



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
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## **Writing from Images: Bringing the Latin American Heritage into the Classroom**

Curriculum Unit 14.01.06  
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### **Introduction**

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Teachers of world languages at a middle-school level usually encounter challenges such as convincing students why is important to know a language other than English. Our adolescents, nowadays, are very outgoing and have a great awareness of the world that surrounds them and its potential demands. Thus, they are not shy to ask, "What is the point of learning a foreign language?" Along with the need for instant gratification, our students do not feel a connection to the learning of another language unless we, as ambassadors of world cultures, bring to the classroom the perspectives, the practices, and the products of a culture other than the American culture.

Working in an urban district, I have always had a diverse student population. Teaching Spanish as a foreign language has proven to be a challenging task. Teachers, who like me, teach Spanish as a heritage language might identify with the difficulties that come across on daily bases, such as finding activities that will spark their interest, keep the motivation high, and at the same time improving student communication in speaking and writing.

As teachers, we might find ourselves required to teach the curriculum and cover materials that students must know and should be able to do at the end of each unit, and sometimes this goal becomes redundant and uninteresting for the students. Our students need to be engaged and excited when learning new things. From my personal experience, I have observed that Latin American history, when taught with visuals, sparks a great interest among students. They want to learn more about their ancestry, such as the rise and the fall of the Aztecs, or the traditions, symbols, and artifacts of the Taíno tribes in the Caribbean Islands. When listening to a Latin American history lesson, our students want to learn where their families and ancestors came from, what were their traditions, how their daily life was, and how they are preserving the culture nowadays. The unit that I will be writing and teaching must represent my students. It is very crucial that they feel an important part of the world culture and civilization.

## The Purpose of the Unit

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This unit is intended for eighth grade level of Spanish native speakers. The school where the unit will be taught is highly populated by bilingual and ELL (English Language Learners) where students learn Spanish in a differentiated way from the regular Spanish as a second language class. This group contains approximately 34-40 students who are fluent Spanish speakers, and they work alternatively with a regular curriculum and an addendum for native speakers.

The materials that teachers use on a daily basis are authentic resources for Spanish speakers that match their level of language proficiency.

Because the materials are very structured and already designed, this group of youngsters is missing an opportunity to be creative in their writing and also presentational speaking. Native Spanish speakers have a great understanding of their language. They are exposed to the Spanish language in their daily lives. It is the primary language spoken at home and in the neighborhood where most of the students reside. However, there is a gap in the way native Spanish speakers perform in written and spoken academic Spanish. Students are lacking the rich vocabulary that would allow them to speak the standard Spanish language and to express their thoughts freely using English. As the students progress in school and in all subjects, they learn more academic English, whereas the Spanish language does not progress at the same rate. Some of the materials that I use for this group of students are a book series by Pearson Education, called "Realidades." Nonetheless, along with the books, teachers have the flexibility to use different sources such as reading articles, short poetry, and other materials that will incite students' interest.

Such students have reached a certain point where they are comfortable communicating using limited, basic communication skills, whereas the proficiency level of academic Spanish has not made any progress. It remains within the frames of a simple communication of basic needs. The gap consists in the language input and output. In other words, our students can absorb the language, yet are not able to produce a satisfactory output, communicate freely and use standard, literary Spanish. Students are reluctant to speak in complete sentences, write solid paragraphs and properly enunciate words.

The purpose of the curriculum unit is multilayered. First, it will give students exposure to a rich Spanish language. It will allow students to bring into class and share their family heritage; they will explain, describe, and illustrate in writing and speaking their childhood memories using academic and standard Spanish. Secondly, it will give the students the confidence to speak clearly in public, express their opinions, and share their own experiences. Thirdly, it will give teachers who work with native Spanish speakers the opportunity to explore the resources I have used to write the unit and implement them in their lessons. Lastly, this curriculum unit will add to the native speaker curriculum in the City of New Haven and will offer to its teachers many ways to differentiate the lessons in a classroom.

There is a lot of research and many excellent curriculum units already written on this topic. However, this unit will contribute to helping our native Spanish speakers become proficient in writing and speaking. At a district level it might help other teachers who work in the same schools as I do plan lessons in order to meet the learning needs of our student population. At a national level, other teachers might benefit from the unit in ways that will bring more diversity in planning and teaching in the classroom.

## Objectives and Standards

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The objectives of this curriculum cover a wide range of what the readers will be able to learn and take with them at the end of the unit. The objectives will be seen from two angles: Objectives for fellow teachers or professionals who will be looking at the unit as a resource for research work, and objectives for the students to whom the unit will be taught.

As educators, teachers must always look for new ways to gain knowledge, to improve on teaching strategies, but most importantly, to build a solid professional background with rich information that will help them become experts in their field. By providing a literature review for fellow teachers, I intend to help them understand how writing evolved as a system, the development of writing from pictographs and symbols. It is then very important that teachers of Spanish make the connections with the symbols, arts, and writings of Latin America.

The second set of objectives will be those written for the students. From that perspective the unit will focus on what the students should learn and know at the end of the curriculum unit.

Keeping in mind that students must benefit the most, the lessons will be designed based on two concepts: Content objectives and language objectives. <sup>1</sup> Content objectives are wide; they will allow students to learn about the writings, art movements, and historical facts in Latin America, while they identify themselves with the overall culture and heritage of Latin American.

The language objectives will be the tools, the instruments the students will use to express themselves in writing or speaking. The language objectives are in alignment with the standards of learning a foreign language and they include the three modes of communication: interpretive, intrapersonal and presentational. However, the language objectives will focus more on interpretive and presentational modes of communication. <sup>2</sup>

## Research

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### **Language, Art and Writing in Pre-Columbian Mesoamerica**

Languages evolved as a mean of communication much earlier than the writing. Documented writing as a form of communication emerged when people began putting their thoughts on random objects such as stones, rocks, ceramic and later on, as writing systems developed, papyrus and then paper were introduced. Thus, writing became a sophisticated way of communication and expressing ideas, concepts and phenomena; nevertheless the early writing system were created based on the first pictographs and symbols. The world's writing system began with the early civilizations such as Phoenician, Mesopotamia, Egyptians, Greek and Summarian. <sup>3</sup>

In "Languages of Pre-historical Antilles" Cranberry and Vescelieus maintain that "nothing has survived of the lengthy utterances of Taíno Language" (Taínos were one of the tribes in the Great Antilles). Thus, in many of the islands of the Caribbean after the conquest of the Spaniards, languages were wiped out along with the

population, and it is therefore very difficult for researchers to study these dead languages. Little is known how developed the languages of great Antilles were when the explorers first arrived in the islands of the Caribbean. <sup>4</sup>

When the conquistadors came to the Caribbean Islands, they saw and conquered. The conquerors converted the natives to Roman Catholic and changed the names of the islands to Spanish names. The first contact with the natives was awkward due to the communication barriers. Thus, explorers were not able to make any sense of the utterances of the natives. Nor were the natives able to communicate their way of life beyond what the eye of the explorers could see. <sup>5</sup> For example, Cubanacan (Ciboney name for Cuba) became Juana. Ciboney was one of the tribes of the Great Antilles. The island of Haiti and Dominican Republic became "La Hispaniola".

In the archipelago of the Antilles during the pre-Columbian era, civilizations were developed in the form of small tribes and villages throughout the main islands of what are now Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Cuba, and Jamaica. Two main tribes called Ciboney and Taino had already established their way of life and were distinguished from others by their social structure, architecture, pottery and artifacts. However, after the colonies were established, Ciboney and Taino Indians, successors of the Arawak tribes in the Caribbean Islands, were extinguished within a century of the conquest. Lacking the language evidence anthropologist and archeologists have used symbols, art, pottery and paintings to discover more about the way of life in the Ciboney and Taino tribes of the Great Antilles. Ramon Dacal Moure and Manuel Rivero de la Calle in their book *Art and Archeology of Pre-Columbian Cuba* mention that pictographs (rock painting) were very popular in Ciboney culture and they were manifestations of their tradition and artistic creativity. However, Ciboney pictographs were very abstract and quite impossible to interpret because of their indecipherable nature. <sup>6</sup>



"Taíno pictograph telling a story of missionaries arriving in the island of Hispaniola." <sup>7</sup>

Meanwhile, in the Central American peninsula including Mexico, in the late 1400s pre-Columbian cultures were already established civilizations distinguished by their art, architecture, religious beliefs or other forms of worship. Most importantly, pre-Columbian cultures differed in languages. It is believed that thousands of languages in the America were spoken from Alaska to Greenland, including South American indigenous languages before the first contact with the Europe. <sup>8</sup>

The European conquest of Latin America was a very long process and included many areas. One of the main players was the clergy. The driving force behind the conquest, among others, was the expansion of Christianity. Moreover, with the fall of the Aztecs, codices and symbols were lost and burned in the center of Tenochtitlan, today's Mexico City. <sup>9</sup> Aztec Gods were slowly replaced by the Lady of Guadalupe, otherwise known as the Virgin Mary. The year 1521 marks the fall of the Aztec Empire. With more than 40,000 Aztec warriors perishing in the battle between Cortes and Montezuma, the new era of Spanish conquest marks the end of the Aztec civilization. Along with the death of the Aztec warriors and their noble leaders, the fall of the empire marks a systematic conversion from the aborigine cultures of Latin America to Roman Catholic beliefs and philosophy. The wars of conquest were not the only decisive factor in the making of history of the entire North and South American continents. Diseases that Europeans brought with them spread rapidly, and epidemics such as small pox played a role in reducing tremendously the Aztec population who vanished under the ruins of Tenochtitlan. <sup>10</sup>

The Roman Catholic mentality brought by Spaniards viewed the Aztecs and other cultures of Mesoamerica as having no fixed place in the history. Their existence was not foretold in the Bible; it was not documented anywhere. Cortes considered the Aztec city of Tenochtitlan as the equivalent to the old city of Jerusalem, or the old city of Troy, and he sought to govern it. In *The Aztec Pantheon and the Art of Empire*, John M.D. Pohl and Claire Lyons underline that Spaniards, led by Cortes, saw similarities between the Aztecs and the civilizations outside of "salvation"; therefore, they believed that to govern the New World, it was necessary to apply the laws of antiquity. The old Roman law of *de Jure Belli*, or the right of conquest by war, was very pertinent and consistent with the conquest of the Aztecs. <sup>11</sup>

With conquest came not only heartaches but also communication difficulties. The Aztec and the Spaniards spoke two different languages, Nahuatl and Spanish. Cortes relied on interpreters to figure out the Aztecs. One of them, an Indian woman called Doña Marina, who later became Cortés's mistress and bore him a son, is mentioned in many historical documents. Dona Marina, or Malinche, was considered a traitor who betrayed the Aztecs by revealing to Cortes that the empire was falling because of Montezuma's weak leadership. *Daily Life of the Aztecs* by David Carrasco and Scott Sessions reveal that through pictures and painting, important events were documented in the Aztec life. Such events tell the story of Aztec warriors, spiritual beliefs, natural phenomena like the passing of comets, or simple Aztec family life. Later on, even shortly after the fall of the empire, Aztec art, as a form of storytelling, was a sheer representation the Spanish conquest and the heartache that came with it. <sup>12</sup>

Aztec art has fascinated many art critics and researchers. The Dominican friar Diego Duran introduced in 1581 the *Duran Codex, the History of the Indies of New Spain, one of the earliest books of the Aztec history and civilization. The book was initially criticized for serving as a tool to help the "heathens" maintain their culture. The book was a collection of Aztec folktales, stories Duran had previously collected from other friars and the natives. Friar Diego Duran spoke fluent Nahuatl that enabled him to win the trust of the natives and share stories that natives would never share with other Europeans.* <sup>13</sup> For example, in the picture below, Montezuma has a clairvoyant moment while watching a comet passing by, and it is not the first time we see the use of astrology to interpret different phenomena in the life of the Aztec Empire.



"Montezuma watches a comet passing by."

The image is taken from Codice Duran, Chapter LXIII. According to Duran, the comet was interpreted by tlatoani (the king) as a signal; however, the Mexican doomsayers could not figure out what it was. Montezuma then consulted the Nezahualpilli of Tetzcoco who told him that the comet signals the fall of Mexico-Tenochtitlan." (Translated from the Spanish version.)<sup>14</sup>

### **Documenting Childhood in Art and Writing: Pre-Colombian Era**

In earlier cultures and civilizations, important events were documented through pictography or petroglyphic representations. Visual interpretations of what civilizations considered as important to trace and record were either done through symbols, pictography or petroglyphic images. Interpreting documents was not always easy because of the abstract nature of petroglyphic images. Documenting childhood in pictures or writing depended on how cultures perceived the place of a child in society and the way the civilizations developed. Thus, the Egyptian papyrus drawings reveal an interest in documenting children as part of the society.<sup>15</sup>

Documenting events and simple life differs from one civilization to the other. Aztecs pictographs are characterized by symbols that represent a specific meaning, and children are scarce in Aztec pictographs. Generally speaking, Aztec pictographs depict warfare, glory, triumph and defeat. Hence, cultural differences between civilizations clearly represented childhood in various ways, but the idea remains the same, children were a great part of the social structure. The social structure in the Aztec empire, just like those in other earlier societies determined what role children play and how were they brought up. For example, Aztecs,

according to pictographs were concerned about their children's education, thus, we can see in them a visual representation of parents bringing their children in school. The pictographs can be interpreted in many ways, but it is evident that Aztec society, as a very structured society, made room for the schooling and education of children. <sup>16</sup>

Similarities between the Egyptian papyruses and Aztec pictographs in documenting childhood are remarkable. Since both societies were a hierarchical structure, children's place varied from high social statuses down to slave children being sold in the slave market. In other pictographs, children of the lower class in the social ladder were depicted as slaves for sale, a status that they inherited from their own parents. Overtime children were allowed to buy back their freedom. <sup>17</sup>

### **Documenting Childhood in Art and Writing: Colombian Era**

After the Spanish conquest, Native American art changed drastically. It was oriented more toward religious themes and the building of its infrastructure. With the colonizing of the Americas, artists and intellectuals spent their early years in European art schools and universities with the intention of bringing the European culture to the Americas, especially South America. Artists who studied plastic arts came back with European art techniques. Among painters and artists was the well-known painter of the colonial era Cristobal Rojas (who studied Plastic Arts in Paris). <sup>18</sup> During the Columbian era we see a shift from native art to modern art. Murals became a way of expressing what was left of the continent and the indigenous culture. Along with the new techniques artists shifted the themes as well, yet they remained authentic to their roots. Thus we see modern themes treated by Jose Clemente Oroscio, <sup>19</sup> and more traditional murals by Diego Riviera. <sup>20</sup>

By the 1800s the Latin American Society has drastically changed. Peninsulares (those who were born in Spain) held the highest social rank. The other structures were placed in accordance with race and importance. For example, the blacks and the indigenous were at the bottom of the social ladder, whereas the "Criollos" Creoles (Whites born in the Latin American continent) were a step below the Peninsulares in the social ladder. Regardless of the ranking importance, the social structure and the family as its component were documented in the art work, writings or other forms of documentation. <sup>21</sup>

During the colonization of Latin America or the Caribbean, paintings that depicted women of color, servants, and slave masters were very common. Later in the 1800s, artists seemed to diverge from the religious themes and represented more a family theme and the daily life in the new continent. For instance, the Spanish artist Francisco Clapera in his painting *De Chino e India* depicts a typical family of the Americas. In the center is the head of the household who is the product of an interracial union. He is called "Mulato" (a mix between black and white parents). His wife is an indigenous woman and their child seems to be contributing to the household chores by sorting out what is seem to be cotton for textile. It appears that the family belongs to the artisanal class. But most importantly, we see how the life of children is visually documented during the 1800s. <sup>22</sup>

Even though powerful voices rose in the new literary society, Latin American literature was not developed as a literary current until the twentieth century with the introduction of the experimental Latin American novel. Yet one of the most talented philosophical writers in colonial Latin America was Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, a self-taught nun who lived in Mexico in the 1600s. Though an autodidact author and a poet, Sor Juana Ines de La Cruz in her work, *Respuesta a la Sor Filotea de la Cruz* (1691), documents pieces of her childhood from a child's perspective. Her exquisite style has become one of Latin American literary jewels. Her writings were artistic, well-crafted written segments of her life. Her work opened new doors for autobiographic writings in

Latin America, which was still an underdeveloped or underrepresented genre. <sup>23</sup>

The distinction of stories told from a child's perspective and an adult angle is quite evident in the writings. In Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, who offers a series of confessions of her childish manipulations that Sor Juana used to achieve her childhood goals. Her stories are quite entertaining and make the reader think of her as a bright, exceptional child with an embellished thirst for knowledge at an early age. For example, in paragraph seven and eight of the letter Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz writes, "... I hereby state that before I was three years old my mother sent me and one of my sisters, who was older than I, to one of those schools called Amigas, where we could learn to read. I followed her with affection and mischief. When I saw she was receiving lessons the desire to learn to read caught fire in me so much that I tried to trick the teacher (so I thought) by telling her that my mother had instructed her to give me lessons too." <sup>24</sup> The author brings memories of her own childhood from a child's perspective explaining how she saw the world and how she perceived the learning.

Certainly, there are many ways of documenting a child's life. Besides pictures, videos, journals are compilations of memories that a family holds very dear. However, documenting a child's early years was always done from a parental angle, thus an adult's perspective. Silvia Malloy in her book *At Face Value: Autobiographical Writing in Spanish America* mentions that in Epinal engraving, children were depicted less as themselves, than as miniature grown-ups.

According to Malloy's point, launching childhood memories from the author's perspective created depth, and revealed mysteries of family life, which was, interestingly enough, a part of the historical novel, yet not part of the history itself. <sup>25</sup> The concept of family life, as presented here by Malloy, it is in fact the root concept of Latin American social structure. A catholic decree, the "family" in Latin American culture is a social construct held together by traditions and celebrations that mark different stages in one's life. For example, "Quinceñera" a girl's fifteenth birthday marks her entrance to womanhood nowadays documented by videos or pictures, scrapbooks or journals.

## Unit Teaching Strategies

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The lessons in this unit will focus on the Spanish language and images. Since the unit revolves around art and writings in Latin American cultures, it will be focused on two major periods, pre-Columbian and colonial era. Hence, most of the lessons will deal with these periods. Furthermore, in order to personalize the lessons and make them meaningful for my students, I will incorporate themes from their family lives. Generally speaking, students like to share family memories such as birthdays, special events, the birth of their siblings, graduations, holidays, and other celebrations. The unit will give them the opportunity to use technology such as slides with images and captions to present their Spanish heritage.

While researching for strategies, I was able to find out multiple art and history ideas and incorporate them in the unit. For example, aborigin art is a very interesting topic to explore with students. Aboriginal art in the Caribbean Islands was very distinguished by its abstract nature and it can be a great source for students to use critical thinking and their analytical skills in order to interpret them. As a way to start a lesson, students can also compare aboriginal art of the Aztecs and that of the Tainos or the Ciboneys in the Caribbean Islands.

Creating a lesson combined with the art class will give the students the opportunity to explore, enjoy, and be



creative. It will also create a connection between Spanish as a language and other disciplines such as art, and history. As an assessment students can create their own "aboriginal" paintings and explain in writing or orally what the picture represent and why is meaningful to them.

Another teaching strategy that I will use is to create a mural. Either in group work or individual work, students can present it to their classmates or schoolmates. Murals were a very important part of Latin American art. Jose Clemente Orozco and Diego Rivera were two Mexican painters who incorporated indigenous art and history in murals. Murals were a very essential and very unique way to depict Latin American history and the wars of Independence from Spain. Teaching murals as an art and history lesson will open more opportunities for students to freely express themselves and work on project as a group showing cooperation and teamwork.

Since the lessons plans will have two sets of objectives, content objectives and language objectives, the lessons will follow a set of guidelines on sheltered instruction. The idea of designing a lesson plan following this model is taken from the SIOP model; a sheltered instruction observation protocol designed by Jana Echevarria and Ann Graves .<sup>26</sup> The rationale for following this model is to help students with scaffolding techniques so they do not become overwhelmed by the tremendous amount of information that they will find in Latin American art and history. Also, lesson plans and materials must be modified in accordance with the language proficiency. That is, the higher the proficiency level is, the more challenging materials are. For the lower level, readings will be differentiated and modified.

### **Lesson Plan 1**

**Time: 90 minutes: Level: 8th grade: Proficiency Level: Native Speakers**

<b>Content Objectives</b>	<b>Language objectives</b>
Talk about family life, members and childhood memories	Focus on speaking Present orally and describe in childhood pictures and memories.

#### **Part 1: 45 minutes**

Preparation

Teacher will go over the content and language objectives.

Strategies

Teacher will brainstorm with the students about their childhood memories. Teacher will link family concepts to students' background. Teacher will also present key vocabulary in writing, orally, visually and will highlight the key concepts for the students to see.

#### **Lesson delivery**

Teacher might use a variety of techniques and strategies to explain the concept of family life, relation, siblings, parents, grandparents and other relatives. Such materials include visuals, videos, books or teacher made materials. Teacher will reinforce the key concepts with activities, individual or group work.

Note\* Since students are native Spanish speakers, most likely a few of them have visited countries such as Puerto Rico, Mexico, Guatemala, etc. and have had very rich experiences in the countries their parents are

from.

## Review and assessment

Teacher might stretch the lesson depending on students' ability. The project depends on how well and fast students absorb the concepts and are able to perform successfully.

Teacher will present the performance task with clear direction and a rubric. The performance task might depend on the teacher. Some examples of performance task are: Present a poster with family pictures and describes the relation to the family members, time and place student took the picture, why is it meaningful and dear to them. Preferably the pictures must be from the Spanish speaking countries, or childhood pictures. The project can be in the form of a poster or if the teacher feels comfortable to challenge students technologically, she/he might design a rubric for a technology project such as Power Point presentation, or a slide show using an enhanced web-component. A web enhancement component can be a slide show designed on google.com or photodex.com. Students have to open their own account.

**Part 2:** Students will present in front of the class their projects and be graded with a rubric.

### Lesson Plan 2

Content objectives	Language objectives
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Learn about aborigin art in the pre-Colombian Antilles (Taino and Ciboney Tribes)</li><li>2. Apply the knowledge learned in a daily life activities by using aborigine art to illustrate events, concepts or point of views</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Use aborigine design or painting to write a paragraph in Spanish complete sentences and subject verb agreement.</li><li>2. Present the design in Spanish to the class using an oral rubric.</li></ol>

Materials: Taíno art (visuals and papers), drawing paper, pencils, or colored pencils

Strategies:

Background knowledge

Recall background knowledge by asking students what they know about aborigine art and if they have learned about this subject in art class.

Show on the overhead projector the "art" from the research work (Taino symbols in the Island of Hispaniola) and ask the students how can it be interpreted.

Ask the student to pick one of the symbols and write a paragraph (3-4 sentences) expressing in complete sentences their own interpretation.

## Lesson Delivery

Teacher will go over the language part of the lesson by explaining how important subject verb agreement in a paragraph is. (A teacher can conduct this lesson at her/his own discretion).

## Review Assessment

Pass around pencils, papers and a copy of the Taino symbols just studied.

Ask the students to think of one important event in their life, or an idea and interpret it in drawing using aborigin art.

Students will write a paragraph using correct and short sentences. Teacher will model a paragraph or use a sentence starter.

## Annotated Bibliography

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"Aztec Inventions". Mandatory Education. <http://www.aztec-history.com/aztec-inventions.html>.(2014).

This site is a useful source to help to help the reader understand the Aztec perspective on the cultivation and education of their children.

Carr, Nicholas G. *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains* . New York: W.W. Norton, 2010.

The chapter used as a source in this book helps the reader to understand how writing evolved from images and symbols. It gives an overview of old civilizations and how their writing systems developed.

Carrasco, David, and Scott Sessions. *Daily Life of the Aztecs: People of the Sun and Earth* . Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1998.

Useful source to understand how developed the Aztecs were in astrology and how they connected events and philosophical thinking with the movement of stars.

"The Class System in Latin America."

<http://www.etownschools.org/cms/lib/PA01000774/Centricity/Domain/629/Colonial%20Latin%20America101.pdf>

This presentation is a great resource to share with students in Spanish Class. It is a great tool to demonstrate, not only the Latin American history, but it has an excellent art work to learn how to interpret it.

Cranberry, Julian, and Gary S. Vescelius. *Languages of the Pre-Columbian Antilles* . Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004.

Useful source to understand how languages in the Antilles were created, what were their grammatical structures and why they vanished after the arrival of the conquerors.

De La Cruz, Sor Juana Inés. Answer by the poet to the most illustrious Sister Filotea de la Cruz by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1691) (translated by William Little). <http://dept.sfcollege.edu/HFL/hum2461/pdfs/sjicAnswer.pdf> . Last accessed 7/2014.

This PDF file is a great resource in which to read the complete essay to Sister Filotea translated in English. The reader is not only able to understand Sor Juana but also relate to her perception of the world and understand her academic writing.

Echevarria, Jana. *Sheltered Content Instruction/Teaching ELL with Diverse Abilities* . 3 ed. Boston: Pearson Education, 2007.

This book is very useful when working with English Language Learners. However, the strategies discussed, such as background

knowledge, objectives, lesson delivery, can be transferred when teaching Spanish as heritage language (to Spanish speakers).

Erman, Adolf. *Life in Ancient Egypt* . New York: Dover Publications, 1971.

"Haiti." In Wikipedia .<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haiti>. Last accessed 6/1/2014.

This site is very useful for learning about the history of the Hispaniola, the indigenous people and their art.

"Indigenous Languages of the America." [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indigenous\\_languages\\_of\\_the\\_Americas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indigenous_languages_of_the_Americas) (accessed July 1, 2014).

This site is a useful source for a historical perspective on the languages spoken in the Americas during the Pre-Columbian era.

Koestler, Rachael and William H. Goetzmann. *Hernando Cortes and the Fall of the Aztecs* . New York: Chelsea House Publishers. 2009.

This book, even though is written for young audiences it is a great explanation of how Hernán Cortes conquered the Aztecs. Besides the life in the Aztec Empire, it tells, the story of the fall of Tenochtitlan into the hands of the Spaniards.

Malloy, Silvia. *At Face Value: Autobiographical Writing in Spanish America* . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

This book is a useful resource to help understand children's place in Latin American literature and writing.

Mason, Kate. " *Mexican Muralists: Jose Clemente Orozco 1883-1949* ." <http://www.wfu.edu/history/StudentWork/fysprojects/kmason/Orozco.htm> (accessed July 1, 2014).

This site is a useful resource to learn more about Mexican Muralists during the period of the Mexican Revolution. It also gives students a historical perspective on how Latin American evolved from Pre-Colombian to Colonial art, leading to artists' self-awareness and cultural identity.

*Module 01: Demographic Catastrophe — What Happened to the Native Population After 1492?* (2004). [http://www.dhr.history.vt.edu/modules/us/mod01\\_pop/evidence\\_detail\\_06.html](http://www.dhr.history.vt.edu/modules/us/mod01_pop/evidence_detail_06.html). Last accessed 5/27/2014.

This site is a very useful source on Friar Diego Duran who contributed into recording the history of Latin America and particularly that of Mexico after the Spanish conquest.

Moure, Ramo, and Manuel Calle. *Art and Archaeology of Pre-Columbian Cuba* . Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1996.

This book is a useful resource to learn about the life in the Caribbean Islands before the arrival of Columbus. It describes the art, pottery and other cultural artifacts of the Ciboney and the Taíno populations.

"No es sabio el que sabe dónde está el tesoro, sino el que trabaja y lo saca." <http://historiasenconstruccion.wikispaces.com/%E2%80%9CNo+es+sabio+el+que+sabe+donde+est%C3%A1+el+tesoro,+sino+el+que+trabaja+y+lo+saca%E2%80%9D>. Last accessed 7/2014.

This site is a useful source to understand how the painting of Francisco de Quevedo De Chino e Indio is interpreted. It has tremendous vocabulary related to interesting art work in Spanish. It helps the students understand the cultural value of produces and perspectives in the Spanish speaking world during Colonial era.

Núñez, Arquimedo . *Biografía de Cristobal Rojas*. <http://www.actualidad-24.com/2012/06/biografia-de-cristobal-rojas.html> (accessed January 1, 2014).

This site is a useful source to read about Latin American artists and understand their work. Even though it is concise, it must serve as a quick reference source for students in Spanish art and culture class discussion.

Pohl, John M. D., and Claire L. Lyons. *The Aztec Pantheon and the Art of Empire*. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2010.

This book is an excellent resource of Aztec art. It is an illustration of the major Aztec monuments, statues, painting and sculptures. In addition, it covers the conception of the conquerors regarding the new world and the cultures they came in contact with during the conquest.

Olson, Julius, and Edward Bourne.eds "Christopher Columbus, Journal of the First Voyage of Columbus." *The Northmen, Columbus and Cabot, Original Narratives of Early American History*. . . New York: New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2003.

The journal is a useful resource to understand Columbus's point of view and his historical perspective on conquering the Caribbean Islands.

*Standards for Foreign Language Learning*. Available:

[http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/StandardsforFLExecsumm\\_rev.pdf](http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/StandardsforFLExecsumm_rev.pdf). Last accessed 4/2014.

This site is very useful for teachers of Foreign Language because it describes explicitly the teaching standards of second languages acquisition in United States.

"Sugar Cane Mural. "<http://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions>.Last accessed 7/2014.

This site is an excellent source to view art work. It has a comprehensive list of Diego Rivera's murals. (2014). It is a great way to introduce art work to students.

## Useful Sources for Students:

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Aztec stories told by Virginia Cano <http://mexicolore.co.uk/aztecs/stories/>

Aztec symbols and their meaning. <http://www.ancientscripts.com/aztec.html>Boricua kids. <http://www.elboricua.com/BoricuaKids.html>

Day of the Dead. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jCQnUuq-TEE>

Dominican Republic <http://www.infoplease.com/country/dominican-republic.html>

The history of Machu Pichu. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BeyZxu3mW-Y&feature=player\\_embedded](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BeyZxu3mW-Y&feature=player_embedded)

Ideas for Arts and Crafts <http://www.mexicolore.co.uk/aztecs/resources/ideas-for-arts-and-crafts>

## Appendix: Implementing National Standards for Foreign Language in the Classroom

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### Communication

Standard 1.3: Presentational Communication Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

*Planning according to standard 1.3 is a very important way to promote the learning of a foreign language. It allows students to produce language and present to an audience. In addition, it is a great tool to improve their fluency, accuracy and public speaking. Standard 1.3 can be applied in this unit since it will allow students to work with art, describe art work or images and explain it to an audience.*

### Connections

Standard 3.1: Making Connections Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.

Standard 3.1 gives the teacher the opportunity to expand the lesson and connect it to other disciplines. In, order to write the unit I have consulted sources from two subjects: Art and history. This will allow students to make connections while they study about history of the Latin America and use art to visually understand how the historical events occurred in the Pre-Columbian and Colonial era.

## Notes

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1. Echevarria & Graves, *Sheltered Content Instruction*, 58.
2. *Standards for Foreign Language Learning*.
3. Nicholas Carr, *The Shallows/What Internet is Doing to our Brains* , 58-60.
4. Julian Cranberry and Gary Vescelious, *Languages of Pre-historical Antilles* , 87-88.
5. Journal Christopher Columbus 1451-1506, Bartolome de la Casasc 1490-1558.
6. Moure & Rivero de la Calle, *Art and Archeology of Pre-Columbian Cuba* .
7. Haiti, Republic of Haiti, Wikipedia.
8. Indigenous Languages of the Americas, Wikipedia.
9. Koestler & Goetzmann, *Hernando Cortes and the Fall of the Aztecs*, 113-138.
10. Koestler & Goetzmann , *Hernando Cortes and the Fall of the Aztecs*, 113-138.

11. Pohl & Lyons, *Aztec Pantheon and the Art of Empire*, 8-12.
12. Carrasco & Sessions, *Daily Life of the Aztecs*, 1-3.
13. Fray Diego Durán, *Aztecs, The History of the Indies of New Spain*.
14. Codice Duran.
15. Adolf Erman. *Life in Ancient Egypt* ,155, 150-167.
16. Aztec Invention, Mandatory Education.
17. Aztec Invention, Mandatory Education.
18. Biography of Cristobal Rojas, *Biografia de Cristobal Rojas*.
19. Mexican Muralists, Jose Clemente Orozco, 1883-1949.
20. Interactive Exhibition, Sugar Cane mural.
21. The Class System in Latin America.
22. For this painting see, "No es el que sabe dónde está el tesoro, sino el que trabaja y lo saca."
23. Silvia Malloy, *At Face Value: Autobiographical Writing in Spanish America*, 69.
24. Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, *Answer by the poet to the most illustrious Sister Filotea* .
25. Silvia Malloy, *At Face Value/Autobiographical Writing in Spanish America*, 83.
26. Echevarria & Graves, *Sheltered Content Instruction* , 58.

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