



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1992 Volume II: Writing and Re-writings of the Discovery and Conquest of America

French Creoles in Louisiana: An American Tale

Guide for Curriculum Unit 92.02.02
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The story of America reflects a rich history of the many peoples who came to this continent to begin a new life. Some came willingly, looking for the challenges and the rewards; others were sent, in shackles, from prisons or as slaves. Their origins notwithstanding, these immigrants' contributions to American culture have created a unique nation. America is not a melting pot, but a marriage of cultures. These cultures mix and meld, share and exchange, adapt, adopt, and reject aspects of the foreign cultures which helped the immigrants forge an American identity.

The different ethnic groups and their contributions to the mosaic of American life are fascinating to study. As a French teacher, I enjoy learning about French Americans, their history and culture. The French Americans are descendents of French explorers and settlers who were resilient and creative in adapting to their new environment, and, in adapting their new environment to their way of life. They took advantage of natural resources, in particular, to establish their claim to certain areas of the New World.

This unit focuses on the French Creoles of Louisiana—their history, holidays and customs, music, dress, food, and language. Creole life today will be mentioned as evidence of the Creoles' tenacity and interest in holding on to their heritage.

This five week unit is designed for French classes levels II, III, and IV. In addition, it can be used in an American History class, an American Literature class, and a Visual Arts, Drama, or Creative Writing class.

(Recommended for French II, grades 9-12, French III, grades 10-12, and French IV-V, grade 12)

Key Words

French Culture U.S. Influence American History

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