



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1995 Volume IV: Coming of Age in Ethnic America

Mosaic America: Paths to the Present

Guide for Curriculum Unit 95.04.07
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Mosaic America: Paths to the Present will be designed to allow the teacher and the students to do a comparative examination of African American, Latino and Native American history through the arts. There will be a significant change in the United States' population during the twenty-first century. This change will be manifested in the classroom. The potential difficulties of intercultural communications can be decreased if students appreciate and accept diversity.

Using this curriculum unit, seventh grade students will become more aware of the ideologies of life, values, love, peace and struggle of African Americans, Latinos and Native Americans as citizens of the United States. All of the cultures that make up the United States have deep roots in history. Authors and artists will be used as tools to open the eyes of the students and allow them to see the impact and significance of cultures upon the history of the United States. Through traditional stories from different groups, students will explore the customs and beliefs of their culture and others.

As students read and examine works of art, they will be required to develop a portfolio that demonstrates their skills in writing, critical and creative thinking, and knowledge of the elements and structure of literature. They will be required daily to orally express their ideas and keep a daily journal of those ideas. Students will develop illustrated time lines from lectures, reading assignments, videos and museum field trips that focus on migration of African Americans, relocation of Native Americans, and immigration of Latinos from one region of the United States to another.

Additional skills will include research through the Internet. Students will be given the opportunity to become effective users of this communication technology. This will assist students in obtaining essential experience with the Internet and become effective communicators in their communities and in their future endeavors.

The citizens of the United States face many challenges. From the birth of the nation, the motto of the United States has been "E pluribus unum"— "Out of many, one." This motto reemphasizes and reflects the nation's diverse nature— many regions, many cultures, many traditions. At the completion of this unit, students will appreciate and celebrate freedom to be themselves, to respect one another, and to work together using each other's strengths.

(Recommended for World Cultures/Geography, grade 7; and U.S. History, grades 7-12)

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