



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1994 Volume III: Understanding the Ancient Americas: Foundation, Flourishing, and Survival

Cultural Aspects of Spanish in America

Guide for Curriculum Unit 94.03.02
by Eva de Lourdes Diaz

This unit is addressed to teachers of Spanish as a foreign language, though excerpts of the unit can also be used by teachers planning lessons on multicultural themes. Students of Spanish as a Foreign Language are normally presented with a language of European origin (Castilian Spanish), and teachers are constantly having to explain language variations in the Spanish spoken in America. As English in America differs from British English, so does Spanish.

The unit includes three lessons, (1) New World Foods / Los Alimentos del Nuevo Mundo, (2) A Trip to the Marketplace / Un Viaje a la Plaza del Mercado, and (3) Poetry and Art / Poesia y Arte. The first lesson is complemented by a list of foods that traveled from America to Europe and other parts of the world, and a list of foods that traveled from Europe and other parts of the world to America. Their names are given in English and Spanish. A brief anecdote of their voyage is provided. The second lesson is inspired by the book *The Conquest of New Spain* by Bernal Diaz in which he writes as an eyewitness with Cortes about that first trip to the marketplace in Mexico. The third lesson introduces the student to the Aztec poetry of Netzahualcoyotl, former ruler of Texcoco, translated to Spanish. The annotated bibliography provides references of art books that show contemporaneous representations of the extended metaphors in the poems.

(Recommended for Spanish as a Foreign Language or for a multicultural lesson in mainstream classes, grades 6-12)

Keywords

Spanish Latin American Literature Culture Social History

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