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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2006 Volume II: Latino Cultures and Communities

Esperanza Rising: Connecting Latino Students to Literature

Guide for Curriculum Unit 06.02.10
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This unit is written for fourth, fifth, or even sixth graders. The unit revolves around a book called *Esperanza Rising* by Pam Muñoz Ryan. This story is based around a Mexican family, and can allow great connections for all students, Latinos in particular. This story can be used for a variety of readers, depending on how the unit is implemented. It is ideal for shared reading, or guided reading lessons. The plan for the book includes vocabulary, Spanish phrases, and reading comprehension questions. Each question is labeled with the proper Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) strand, and is geared to familiarize the students with the format and acceptable responses to these questions.

Along with the lessons based solely on the book, there are lessons that will connect the students' emotions to the emotions of the characters. The students will track the journey of the characters in the story as well as the journeys of their own families. They will also be required to have conversations with their families about migration and moving, and will create a family history book at the culmination of this unit.

By the end of this unit, students should have a better understanding of what migration is and how it can change a family. Along with this knowledge, the students will be learning vocabulary pertinent to a Mexican migrant family, and California field workers. The students will also be highly focused on mastering comprehension of text as well as the completion of CMT questions.

(Recommended for Literacy and Latino Studies, grades 4-6.)

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