

Understanding Latinidades: Reclaiming the Rite/Right to America

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“The curriculum is Eurocentric and whitewashed. The Spanish [language] curriculum is centered around Spain, and the Spanish colonizers degrade the Spanish spoken in the Caribbean Islands. Also what Latinos should look like. Latinas have big eyes, big butts and tan skin. Culture that is not Spain-centric is misinterpreted. Everything I know about Latinx culture has been learned in the Dominican Republic. I have not learned anything that connects me to my culture from school here in America.” Y.G., Carver alum

“Latinos are the largest rising populations in the country and the Spanish language is one of the largest rising languages being spoken. Portuguese and the Spanish dialects are changing so much and the lack of EL support for Spanish speaking students, Latinx cultures need to be represented. In Philadelphia, schools that had bilingual programs are dropping these initiatives because of the amount of work it presents for staff. When students pass the EL tests, services are removed”. K.S., school social worker (Deburgos, Esperanza, Bodine)

“I think Latinx culture should be better represented in the school curriculum/the world because it's really a shame how we don't know any actual history that reflects Latin countries. We aren't represented at all and we are definitely beyond being colonized. Latin history runs very deep and I'm glad that we have an African-American history course because we are learning more and more about Latin history. I find it shameful how as a Latina I barely know anything about my history and this is because we are hardly recognized. It would be very beneficial to have a course that represents what we've been missing.” A.A., Carver student

Abstract

The following curriculum unit is written in response to the growing number of United States residents who identify as Latino/a/x. Census data collected in the recent past documents that Latinos are the largest minority group in the United States, and this number is expected to continue increasing in the near future. In the city of Philadelphia, Latinos from various nations make Philadelphia their home. At present, the curriculum in the School District of Philadelphia and in many large cities across the country, does not adequately represent the Latino/a/x culture. This curriculum unit is intended to begin addressing the lack of Latino/a/x representation in K-12 classrooms through an examination of both informational and fictional literature of varying genres through an examination of primary and secondary sources as well as the creative works of Latino/a/x writers. While this unit is in no way a comprehensive nor completely

representative unit of the vast and dynamic contributions of the Latino/a/x community in the United States and the larger global community, this unit was developed to increase student access to engage in discourse pertaining to the geographical, political, social and cultural contributions of the Latino/a/x community, to empower those who identify as Latino/a/x and to more effectively educate those who do not identify as either on the invaluable contributions that the Latino/a/x community have made to the world.

Key Words: Latino, Latina, Latinx, Latinidad, Afro-Latinidad, Latin America, Literature Circles, Collaborative Learning, Latin American Geography, Latin American colonial history, postcolonial Latin American Studies, “banana republics,” informational texts, summarization, Son Jarocho, Latin American Politics, Haiti, Guatemala, Panama, Dominican Republic, La Bamba

Unit Content

Representation is a powerful tool for self-actualization. The push to highlight representation has increased in recent years as historically marginalized and oppressed people have sounded the alarm, calling out America and her imperialist counterparts on their exploitation of and dehumanization of Black, Indigenous, and people of color. Representation in school curricula across the United States of America is lacking in perspectives and voice with respect to race, class, gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, nationality, ableness, and marital status to name a few.

Since the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s in the United States, strides have been made in challenging the traditional curriculum. As African Americans have fought to secure their rightful places in U.S. society and academia, the strides that have been made have not come without struggle. In many spaces the traditional hegemony has remained steadfast in the curricula across the country. In many cases, the accomplishments that have been made are simple additions of a BIPOC author or figure to the curriculum.

In the fifteen years I have worked as a teacher in the School District of Philadelphia, many of the students I taught in the first half of my career were almost exclusively Black/African American. However, in 2014, I began teaching at a school at 8th and Norris Streets. This was the first time that I worked in a school that had a large Latino/a/x demographic, representing places such as the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Mexico to name a few. Here is where students voiced that they were doing well in African American History, the required history course in the School District of Philadelphia that is typically taken in the tenth grade, but wondered when they were going to learn about the history of Latino/a/x people. In 2017 when I began teaching at George Washington Carver High School for Engineering and Science, this sentiment echoed in the voices of two students in my study hall period, Luz and Nasir. Both

students wanted to know why they do not learn about the history of Latino/a/x people, and to Luz's point, there are similarities between Latinx and Black people, however, she insisted that Latino/a/x history and culture is not exactly the same. Both Luz and Nasir insisted that there needed to be a place in the curricula that teaches about Latino/a/x people, their history, culture and aesthetics. It is for this reason this curriculum unit is needed.

In their resources on culturally responsive teaching, The Professional Development Institute's (PDI) suggests "instruction [should be] presented in such a way as to embrace diversity so that students are able to make the necessary connections to what is relevant in their own lives and cultures" (The Three R's: Rigor, Relevance and Relationships). Moreover, PDI notes, "it becomes of paramount importance for teachers to take an interest in their student[s]' lives so that they are able to draw upon their real-world cultural experiences which can then be used to create new understandings so that new knowledge can be built" (The Three R's: Rigor, Relevance and Relationships). Latinx Studies scholar Dr. Lorgia Garcia Peña makes the case for why a curriculum unit like this one is a necessary addition to the curricula in Philadelphia and beyond. Peña writes, "The antidote to the white-supremacist, exclusionary teaching and learning many of us are still trying to recover from." This sentiment echoes loudly the credo of Afro Latino scholar and activist Arturo Alfonso Schomburg who made it his mission to reclaim "that which slavery took away." It is the ambition of this reclamation that demands the design of a curriculum unit of this kind.

In this curriculum unit, students will explore the literature, art and culture of Latin America and the Caribbean that examines the concept of "Latin"ness, Latinidades, Latino, Latina and Latinx. Through an exploration of the literature and other cultural artifacts of Latino/a/x people, students served by the School District of Philadelphia and other large urban districts will come to understand the vital contributions that Latino/a/x people have made to the world. Through this understanding and this increased representation of Latino/a/x people, the Black and Brown students that sit in classrooms across this nation, in both urban, suburban and rural areas across this nation and the world, will see themselves and their culture reflected in the curricula.

According to demographic data retrieved from the School District of Philadelphia's website, the 331 schools in the SDP serve nearly 200,000 students. Of those students, the largest racial demographics in the student population is 50% Black/African American and 24% Hispanic/Latino. The George Washington Carver High School for Engineering and Science is a criteria-based admissions public school in the School District of Philadelphia that serves grades 7-12. Comparatively, the student demographics for Carver are listed as 59% Black/African American and 12% Hispanic/Latino. While the

Hispanic/Latino population is disproportionately smaller than the district's total demographic make up, the overall demographic makeup of Philadelphia public schools indicates that the current curriculum is not designed to effectively reflect its constituents.

In schools and classrooms across Philadelphia and, I would imagine, much of the country, efforts have been made to revise and rewrite curricula that are more reflective of historically marginalized groups, with a particular focus placed on the presence of Black/African Americans given the history of racial oppression and discrimination faced by this demographic in the United States history. Many activists and educators have worked tirelessly to begin the long and sordid process of reclaiming and unearthing the methods of erasure that have been employed to ignore or diminish Blackness. In examining these revisions to the curriculum it becomes evident that the voices of many other people of color, in this instance, Latino/a/x voices are also missing from the curricula, and when Latinos/as/xs are present, they are nearly always non-Black or Indigenous.

The narrative components of this curriculum unit and the introductory lessons that follow are designed to acquaint students with some of the basic aspects of history that have impacted the Latino/a/x people and the ways in which these pressures/forces have and continue to shape our city and our world. The relevance of the material explored is intended to begin challenging the notions of Latinness and to shed light on the ways that imperialism and racism have impacted and continue to exert influence in all of the Americas. Understanding and being able to recognize the source of oppression is a crucial component in eradicating the problem. The lessons in this unit are designed to ask students to analyze/engage with primary and secondary sources as well as literary works from Latino/a/x authors through the use of literature circles, an instructional method that allows for student-centered and student-driven exploration of literature.

The Latino/a/x Presence in Philadelphia

The Pennsylvania Historical Society of Pennsylvania's report "Latino Philadelphia at a Glance" notes that the Latino population is mostly made up of Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Dominicans, Cubans and Colombians. Many Puerto Ricans arrived in Philadelphia through trade and work programs. Many Puerto Ricans spend time living both in the United States and on the island, and as a result of the island's colonization by the Spanish and now the United States of America, comprise the largest Latino/a/x population in the United States and the city of Philadelphia.

A 2021 6ABC news story reports the Latino/a/x population in Philadelphia increased by 27% in the last 10 years and tripled since the 2000 census data collection. As this

demographic continues to grow in the city of Philadelphia and throughout the United States, the need for curricula that explores the dynamics of the Latin/o/a/x cultures. According to a 2021 news article written for WHYY, Rafael Logroño notes that national and international policies have impacted the economies of many Latin American countries. With the United States federal government's 1917 decision to extend citizenship status to its colony Puerto Rico, the migration of Puerto Ricans from the island increased tremendously. Many Philadelphians of Puerto Rican descent came to the United States to provide labor in factories as the United States work force experienced shortages as a result of World War II. As a result, El Centro de Oro, the vibrant Puerto Rican neighborhood in Philadelphia's Fairhill section now serves as a refuge and a welcome space for economic growth for the recent surge in Dominican migrants and immigrants who have settled there and established successful businesses. Logroño goes on to write that the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement in the 1990s adversely impacted laborers in Mexico who experienced increased poverty and job insecurity as a result. The financial pressures on low wage Mexican laborers have resulted in a tremendous increase in the Mexican population in the city of Philadelphia. Similar economic and social pressures have caused a large growth in the Central American population in Philadelphia, resulting in hundreds of people from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador migrating to the city. With 15.2% of Philadelphia's population being of Latin American descent and the rampant racist and anti-immigrant sentiment that is unabashedly touted in the national discourse, there is a fervent need to explore and celebrate the full humanity of the Latino/a/x community.

What is Latin America?

Latin America comprises specific political regions in the Western Hemisphere. However, these geographic locations historically have been contested based on racial, cultural and linguistic differences. According to Britannica, "Latin America is generally understood to consist of the entire continent of South America, in addition to Mexico, Central America, and the islands of the Caribbean whose inhabitants speak a Romance language" (Britannica, History of Latin America, par. 2). However, DotDash Media Incorporated's news media site, ThoughtCo.com suggests that Latin America is sometimes considered to include the islands of the Caribbean and all of the nations south of the United States in the Western Hemisphere without respect to language, Rebecca Bodenheimer's article "What is Latin America? Definition and List of Countries" acknowledges and employs what is considered, "The most limited definition...[which] defines Latin America as countries where Spanish and Portuguese is currently the dominant language, a definition that excludes French-speaking, English-speaking and Dutch-speaking nations. On the other hand, Dictionary.com defines Latin America as any country where Spanish, Portuguese and French are the official

languages. The divergence in definitions outlined by Britannica, ThoughtCo.com, Dictionary.com and Bodenheimer is evidence that the physical space and the concept of Latin America is both highly contested and often variable.

The history of Latin America is one fraught with violence and oppression. When European colonizers arrived in the Americas, their encounters with indigenous Americans had devastating consequences. After years of colonial rule and the harsh subjugation of both Indigenous Americans and African forced migrants who came to populate this region of the world alongside their Spanish, French and Portuguese oppressors, the late 1700s and early to mid 1800s sparked the inhabitants of Latin America to resist European domination. Many groups in Latin America began to organize forces in opposition to their colonizers. Interestingly, while Haiti is a country that has been and is often excluded from the region known as Latin America speculatively because it is a Black country liberated by the sacrifice and determination of enslaved Black people, becoming the first colony to successfully organize and rebel against their French colonizers, establishing its independence in 1804. However, in researching this fact, several sources consider Colombia to be the first independent Latin American entity. In considering the definition of what makes up Latin America, one must consider the forces that have been at play in the European colonization of many parts of the globe.

The motivation behind European imperialism, as in many similar quests, was rooted in the mission to attain power and wealth. As a means for increasing both wealth and power, European nations like England, Spain, France, Portugal, Germany and Italy relied on the forced physical labor of Indigenous American nations who were living in various parts of the Americas upon their arrival as well as the forced migration and physical labor of Africans who were transported to the Americas through the trans-Atlantic slave trade. In order to execute and sustain this hierarchy of oppression and subjugation, European nations propagandized existing racist ideologies to justify the caste system that placed people of color who were Black, Indigenous, and mixed race at the bottom of the hierarchy and justified their domination by white colonizers.

Despite gaining independence and embarking on the creation of national narratives aimed at dispelling some of the Spanish social structures from the colonial era, another kind of colonialism invaded Latin America in the form of foreign commerce in various parts of the region. American business established a new kind of imperial control in the newly independent nation of Colombia in the late 1800s. American business people began marketing bananas and other tropical fruits, creating the commercial entity called The United Fruit Company later renamed Chiquita. In the piece "Blood for Bananas: United Fruit's Central American Empire," Morey notes that United Fruit utilized unethical

racial practices that strongly mirrored the caste systems that were employed during the colonial period. United Fruit gave better paying more prestigious positions to white employees and subjected Black and Brown people to menial, hard labor oriented tasks. Management would then blame opposing groups for any perceived issues that arose in order to pit them against each other, deflecting any discontent from the white business managers and the corporation itself. Morey goes on to note that when nations occupied by United Fruit attempted to protect, rather than exploit the interests of its citizens, United Fruit, backed largely by United States business interests as many Americans owned stock in the corporation, the United States government overthrew governments and meddled in Central American political affairs in order to keep control of the resources such as land, ports and railways in nations like Guatemala in an effort to allow the American business to flourish while setting up puppet governments that supported American business interests as well as quell the power of Latin American nations ruled by nonwhite people.

What does it mean to be mestizo? What does it mean to be a mulatto?

When the quest for wealth and power cause different cultures to cross paths, there are inevitable consequences of these encounters. As European powers set out to establish commercial and geographic empires, many aspects of the two colliding cultures were altered both intentionally and unintentionally. The term *mestizo* is a Spanish word that means “mixed” and is used to describe people whose ancestry consists of multiple races, specifically European and Indigenous descent. In colonial and postcolonial Latin America, the word *mestizo* refers to people who are descended from European and indigenous ancestry who came to inhabit the region of the world known as Latin America. This intermingling of indigenous, Black, and white people were an inevitable component of the advent of the European colonizers. However, in the immediate postcolonial era, many Latin American countries employed intentional miscegenation in their effort to establish independent, national identities that took pride in the mestizo members of the citizenry. This phenomenon known as “blanqueamiento” was encouraged by the government in several Latin American countries as a nationalistic means to “better” the population by “whitening” the populace. This increased the number of mixed race people in Latin America and was a means of creating a “new” race as an after effect of colonization. These political decisions and policies effectively excluded those who were not white and Indigenous, leaving other racial groups such as Black and Asian identifying people outside of the “mestizaje.” Oro notes this exclusionary construct known as mestizaje “constructs its imaginary in opposition to and in negation to Blackness (233).

On the other hand, another phenomenon of European colonization in the Americas is the racial mixing of white and African people known as mulattos. While the term has fallen out of fashion because of its derogatory meaning, it is mentioned here to highlight the strategic ways that “Africaness/Blackness” has been marginalized throughout the Americas. Pew Research Center contributor Ana Gonzalez-Barrera writes that Hispanics and Latinos who are most likely to identify as mulatto are more likely born in the United States and to be more educated than those who are born elsewhere and of lower educational attainment. Gonzalez-Barrera cites the harsh stringents of the Spanish caste system as the motivation for shunning Blackness in the Latin American narrative, noting that people of African ancestry in Mexico, for instance, experienced the harshest segregation and discrimination under colonial rule, a legacy that lends itself to uphold anti-Black and even anti-Indigenous sentiments that persist in the present and against which many younger generation Latinos/as/xs shun.

What does it mean to be Hispanic vs. Latino/a?

The term “Hispanic” refers to people who are from or have a cultural link to a Spanish-speaking country including Spain, a European nation. However, the term has sometimes been used synonymously with Latin American or Latino/a/x and is rarely used to describe Spaniards. However, the designation Hispanic is too narrow and inaccurate a descriptor for all of Latin America if the Anglophone, Francophone and Portuguese-speaking countries of the region are included in the definition of Latin America. However, a mere linguistic criteria is not a sufficient marker for either designation. The combined colonial experiences and geographic proximity of people who live in the Americas, North, Central and South as well as the Caribbean Islands, whose inhabitants were all subject to the hegemonic control of European and later United States oppressors constitute the marker for what makes one Hispanic or Latino/a/x.

What is Latinidad?

Latinidad, in its most benign iteration, is described by Kimberly Cortez as, “the various attributes shared by Latin American and Hispanic people--without reducing these attributes to a singular trait or characteristic (Cortez).” The same identity is described by Miguel Salazar as a “forged ethnic identity” which proved to be “a necessity in the face of white supremacy (Salazar).” However, Salazar goes on in “The Problem With Latinidad” to examine the ways in which this construct proves problematic and illuminates the ways in which Latinidad perpetuates the racism and bigotry that its ideal aims to address (Salazar).

In “Dora the Explorer, Constructing Latinidades, Giudotti-Hernández suggests that the issue with Latinidad is that it “describes sets of images and attributes projected onto

Latin Americans and Latino/a subjects by the dominant culture (Giudotti-Hernández).” Alcántara takes issue with the term because “when you subscribe to the idea of a single Latinidad, [it] create[s] a monolith culturally and politically-of an entire continent when every single country and every single community has their own history (Salazar).” This amalgamation is analogous to the ways in which the continent of Africa is sometimes viewed as a single nation rather than a diverse continent with rich, unique and varied cultures that are dynamic and distinct. While Latinidad originally created a sense of unity in the face of adversity, perhaps in a similar fashion as the idea of pan-Africanism promoted by Black nationalist leader Marcus Garvey, there is a need to celebrate and understand the commonalities and the distinctions between each of the cultures that comprise Latinidad and even question the ways in which we view said entities. Additionally, the ideology of Latinidad has historically been based on Hernández’s notion of “*mestizaje*-pride” and “leave little room for acknowledging the particularities of more pronounced African ancestry” as well as the “disparities in living standards among Latinas/os of different races.” As Oro sheds light on the fact that Blackness in places like Central America were in many instances ascribed to the coasts along the Caribbean and were not included in the fashioned, national narratives of Central American nationhood centered on being mestizo and which touted mestizo pride. To that point, there is a more modern reclamation of Blackness branching off from the traditional Latinidad, here in the United States most prominently, which one could assert did not include Blackness in a meaningful way. This reclamation and acknowledgement of the convergence of Latinness and Blackness/Africaness is known as Afro Latinidad and is reshaping the narratives of what it means to be Latin post colonization.

What does it mean to be Latinx?

In the recent past, the Latino and Latina community as we knew it underwent a linguistic revolution to reclaim a freedom not afforded the masculine and feminine binds of a Romance language like Spanish nor the confines of the Spanish subjugators who inflicted their social strata on the people they colonized. Not only is Spanish the language of the colonizing Spaniards, it also denies those in the traditional Latino community who do not fit into the gender binary or the racial or gender ideal of colonial and postcolonial Latin America. As the Latino community reckons with its sordid, exclusionary past, the term Latinx has been coined as an intentional affront to the marginalization of its oppressor. In her writing about the origins and use of the term Chicano and the revisions made to it in recognition of the glaring and even blatant omissions associated with it, Contreras declares that “self-naming is political, ideological and resistant.” To her point, the term “Latinx” is an act of rebellion as Black, LGBTQIA+ and Indigenous people for whom the term Latino does not include in its linguistic default. Vicuña and Pérez suggest that the Latinx designation and those associated with

that affinity group tend to espouse more pro-LGBTQIA+ viewpoints. For many who have been marginalized, Latinx is a reclamation of a younger generation of United States-born Latinos/as who demand visibility and the freedom to name/claim themselves and redefine Latinness.

Teaching Strategies

Through various instructional tasks designed for this unit, students will utilize jigsaws, shared readings, engage in research as well as collaborative writing and collaborative discussions to read and understand concepts related to Latino/a/x identity. Students are asked to trace elements of their study of Latino/a/x identity in literary works by Latin American writers to shape their personal understanding of Latino/a/x identity. The exploration of literature in the unit will be conducted through the utilization of literature circles.

Classroom Activities

Lesson One: The Geography of Latin America
Lesson Duration: 1-2 class period(s) (approximately 45-90 minutes)
<p>Standards Assessed:</p> <p>CC.1.2.9–10.A Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.</p> <p>CC.1.2.11–12.A Determine and analyze the relationship between two or more central ideas of a text, including the development and interaction of the central ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.</p>
Learning Objective: Students will be able to identify and define the geographic and political boundaries of Latin America.
<p>Essential Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is Latin America? ● What constitutes Latin America? What countries are included?
Materials: Handouts (graphic organizers), laptops, KWLQ chart, articles
Vocabulary: import, export
<p>Instructional Directions:</p> <p>1) Students will complete the first column of the KWLQ Chart and share their responses. Students will then complete the second column of the KWLQ Chart and share their responses with their turn-and-talk partners. Before students read, teachers should review the lesson’s essential questions.</p>

- 2) Students will work in pairs or small groups to engage in a shared reading of this [article](#) on the history of Latin America. After reading the article, Students should complete the last two columns of the KWLQ chart and share their writings with their turn-and-talk partners.

- 3) Students will view the [charts on pages 186-189](#) from National Geographic and complete the [Three Column Notes](#) to compare and contrast what they read and observed. Then teachers should have students add any additional questions that come up from viewing the “Country Profiles” to the last column (the “Q” column) of the chart.

Note: Teachers could provide students with the following questions to consider as they view and write about their noticings:

1. *What countries are listed?*
2. *What languages do they speak?*
3. *How do the charts define Latin America when compared to the way that the article defines Latin America?*
4. *What items do these countries produce/export? Why might this information be important?*
5. *What items do these countries purchase for their use/import?*
6. *What inferences can you make regarding what these considerations mean?*

Name _____

Directions: Complete the KWLQ chart below before, during and after reading this [article](#) on the history of Latin America.

What I Know About Latin America	What I Want to Know About Latin America	What I Learned About Latin America	Questions I Have About Latin America

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Name _____

Directions: After reading the [article](#) and viewing the [charts on pages 186-189](#), complete the three column notes below. Record what you read in the article under the “What is Latin America” column and record what you observe/read in the “Country Profiles” section of the National Geographic document. Record any information found in both sources in the middle column

“What is Latin America?”	Information Found in Both Sources	“Country Profiles”

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Write down the most significant thing you learned from the article, the profiles or both. What inferences can you make based on this reading and your observations?

Lesson Two: The Sociology of Latin America

Lesson Duration: 1-2 class periods

Standards Assessed:

CC.1.2.9–10.C Apply appropriate strategies to analyze, interpret, and evaluate how an author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

CC.1.2.11–12.C Analyze the interaction and development of a complex set of ideas, sequence of events, or specific individuals over the course of the text.

Learning Objective: Students will be able to understand how colonialism impacted the people in the Latin American colonies.

Essential Questions:

- Who lived/lives in the region known as Latin America?
- How did living in this part of the world impact the social status of its inhabitants?

Materials: [article](#), [cause and effect chart](#), [article](#), Post-It Notes, writing utensil, laptop (if presenting articles electronically)

Vocabulary: blanqueamiento, mestizo, mulattoes, creole, social Darwinism, miscegenation

Instructional Directions:

- 1) Students will read the [article](#) and complete the cause and effect chart.
- 2) Students will work in pairs or small groups to engage in a shared reading of this [article](#) on the development of nationalism in independent Latin American countries. As they read, students will look for causes and effects that shaped Latin American identity.
- 3) After reading the article “Mestizaje In Latin America,” students will be separated into roughly 6 groups. Each group will read one of the paragraphs from the [article](#) #6-11 from *The Invention of Latin America: A Transnational History of Anti-Imperialism, Democracy and Race*.
Group One: Reads paragraph 6
Group Two: Reads paragraph 7
Group Three: Reads paragraph 8
Group Four: Reads paragraph 9
Group Five: Reads paragraph 10
Group Six: Reads paragraph 11

- 4) After reading each paragraph, groups will create a list of main ideas/key takeaways and record them on chart paper. Each group will post their list of main ideas/key takeaways. Students will then complete a gallery walk with 5 rotations, visiting the posters for the paragraphs they did not read first. As each group rotates, students can write down any thoughts, questions or wonderings on a Post-It note and place it on each of the posters.
- 5) Students will then return to the posters their group created to read any annotations made by groups who read their key takeaways. Responses to annotations can be made via Post-It note or via a brief idea share out facilitated by the teacher.

- Additional Supports:

- Extension Activities: Students could research and write a one pager about the Dominican Republic's 2013 decision to strip Haitians of their Dominican citizenship.

Name _____

Directions: Read the [article](#). As you read, look for causes and effects for how race impacted Latin America.

Cause: Why it happened	Effect: What happened
Cause	Effect

Cause	Effect
Cause	Effect

Lesson Three: The Evolution of Latinidad

Lesson Duration: 2-3 class periods

Standards Assessed:

CC.1.4.9–10.S Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research, applying grade-level reading standards for literature and literary nonfiction.

CC.1.4.11–12.S Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research, applying grade-level reading standards for literature and literary nonfiction.

CC.1.4.9–10.U Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.

CC.1.4.11–12.U Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments and information.

CC.1.4.9–10.X Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

CC.1.4.11–12.X Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Learning Objective: Students will be able to read about and analyze the evolution of the Latino/a/e/x community and Latinidad by engaging in a jigsaw reading of several informational pieces

Essential Questions:

- Who identifies as Latino/a/x?
- What is Latinidad? How has it evolved over time?

Materials: [article](#), [article](#) (shorter piece), [article](#) (shorter piece), [article](#), Post-It Notes, computer

Vocabulary: Latinidad

Instructional Directions:

- 1) Teachers should give students a Post-It note and ask students to write down what they know about the Latino community or any ways in which they experience Latino culture. Have students share their thoughts/responses in a

whole group discussion, posted on a chart paper or bulletin board in a braindump or responses can be captured on a padlet.

- 2) Teachers should then organize students into Jigsaw “home” groups and assign each group one of the articles in the resource bank.
- 3) Each group will read their assigned article and capture the main ideas of their writings.
- 4) Teachers will then regroup students into “expert” groups that allow at least one member of each of the initial groupings to be grouped with each other so that each member of the secondary grouping has read one of the assigned articles. In these second groupings, each member will share their main takeaways from each article with the other members of the group who did not read their assigned article.
- 5) Students will then create a one page infographic that explains the concepts of Latinidad/Latinx/Latino/a as they understand it based on the readings.

Note: Teachers can choose to have each group use one additional resource from the Resource Bank in preparing their infographic using digital tools such as [Google Slides](#), [Google Drawings](#), [Miro](#), [Canva](#), or another digital tool.

- Additional Supports:

- 1) [Jigsaw Method video](#)
- 2) Teachers may select a specific excerpt of the longer readings for groups to even out the length of the readings or assign reading to leveled groups. Also teachers could elect to have struggling readers read the shorter pieces.
- 3) Teachers could allow students to work in pairs or small groups to complete the infographic.

Resource Bank:

[Resource One](#) “Reconstructing Race: Racism, Culture and Mestizaje in Latin America”

[Resource Two](#) “What does your Latinidad mean to you? An exploration of the Hispanic/Latino/Latinx diaspora”

[Resource Three](#) “The Problem With Latinidad”

[Resource Four](#) “The Word “Latinx” is a Betrayal to Latinidad”

[Resource Five](#) “Caste and Politics in the Struggle for Mexican Independence”

Lesson Four: The Politics of Latin America

Lesson Duration: 2-3 class periods

Standards Assessed:

CC.1.2.9–10.A: Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

CC.1.2.11–12.A: Determine and analyze the relationship between two or more central ideas of a text, including the development and interaction of the central ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

CC.1.4.9–10.V Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CC.1.4.11–12.V Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Learning Objective: Students will be able to describe the impact of the political and commercial occupation of Latin American nations.

Essential Questions:

- What forces have shaped postcolonial Latin America?
- In what way has the United States impacted Latin American nations through government directives and commercial endeavors?

Materials: Readings, laptops

Vocabulary:

Instructional Directions:

- 1) Teachers will lead the class in a whole group reading this [article](#) “Foreign Intervention in Latin America.”
- 2) The class will then be split into 4-6 groups if the class is larger. The teacher could split the “Banana Republics” group into 2 groups since there are more resources to be researched there. Each group will conduct research on one of the following topics:

Haiti and the United States

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Article• Essay on U.S./Haitian Politics |
|--|

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essay on Commerce and Politics in Latin America
The Dominican Republic and the United States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article • Rafael Trujillo • Essay on Commerce and Politics in Latin America
Panama and the United States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Panama Canal • The Invasion of Panama • Reading on Central America
Guatemala and the United States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Guatemalan Civil War • Guatemalan Women's Testimonies • Encyclopedia Entry on Guatemala
Banana Republics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading on banana republics • Reading on Standard Fruit Company • A Reading on The United Fruit Company • A Reading on the United Fruit Company • Reading on Central America (This is an overview of Central America that could be utilized in multiple lessons but for the purpose of this lesson and activity the sections on "Economy," "Independence," "Dictatorships" and "United States Influence.") • Article on Banana Republics

3) After conducting research on your topic, each group will prepare a poster board presentation on your topic. Projects can be completed digitally using Google Slides, Google Sites or some other online tool. However, projects should be made accessible for the whole class to view.

- Additional Supports/Extension Sources: [Article on The Monroe Doctrine](#)

Lesson Five: Examining the Culture of Latin America : The Tradition of Son Jarocho, a Mexican Tradition

Lesson Duration: 1-2 class periods

Standards Assessed:

CC.1.4.9–10.V Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CC.1.4.11–12.V Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Learning Objective: Students will be able to analyze and explain the significance of the son jarocho musical tradition in order to pen an original “son.”

Essential Questions:

- What are the origins of the Son Jarocho musical tradition?
- What is the historical context for the evolution of the son jarocho tradition?
- What are the key characteristics of son jarocho music?
- Why is this tradition both an act of celebration and resistance?

Materials: readings on Son Jarocho music

Instructional Directions:

- 1) Teachers will open the lesson by playing “[La Bamba Traditional Dance](#)” and [La Bamba](#) (Ritchie Valens). Students will record their “noticings” and “wonderings” for each on this [graphic organizer](#).
- 2) Teachers will engage students in a shared reading of articles and blogs on the son jarocho musical tradition. The reading can be started as a whole group and then turned into a collaborative reading activity or completed as a jigsaw-like activity with groups being assigned a particular source/sources to read/view then share with peers in small group or whole class discussion the main ideas/key takeaways from each of the readings
- 3) Teachers will place students into groups of 4-6. Each group will be assigned a set of sources and excerpts to report from this [article](#).

Group One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This article section titled “A Brief History of the Enslavement of Africans in México” • The Egalitarian Sound of Son Jarocho • La Bamba Rebelde video (please watch the video and read the lyrics here) add to works cited page or recreate)
Group Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This article section titled ““Para Empezar a Cantar, Permiso Pido Primero:” Son Jarocho as African Diasporic Form’ • What Does Protest Sound Like?La Bamba for Change
Group Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This article section titled “The Creative Renewal of Afro-Diasporic Son Jarocho in the Music of Chuchumbé” (*Warning: lyrics analyzed in this section of the article have explicit material/sexual innuendo) OR Reading on the Origins of La Bamba • Songs of Freedom: The Evolution of Son Jarocho • Piece on Son Jarocho Music

- 4) Students will work in their groups to read/view and record notes on each source [here](#).
- 5) Students will write a mini presentation on the key takeaways from their sources. Presentations can be created using a digital tool and presented to the class by each group. As each group presents, students should take notes to use later in the culminating task to be completed after the literature circles.

[La Bamba for Change](#) (Note to teachers: Please have students pay attention to the diversity of the performers and their geographic locations if they do not make this observation on their own..)

[La Bamba Rebelde video](#) (Note to teachers: Please have students watch the video and read the lyrics [here](#)) add to works cited page or recreate)

[Piece on Son Jarocho https://www.jpanafrican.org/docs/vol6no1/6.1-12SonJarocho.pdf](https://www.jpanafrican.org/docs/vol6no1/6.1-12SonJarocho.pdf) goes in bibliography or Works Cited for unit

Name _____

Directions: As you read/view your sources, record your “noticings” and “wonderings” in the spaces provided.

Source Title:

Noticings	Wonderings

Source Title:

Noticings	Wonderings

--	--

Name _____

Directions: As you read, record notes on each search as well as an explanation for including the information in your presentation.

Source Title:

Source Key Takeaways:	Key Takeaways Rationale
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Source Title:

Source Key Takeaways:	Key Takeaways Rationale
-----------------------	-------------------------

Source Title:

Source Key Takeaways:	Key Takeaways Rationale
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Lesson Six: Examining the Culture of Latin America How-To Run Literature Circles

Lesson Duration: 1-2 class periods

Standards Assessed: N/A

Learning Objective: Students will be able to understand how literature circles function as well as understand/practice the various roles.

Essential Questions:

- What are literature circles?
- How do they work?

Materials: Literature Circles Role Sheets (see handouts below), [Handout for Mentor Text](#)

Instructional Directions:

1) Teachers will review and model the literature circle protocol with the students. The intention of this whole group lesson is to model the literature circle process for students before they actually begin working in their groups. The role share out will be completed as a whole class in order for students to practice a role as well as see their peers model the roles they did not work with but may be assigned in their circles. Teachers could opt to have students retain these initial roles in their literature circles since it is the role they practiced or allow students to select a new role. Teachers could also elect to repeat this lesson if needed to help students understand the function of the literature circles.

- 1) [Researcher](#)
- 2) [Connector](#)
- 3) [Literati Representative](#)
- 4) [Summarizer](#)
- 5) [Questioner](#)
- 6) [Illustrator](#)

- 2) Teachers will allocate roles to students before beginning the shared reading.
- 3) Teachers will group students by their roles together.
- 4) Teachers will engage in a shared reading of the **mentor text with the class either as a whole group or have them conduct a shared reading in their groups.**
- 5) After reading the mentor text, students will work in their “role/home” groups to complete their assigned role for this lesson.
- 6) Teachers will have students engage in a whole group share out that allows each expert group to share their work in order to model for everyone the function of each role before students work in their official literature circles as well as provide teachers with the opportunity to provide constructive feedback for successfully engaging with the roles during the Literature Circle cycle.

Lesson Seven: Examining the Culture of Latin America Implementing Literature Circles

Lesson Duration: multiple class periods

Standards Assessed:

CC.1.2.9–10.A: Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

CC.1.2.11–12.A: Determine and analyze the relationship between two or more central ideas of a text, including the development and interaction of the central ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

CC.1.5.9–10.A Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grade-level topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CC.1.5.11–12.A Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grade-level topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Learning Objective: Students will be able to read and respond to works of literature.

Essential Question:

- How has geography, sociology, politics and culture shaped Latino/a/x literature?

Materials: selected novels, literature circle handouts

Instructional Directions:

- 1) Teachers will review the literature circle protocol with the students.
- 2) Teachers will allow students to preview books to select their reading choice/option. The Reading Resources List are suggestions. Novels or readings can be teacher selected based on text availability. However, the texts should be authored by Latin American descended writers.

Reading Resource List

Reading Selection Title	Text Description
<i>The House on Mango Street</i> by Sandra Cisneros	This text is written as a series of vignettes told from the perspective of a girl named Esperanza. The language in this text is simple, but the themes are profound. This is a suitable reading for readers at all levels and may appeal to lower level readers for its simplicity in language.
<i>And Now We Will Be Happy</i> by Amina Gautier	This text is written from multiple perspectives and centers on Puerto Ricans born on the island and the mainland. The novel explores multiple aspects of humanity and all of its intersectionality.
<i>The Poet X</i> by Elizabeth Acevedo	This text, written in narrative poetry, is a coming of age story about Xiomara, or "X," a Dominican American teenager, living in New York City. "X" grapples with tradition, religion, identity, personal freedom, sexuality and becoming a writer.
<i>When Language Broke Open: An Anthology of Queer and Black Trans Writers of Latin American Descent</i> edited by Dr Alan Pelaez Lopez	This collection is composed of the poetry, prose and art of Latinx writers addressing topics like family, love identity, race, gender, class, spirituality and the possibility of humanity.

<i>Ordinary Girls</i> by Jaquira Díaz	This novel is a memoir that explores themes of identity, home, and Latinx identity.
<i>Drown</i> by Junot Diaz	This collection of stories are narrated by Dominican males who are defining their American identity as they navigate their communities in the Dominican Republic, New York and New Jersey.
<i>The Farming of Bones</i> by Edwidge Danticat	This novel is a love story about a young, Dominican woman of Haitian descent, living and working for a member of the Dominican military. Her life is forever changed when she is forced to return to Haiti, a land she has never known, in an effort to escape the genocide of Dominican Haitians at the hands of dictator Rafael Trujillo's regime.

- 3) After selecting their books, groups will select their roles and set their reading schedule based on the number of days the teacher allocates for the books to be read.
- 4) Students in each group should be assigned the following roles: [Researcher](#), [Connector](#), [Literati Representative](#), [Summarizer](#), [Questioner](#), [Illustrator](#)
- 5) Once the roles are selected, students will be given role sheets to complete for the duration of the literature circle cycle.
- 6) Then students will create a [reading schedule](#) for completing their "circle" selected book.
- 7) After creating the reading schedule, students will complete their "circle" cycle.

Name _____

Book Title _____

RESEARCHER

As a researcher, you are responsible for looking for additional information on your book, the author or any topic that arises in the text. This pertains to:

- Physical location/geography
- Information on the author
- Information about the era in which your novel takes place
- Potential historical connections to the characters in the book
- Information about events/phenomenon that come up in the book
- Events/phenomena that may have influenced the author and their writing

Directions: Information can be recorded as a list or in paragraph form.

Information/Topic Focused On:

Summary of Information Researched

Name _____

Book Title _____

Connector

As a connector, you are responsible for looking for ways that the novel relates to you, other texts or situations, or the larger world. This could include:

- Past experiences
- Current events that have happened in your community or the larger world
- Other works by the author or books on a similar subject
- Particular events in history

Directions: Information can be recorded as a list or in paragraph form.

Types of Connections I Made

Description of the Connections I Made

Name _____

Book Title _____

Literati Representative

As a literati representative, you are responsible for finding significant passages in the text for discussion with your "circle." Look for passages in each reading that are amusing, confusing, infuriating or create any other strong reactions.

Directions: For each reading, complete the chart below.

Page Number	Quoted Passage	Notes for Discussion on the Selected Passage

Name _____

Book Title _____

Summarizer

As a summarizer, you are responsible for capturing the key points/main ideas from each of the readings.

Directions: For each reading assignment, write down a paragraph that captures the main ideas/key takeaways from the text.

Page Numbers for the Reading:

Summary of the Reading:

Name _____

Book Title _____

Illustrator

As an illustrator, you are responsible for identifying a poignant scene or scenes from the reading. You will create your illustration independently and then present your illustration during the small group discussion.

Directions: For each reading assignment, first, describe and then illustrate a scene or scenes that will spark discussion within your “circle” in the spaces provided.

Description/Caption For Your Illustration:

My Illustration:

Name _____

Book Title _____

Directions: After choosing your book, each group will create a reading schedule that aligns to the deadline set by your teacher. Please record the agreed upon assignments in the spaces below. Readings can be divided by chapters or page numbers.

Total Number of Pages:	Total Number of Chapters:	Reading Deadline:

Reading Calendar

Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:
Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:
Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:
Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:	Pgs:

Literature Circle Project

After reading your selections, you will draw on your knowledge of Latin American history and politics as well as Latinidades in all of its iterations as well as the themes that emerged from the readings to write a version of La Bamba, the famous protest song from the son jarocho tradition, that illuminates themes, characters, events or phenomena from your selected reading(s).

You can model your song after La Bamba Rebelde, or The Rebel Bamba as Las Cafeteras crafted lyrics pertinent to the modern day while weaving in the original lyrics on the traditional folk song, although your lyrics do not necessarily need to include the traditional lyrics. In writing your version of this song, consider who your song lyrics are for and what subject matter your lyrics are protesting against.

Your “bamba” should include a minimum of 6 verses and no more than 10 verses with at least 6 lines in each verse. These stanzas do not need to rhyme. If you are multilingual and wish to utilize words from another language that is fine.

After drafting your “bamba, “ you will write a brief explanation for each stanza. Each student will give an overview/share their explanation as their “bamba” is presented to the class. After composing your “bamba” and writing your explanation/description, you will perform a portion of your “bamba” at the classwide fandango. Students should consider creating impromptu musical instruments, using everyday tools or body parts to create the sound that accompanies their “bamba.” Please note the focus will not be on musical talent but on the sharing of lyrics, music and dancing specific to the son jarocho tradition that is reflective of your reading and your understanding of its themes and the subject matter addressed in this unit. The ideal “bamba’ will have lyrics that consider and analyze the geographic, political, social and cultural identity/identities reflected in the unit and in the reading selections.

*Note: Teachers should give students the opportunity to work collaboratively to complete their “bambas” and rehearse their performances in preparation for the class fandango.

Name _____

Directions: In the spaces provided, write your version of La Bamba. In the space next to each verse, write a brief paragraph (5 sentences) explaining the rationale for your lyrics. Please note you need a minimum of 6 verses. Each verse must be a minimum of 6 lines.

Verse	Rationale

Resources

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Appendix

Common Core Standards Assessed

CC.1.2.9–10.A, CC.1.2.11–12.A: Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

CC.1.2.9–10.B: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly, as well as inferences and conclusions based on an author's explicit assumptions and beliefs about a subject. CC.1.2.11–12.A: Determine and analyze the relationship between two or more central ideas of a text, including the development and interaction of the central ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

. CC.1.2.11–12.B: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly, as well as inferences and conclusions based on and related to an author's implicit and explicit assumptions and beliefs.

CC.1.2.9–10.C: Apply appropriate strategies to analyze, interpret, and evaluate how an author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them. CC.1.2.11–12.C: Analyze the interaction and development of a complex set of ideas, sequence of events, or specific individuals over the course of the text.

CC.1.3.9–10.B: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly, as well as inferences and conclusions based on an author's explicit assumptions and beliefs about a subject. CC.1.3.11–12.B: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly, as well as inferences and conclusions based on and related to an author's implicit and explicit assumptions and beliefs.

CC.1.4.9–10.B, CC.1.4.11–12.B:: Write with a sharp, distinct focus identifying topic, task, and audience.

CC.1.4.9–10.D: Organize ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text; include formatting when useful to aid comprehension; provide a concluding statement or section.

C.1.4.11–12.D: Organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a whole; use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to link the major sections of the text; provide a concluding statement or section that supports the information presented; include formatting when useful to aiding comprehension.

CC.1.4.9–10.S: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research, applying grade-level reading standards for literature and literary nonfiction.

CC.1.4.11–12.S: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research, applying grade-level reading standards for literature and literary nonfiction.

CC.1.4.9–10.U: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically. CC.1.4.11–12.U: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments and information.

CC.1.4.9–10.V: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation. CC.1.4.11–12.V: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.