



## The African Presence in the Caribbean

Guide for Curriculum Unit 97.01.03

by Elsa Mar'a Calderón

This unit is about African-Antillean poetry. It is written for students in Spanish 4, Spanish 5, or Spanish for Spanish speakers. The unit examines various elements of Black poetry from the Spanish-speaking Caribbean (*la poes'a afroantillana*), including the African sound, the African glossary and references, the poetic devices such as onomatopoeia, and the African themes. These African themes are a nostalgia for Africa, the exotic beauty of the *mulata*, the anguish and joy of the black race, and a new identity: the Antillean identity. The two poets profiled are Luis Palés Matos and Nicolás Guillén. This unit includes a background section on these two poets, references to selected poems, a teacher outline, student objectives, lesson plans, and a bibliography. The music of Gloria Estefan, Celia Cruz, and Tacuafán are recommended. Students will read poems, listen to songs and musical instruments, research African culture, and perhaps make African Yoruba masks. They will also compose original poems. This unit lends itself to an interdisciplinary unit by making connections with Langston Hughes and other poets of the Harlem Renaissance. Field trips to art galleries and to the Puerto Rican community of New Haven are also recommended. This unit celebrates the African presence in the Caribbean.

(Recommended for Spanish and Spanish for Spanish Speakers, grades 9-12)

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