lesson Plans. *Power to all oppressed people: The Young Lords in New York, 1969-1976*.

https://activistnewyork.mcny.org/sites/default/files/LessonPlan-YoungLords_0.pdf.

The lesson plan provides primary source material in the form of photographs of the events written about in the picture book that the students will read for the lesson. The plan also provides very good questions teachers could use to guide students’ thinking.

Ortiz, R. & Morales, I. (2020). *Vicki and a summer of change! ¡Vicki y un verano de cambio!* Red Sugarcane Press.

Vicki and her sister Val are witness to the dramatic events that happened in Harlem in the late 60’s when the Young Lords advanced the “garbage offensive” as a means of protest about poor health conditions in the city for the local Puerto Rican community. It is an inspiring account of actual events that united various communities to come together and fight for social justice. This is the book selection for this lesson.

Tonatiuh, M. (2022). *A land of books: Dreams of young Mexihcah word painters*. Harry N. Abrams.

The pre-Columbian codices are the inspiration for this book. Although the history here is ancient, it is still a good alternative for this lesson given the fact that it is seldom taught in schools.

Critical Reflection Lesson

Brown, M. (2011). *Marisol McDonald doesn’t match*. Children’s Book Press.

This is the picture book selection for the critical reflection lesson in this unit. The book features Marisol, a mixed-race girl who finds herself enjoying mismatched items in

her life. The book helps children think about identity and the many ways to think about one's self.

Code.org. <https://code.org/>.

The basic lessons in this site are free to use under the Creative Commons License (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0). Where noted, some ideas have been adapted for use in this curricular unit.

Creative Commons. *About CC Licenses*.

<https://creativecommons.org/share-your-work/ccllicenses/>. This section of the Creative Commons website gives a clear overview of the different types of licenses that would benefit students as they research their images.

Flickr Creative Commons. <https://www.flickr.com/creativecommons/>.

This site is a good site containing copyright material, but still usable under certain conditions by students under the Creative Commons license.

Google Image Advanced Search. https://www.google.com/advanced_image_search.

The advanced search for Google images allows a user to perform an advanced search for size, format, type (such as face, clipart, etc.). More importantly, it allows a user to search by license type. This search may need more direct instruction by the teacher for the students to understand.

Laínez, R. (2023). *Do I belong here? / ¿Es este mi lugar?* Piñata Books.

Alternative picture book for the critical reflection lesson in this unit. A young immigrant boy speaks Spanish. With the help of friends and others, he gradually gains more confidence in his ability to learn new things both in school and in his new home.

Lee & Low Books. (2018). Teacher's Guide. *Marisol McDonald doesn't match*.

The guide can help teachers with guiding questions and resources to follow the book. However, the questions in the unit have been adapted to fit the objectives for critical reflection.

Organization of American States. *Art of the Americas*. <https://www.oas.org/artsoftheamericas/>

This website is used by students in the "Critical Reflection" lesson. The resource is a collection of art work in digital form curated by the Art Museum of the Americas in Washington, D.C.

Quintero, I. (2019). *My papi has a motorcycle*. Kokila.

Alternative picture book for the critical reflection lesson in this unit. Daisy, a young girl, and her father ride through immigrant neighborhoods in Los Angeles where they witness a diverse display of community.

Salazar, A. (2023). *Jovita wore pants*. Scholastic Press.

Alternative picture book for the critical reflection lesson in this unit. This book tells the true story of Jovita Valdovinos, the author's great niece. Jovita crossed gender lines to help others fight in the Cristeros War.

Wikimedia Commons. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page.

The search barn on the top left of this wiki-based media repository is easy to use. Once a student inserts a term, many media appear with their license and attribution notes.

Wordpress Openverse. <https://openverse.org/>.

This easy-to-use site contains over 600 million Creative Commons licensed and public domain images that are sure to meet all student needs for this project. Audio files are also available!

Critical Love Lesson

Delacre, L. (2023). *Vevo, vevo, I see you*. Simon and Schuster.

This book is a great alternative for the critical love lesson because it depicts the way a community (and communities all over the world) came together during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through Marisol and her mother, the specifically name the essential worker who continued to work despite the uncertainty of the time.

Donoso, R. (2022). *Viva's voice*. Kind World Publishing.

This is another apt alternative book to use in this lesson. It concerns a girl named Viva and her bus driver father who winds up going on strike alongside his union. Her Papi brings her to the strike where Viva witnesses first-hand strike actions and a strong union community.

Salazar, J. (2023). *Jovita wore pants*. Scholastic Press.

This is the featured book selection for the critical love lesson explained above. It is about a little known Mexican revolutionary named Jovita Valdovinos who called herself Juan when she decided to cut her hair short and wear pants, which only men did in those days. She led a group of men to battle forces of the new socialist government. This book could easily be used in the historical literacy lesson.

Torres, J. (2022). *Lola out loud*. Little Brown Books for Young Readers.

The real-life civil rights and labor leader Dolores Huerta is the subject of this book. It is an imagined story about Huerta's childhood, but her historical significance is alluded to in the book. This selection could also work in the "historical literacy" lesson.

Wellbank, L. (2021). 10 great community service ideas for Philly kids. care.com.

<https://www.care.com/c/10-great-community-service-ideas-for-philly-philadelphia-pennsylvania-kids/>

This site is used for the second 45-minute lesson as a way for students to think about care and community involvement in the city of Philadelphia. If this unit is being implemented in another location, a similar article relevant to the area might be better suited.

Appendix A

The following is a list of the Pennsylvania state standard areas for reading and writing covered in the lessons of this unit. Each standard area is followed by correlating Common Core State Standards.

- CC.1.3: Reading Literature: Students read and respond to works of literature - with emphasis on comprehension, making connections among ideas and between texts with focus on textual evidence (RL.4.2, RL.5.2, CC.1.3.5.C, RL.6.2, CC.1.3.6.C, CC.1.3.6.D)
 - Since each lesson begins with an appropriate children's book, students will be expected to determine a theme and the author's purpose in writing the book
- CC.1.4: Writing: Students write for different purposes and audiences. Students write clear and focused text to convey a well-defined perspective and appropriate content. (W.4.2,4.A, W.4.2, Point 2 & 1, CC.1.4.4.C, W.5.2, CC.1.4.5.A, W.5.2a/W.5.2b, CC.1.4.5.C, W.6.2, CC.1.4.6.A, W.6.2.Point 2, CC.1.4.6.C) (W.4.3, CC.1.4.4.M, W.5.3, CC.1.4.5.M, W.6.3, CC.1.4.6.M) (RI.6.7, CC.1.2.6.G, W.4.6, W.5.6, W.6.6., CC.1.4.4.U, CC.1.4.5.U, CC.1.4.6.U)
 - Students will be responding in writing to what they read and what they see taking care not only to pay attention to the details and facts that they learn, but to create narratives both real or imagined. By the end of the unit, students will be expected to integrate information in different media formats and to use technology to produce their final project.

Pennsylvania Standards for K–5 reading in history/social studies are also integrated into the K–5 Reading standards. The standards below cover more detail.

- CC.8.5: Reading Informational Text Students read, understand, and respond to informational text – with emphasis on comprehension, making connections among ideas and between texts with focus on textual evidence. (RH.6.2, RH.6.7, CC.8.5.6-8.G, CC.8.5.6-8.B)
 - Students will use photographs and literature to help them think through ideas. The teacher will have the opportunity in the lesson to discuss the difference between primary and secondary sources. Students will also be asked to integrate visual information when they work on their final product.
- CC.5.4: How International Relationships Function. (CC.5.4.6.A, CC.5.4.5.B)
 - Students will learn the difference between nation and country and identify how countries have varying interests.
- CC.8.1: Historical Analysis and Skills Development. (CC.8.1-6.B)
 - The overall goal of this standard is to help students realize their own potential by learning to think chronologically and historically.
- CC.8.4: World History
 - With this standard, teachers will have the opportunity to cover how continuity and change have impacted world history.

The following International Society for Technology Education (ISTE) standards are covered in this unit as the students prepare for their culminating project.

- 1.1.d: Empowered learner: Technology Operations
 - Students will be learning basic knowledge of technology operations and transferring the knowledge they gain throughout the unit while exploring an emerging technology.
- 1.2.c: Digital Citizen: Intellectual Property
 - For their final project, students will be learning about intellectual property, demonstrating and understanding the rights of others and the obligations of using the work that others produce.
- 1.3.b: Knowledge Constructor: Evaluate Information
 - Students will be evaluating the information they find online for accuracy and relevance.
- 1.6.b: Creative Communicator: Original and Remixed Work
 - There is a chance for students to learn about repurposing and remixing digital resources responsibly.
- 1.6.c: Creative Communicator: Models and Visualizations
 - Students use a rubric to help them think through how best to represent information clearly and effectively

Appendix B

Historical Literacy			
Source	Read closely <i>Does it make sense? Is it believable?</i>	Analyze the source <i>Does it come from a credible, unbiased source?</i>	Look for corroboration <i>Do other credible sources say the same thing?</i>
<i>What is something new that you read or saw in the source that you did not know before?</i>			
<i>Where did the author/source use imagination to create new ideas?</i>			

Appendix C

Critical Reflection		
Source	Read / look closely <i>Does it make sense? Is it believable? Why or Why not?</i>	Apply to your life <i>How does what you read or saw apply to your life? Give an example</i>
<i>What is something new that you read or saw in the source that you did not know before?</i>		
<i>Where did the author/source use imagination to create new ideas?</i>		

Appendix D

Creative Commons





Icon	Abbr	Description	Icon	Abbr	Description
	BY	Attribution: Others who use this work must give credit to the original author.		SA	Share-Alike: Users of this work must share any derivative works under the exact same license.
	NC	Non-Commercial: Others may not use this work for advertising or to make money.		ND	No Derivative Works: Users may only use this work as is and may make no modifications.

Image Hunt

Image Description	License Type	Rules for using the image	Attribution

Appendix E

Critical Love	
Source	How does this source show care for the community? What is imaginative or creative about the way they do it?
Where are there other examples of showing care for the community?	
What are your communities?	Where is there care in these communities?

Appendix F

Archeology of Self Digital Graphic Representation				
	Basic	Sound	High	Outstanding
content	<p>less than 3 components are demonstrated.</p> <p>Uses minimal sources and minimal multimedia options e.g. embedded video, sound, animated graphics and images.</p>	<p>3 components are demonstrated.</p> <p>Uses a few credible sources and a sound variety of multimedia options e.g. embedded video, sound, animated graphics and images.</p>	<p>Well thought out.</p> <p>4 components are demonstrated.</p> <p>Uses a good range of credible sources and several multimedia options e.g. embedded video, sound, animated graphics and images to complement the content.</p>	<p>Critical and well thought out.</p> <p>All 5 components are demonstrated.</p> <p>Uses accurate, extensive and credible sources and a large variety of effective and relevant multimedia options e.g. embedded video, sound, animated graphics and images to enhance the content.</p>
audience engagement	<p>The project has basic elements that interest the audience and maintains sound attention.</p> <p>A low level of engagement in the task.</p> <p>Basic consideration of aesthetics.</p>	<p>The project has some elements that interest the audience and maintains sound. Attention.</p> <p>Encourages the audience to navigate the project.</p> <p>Satisfactory balance of images, text, embedded video and audio.</p> <p>Aesthetics are mostly considered.</p>	<p>The project gains the audience's attention.</p> <p>Generates high interest, investigation, and engagement.</p> <p>Encourages the audience to learn, listen, investigate and navigate the project.</p> <p>Solid balance of color, images, text, diagrams, embedded video and audio that reflects the purpose of the task.</p> <p>Friendly to the eye.</p>	<p>The project caught the audience's attention.</p> <p>Captivates the audience and maintains attention and engagement.</p> <p>Excites the audience to learn, listen, investigate and navigate the project.</p> <p>Outstanding balance of color, images, text, diagrams, embedded video and audio that reflects the purpose of the task.</p> <p>Friendly to the eye and effective aesthetics.</p>

			Uses a variety of embedded multimedia in a relevant and innovative way.	Uses all forms of embedded multimedia in a relevant and innovative way.
organization and layout	<p>Content organization is unfocused and shows basic understanding of layout skills.</p> <p>Fundamental use of appropriate headlines, titles, labels, graphics, colors, textures and direction.</p>	<p>Content organization is considered satisfactory.</p> <p>Sound use of appropriate headlines, titles, labels, graphics, colors, textures and direction.</p>	<p>Content organization skills are evident and clear.</p> <p>High use of appropriate headlines, titles, labels, graphics, colors, textures and direction.</p>	<p>Content organization is clearly focused and the layout is thought out and very well considered.</p> <p>Innovative and creative use of headlines, titles, labels, graphics, colors, textures and direction.</p>