



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1997 Volume I: Twentieth Century Latin American Writing

Short Novels, Stories and Poetry of the Latin Americas (Dedicated to my daughters, Valeria and Patricia)

Curriculum Unit 97.01.10
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Part I

There is no more important task before this nation than building and encouraging children to learn. All of us are now firmly a part of a global society on which our economic and political lives depend. Understanding other cultures and groups is no longer a luxury. It is imperative. As teachers, we need to help our children discover that many elements of many cultures exist within our way of life and that understanding others is not only important but also relevant to our own lives. In education, we teachers know that the diversity of cultural values and family customs in our communities make every class multicultural to some degree. *Language* is one of the fundamental signs of our humanity. It is the “palette” from which people color their lives and culture. Intimately connected to the human experience, language oils the gears of social interactions and solidifies the ephemera of the mind into *Literature*. *Language* is a central element of who we are, how we think of ourselves, and how others see us. It is tied in a myriad of ways to the history of generations past and to the present—day struggles of culture, identity, and communications in homes, communities, schools, and variety of other institutions. *English Language* has been enriched by a vast numbers of words from many cultures, and languages, especially from Latin America.

With the design of a program using the Latin American process of Literature and Poetry of the 20th Century, (adapted to the interest and development of each child) our students will love to listen to the stories, providing the setting to study elements of literature. The teacher should discuss meanings with students, whenever possible. Students will be asked to do various activities to prove that they are able to use language expressions or vocabulary in situations not necessarily related to the story-line of the poetry—or short novel selected. This program is guaranteed to make the students more eager and able to understand and discuss the strength and power of other cultures, incorporating higher—level thinking skills. By introducing this Unit, we are acquainting our children with part of their own heritage and literature as Americans.

They may learn that there exist marked similarities and differences between North American culture and that of their neighbors. This Unit also open the way to interdisciplinary discussion of Latin Americas problems in which the United States plays an active role (political intervention, industrialization). Depending on the short novel chosen or stories, this Unit can function as an alternative selection of readings for the Social Studies class or as part of a more comprehensive study unit on Latin American topics. Some of the stories treated in the complete unit are Gabriel García Márquez, “ *Un Día De Estos* ,” (One of these days), “ *Los Funerales de la*

Mama Grande " (Big Mama's Funeral), "*La Siesta* " (Tuesday Siesta), and "*Rosas Artificiales* " (Artificial Roses). Poems: "*Pueblo* " (Village), "*La Arboleda* " (The Grove), Octavio Paz, 1970.

The degree to which this program is successful will, of course, depend largely on the teacher use of the materials.

Perhaps the most important feature of the Unit is the belief that the essential goal of reading the stories, novels and poems of the Latin Americas, is to inspire in the students the enjoyment of knowing these relatively untouched areas in the elementary school curriculum (also in middle and high school) due to the lack of relevant texts for kindergarten to 12th grade level. It is only in the past few years that texts have appeared introducing Contemporary Latin American novels, stories and poetry.

To integrate the teaching of reading Latin American literature and poetry, it is advantageous to be aware that children are introduced to reading, using large, purposeful units of meaning. The selection is discussed, and activities related to it may all be carried out before the selection is broken into paragraphs, sentences, words and letters. Strategies such as context, sentence structure, and word knowledge help them to recognize *language* elements.

First a book must be chosen that will fit curricular needs and the interest and abilities of students. After several careful readings of the book—short story or poem in English and Spanish, it will be possible to sketch out the Objectives and Activities for the Lesson or Unit. The approach of this Curriculum Unit is to present the New Narrative and poetry within the context of Latin America history and culture. According to the Cuban writer Alejo Carpentier, "Latin America was founded on the basis of a fantastic invention, and that the New World in contrast of the European surrealism, is permeated with magic and myth." (pg 17) (1).

Part II Historical Backgrounds

All literature begins with the oral tradition, when stories were told during winter nights after a whole day of hard work.

The Hispanic oral tradition has a very rich mixed history. The peninsula was invaded first by the Latin—Romans, then by the German visigoths and later by the Muslims who remained for more than eight hundred years, developing their culture, and given a strong influence to the rich oral tradition. Also the tribal cultures were incorporated when the Spaniards invaded and attacked them. As a result of all these invasions, including Africa, new stories were created in response to new realities. But the written literature had a different development. Those who knew how to read and had access to books, initiated a written literature, based on the popular tradition. Since then the scenario were filled with exceptional writers like: Miguel De Cervantes y Saavedra who published the first part of his famous "*El Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quijote De La Mancha* "—(Don Quijote) in 1605.

Several Nobel prizes have given prestige to the Spanish writers at the end of the nineteenth century: Jose Echegaray (1832-1916, Nobel Prize 1904), Jacinto Benavente (1866-1916, Nobel Prize 1922), Juan Ramón Jiménez (1881-1958, Nobel Prize 1956). Vicente Aleixandre (1900-1984). Camilo José Cela (1916, Nobel Prize 1989). All these writers obtained worldwide recognition, but Latin American writers practically were known first in Europe, when numerous publishing houses appeared, some of them devoted exclusively to children's

publications. Various awards were established, contributing to the legitimization of a genre throughout the Spanish speaking world.

The Latin American literature developed differently but consistently in the various countries, describing the need of Latin American reality. Private publishing houses also began to recognize the rich Latin heritage and to publish beautifully illustrated versions of traditional legends and poetry.

The theme of multiple heritage is a historical reality for Hispanics. The novelist José María Merino, surprised that the historically significant experiences of the invasion and colonization of Latin America were not represented in the literature for young readers, attempted to respond to the challenge. His trilogy of novels has as a protagonist, a young boy who is the son of a Spanish “conquistador” and an Indian mother. Unfortunately there remains a lack of other books that attempt to address this subject matter. (2)

The history of Spain and Latin America has begun to be a literacy subject for young readers. Many of our classrooms have students who are newcomers to this country, and the necessity to understand their needs is strong. Teachers must have information to foster mutual understandings.

This Unit has been written with these needs in mind but optimum learning, however does not take place without a supportive environment that includes social acceptance. It is difficult to provide that environment if we do not fully explore, acknowledge, and respect the diverse cultures present, whether for newcomers or of longtime citizens who retain ethnic attributes.

Part III Latin American Writers From the Twentieth Century

There is a roaring avalanche of extraordinary writers. To name a few I will start with 5 Nobel Prizes:

Gabriela Mistral (1889-1957):

This famous Chilean Poet was born in Vicuña, Chile in 1889. From a very young age, she showed herself capable of composing verses. In her youth, she wrote several articles for the Newspapers of her province. From 1912 until 1921 she worked as a Spanish teacher and during the 1920's she traveled to Mexico, Europe and other South American countries, evaluating their systems of education and as a representative from her country. Her first poetic work, *Sonnets of Death*, came out in 1915. In 1922, her best collection of poems, *Desolation*, appeared. The literary world considers her a very important poet in the circle of Lyrical Poetry. In her poetry are shown a love for children and maternity (even though she never married) and a compassion for the frustrated and misfortunate. Due to her Lyricism in poetry, they granted her the Nobel Prize in 1954. Her poetry is famous for its musicality and emotional, almost mystical spiritualism. Others: *Tala—Lagar*.

Miguel Angel Asturias (1899-1974):

Born in Guatemala. He was fascinated with the Indian legends. He learned from them that reality is a mix of realism and imagination. In his novels he experimented with the language, with the “automatic” form of surrealism’s writing and the representation of thoughts and dreams. He protested against the North American bananas Companies and against the United States intervention in his country in 1954. His books: “ *Mr. President*, *Weekend in Guatemala*, *The Green Pope*, and others. Nobel Prize: 1967.

Pablo Neruda (1904-1973):

His real name was Neftalí Ricardo Reyes. Born in Parral, Chile, he grew in the pioneer town of Temuco, briefly encountering Gabriela Mistral, who taught there for a time. In 1920 he went to Santiago to study, and the following year published his first collection of poetry, *La Canción de la Fiesta* (The Feast Song). His father did not approve his tendency as a poet, apparently to avoid his father's disapproval, he restyled himself "*Pablo Neruda*", choosing a working-class first name and surname that recalled the nationalistic Czech historical novelist Jan Neruda (1834-1891). A second collection (*Twilight book*, 1923) brought him critical recognition, but Neruda's first major publication was *Veinte Poemas de Amor y Una Canción Desesperada* (Twenty love poems and a song of despair), 1924 in Santiago. From 1927 to 1943 Neruda lived abroad, serving as a diplomat in Colombo, Rangoon, Batavia, Singapore, Buenos Aires, Barcelona, Madrid, Paris, and Mexico City.

In Madrid, Neruda came into contact with pre-civil war politics and with some of the most important poets of the Spanish "Generation of 27", like Federico García Lorca, Rafael Alberti, and Miguel Hernández. He joined the Communist Party of Chile after World War II, was prosecuted as a subversive, and began an exile that took him to Russia, Eastern Europe, and China.

Already the most renowned Latin American poet of his time, he returned to Chile in 1952. Through this period (1954-1964) enacted his identification with the democratic individual in surprisingly accessible poems. Neruda's later love poems, were dedicated to his third wife Matilde Urrutia, returning Neruda to the image-rich affection of *Veinte Poemas De Amor*. (One Hundred Love Sonnets, 1959).

While he was living in Paris serving as the Chilean ambassador to France, he became ill and returned to Chile where he died two weeks after the CIA-backed coup in 1973, and toppled the democracy.

His famous *Canto General* (General Song) was written in the context of the vistas, flora, and human customs of the Latin America continent (including the Araucanian Indian tradition of Southern Chile). Nobel Prize: 1971.

Gabriel García Márquez (1927-) (my favorite writer). (The Magic Reality):

Born in Aracataca, Colombia (1927, a small town on the Caribbean coast, influenced greatly by North American banana interests). Lived with grandparents during first eight years of life which were his most memorable years. In many occasions he said: "that nothing interesting happened to him during the time after his grandparents died when he was only eight years old." "That everything he knows occurred to him before that age." His grandmother was a great storyteller whose anecdotes/accounts served as impetus for many of García Márquez writings.

He became a journalist upon completion of his education. Later served as foreign correspondent in Rome and Paris. His most famous work "*Cien Años de Soledad*" was written in 1967. Part of the "Boom" in Latin America Literature, he brings light onto the concerns and predicaments of his country. In 1982 he received the Nobel Prize for literature.

Octavio Paz (1914-):

Is Mexico's foremost man of letters of the Twentieth Century. His most famous prose work, *El Laberinto De La Soledad* (The Labyrinth of Solitude, 1961), explored the complexities of the Mexican psyche. In the 1930's he fought on the side of The Spanish Republic. As a diplomat in the 1950's, he represented Mexico in several countries. His essential themes of his essays and poems are solitude, time, love, communication and nature.

He writes about the attitudes and character of the Mexican people but with a deep concern about the destiny of the whole human beings. He thinks that it is possible to reestablish the dialogue between people through the poetry and love.

His best poems are: *A La Orilla Del Mundo* (On The Edge of The World, 1942), *La Estación Violenta* (The Violent Season, 1958), *Blanco* (White, 1967). He uses a very complex metaphorical language. Paz won the 1990 Nobel Prize in literature.

Other biographies from the suggested writers are available in the list at the end of the Unit.

Although I chose the most important Nobel Prize writers from the Latin Americas, I would like to introduce a short biography of a very young writer considered as one of the best New Age novelists of this time. She is one of the most highly praised and widely read writers of fiction to come out of Latin America in this Century.

Her name: Isabel Allende, the reason why I chose to introduce her in this unit is very personal and also because I believe that sooner or later she will also win a Nobel Prize. The personal reasons are explained at the end of the unit. It is a sort of homage to somebody I met in person and for that reason she became part of my life.

Isabel Allende (Chile 1938-):

She is one of the novelists who always appears in the list of the best contemporary Latin American writers. Her novels are: *La Casa De Los Espíritus* (The House of The Spirits, 1982), *De Amor y De Sombra* (Of Love and Shadows, 1984), *Eva Luna* (1987) and *The Stories of Eva Luna* (1990).

Her last book: *Paula* was written in memorial of her daughter as a powerful autobiography whose straight forward acceptance of the magical and spiritual worlds appear before our eyes unforgettable, were memories, amazing anecdotes of youthful years come alive as symbols of a general reform the society needs, if life will be better for all of us as human beings.

Part IV Basic Goals

1. Incorporation of Contemporary Latin American Writer and Poets.
2. Selection of issues of Children's Literature.
3. Selection of Novels—short stories for older students.
4. For classes where the Native Language Spanish and or English are used.
5. Cross—cultural understanding for English and Spanish in Elementary—Middle and High School.
6. Introducing Spanish selected literature from Latin Americans as part of the Curricular or Framework.
7. Increasing social skills.
8. Improving communications skills.
9. Developing a positive self-concept.
10. Providing recognition.
11. Stimulating cognitive development.

12. Encouraging creativity and having fun.

Part V GENERAL OBJECTIVES ACADEMICS CONCEPTS (Reading and Writing)

SEQUENCED SKILL PLAN for each lesson

1 — Awareness and attention

— Increase understanding of learning and social situations.

SPEECH AND PHONICS — To articulate correctly and to analyze/synthesize sound patterns that communicate it through poems-short stories.

ANSWERING & DESCRIBING — To improve the ability of expression.

— To retrieve needed information and construct sentence patterns that communicate it.

LANGUAGE ARTS — To lose fear when reading a poem, or a story in front of other people.

— To increase vocabulary taken from books written by contemporary Latin American writers.

— To introduce Latin American writers from the 20th century.

ESL — To improve Language skills in English and Spanish.

To recall and use familiar language patterns.

SOCIAL SKILLS— To develop self-esteem and confidence without criticism from peers.

— To understand needs of peers when showing areas of weaknesses.

— To work in group sharing knowledge through the stories they read.

Part VI GENERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR:

A. PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES

B. METHODS

C. TYPES OF ACTIVITIES

What we do in our daily role working with children has an effect on their growth as an individual. To have a positive influence, careful thought and planning must be given to selecting and implementing all activities we use with children.

A. To plan strategically, we should take into consideration the following:

teaching objectives, developmental needs, activity variety, teaching methods, resources and program evaluation. This unit will provide ways of looking at activities which might stimulate and aide the creative planning process.

Before planning any activity, we need to decide up front what we want to achieve to insure having a positive effect on children's development. Lack of planning could affect youth negatively. An activity can serve many purposes. Good program strategies take into consideration the physical, cognitive (thinking) and emotional components of children's developmental needs.

GENERAL BASIC GOALS OF PLANNING

- Increasing social skills
- Enhancing physical development
- Improving communication skills
- Developing a positive self-concept
- Providing recognition
- Stimulating cognitive development
- Encouraging creativity
- Providing positive leisure experiences in a safe and caring environment, and
- Having fun

EFFECTIVE PLANNING CHECKLIST

Once goals are determined, *planning activities* to carry out those goals should be concerned with the developmental levels of the children, size of group, time and space, resources needed, rules and directions for the activity.

Flexibility is important for planning. There will be times when external forces will change plans at the last minute. Careful planning involves having alternatives activities for such times and also a willingness to make changes when appropriate.

B. Methods

For the Unit

METHODS:

1. Include learn by doing (experiential)
 - Lecture or discussion
 - Modeling
 - Repetitive
 - Experimental
2. A second method of planning is:
 - Deciding what we want to accomplish
 - The steps needed to attain that goal will provide us with activities
 - Each of these steps breaks down into one or more activities

3. *Theme Planning*: Involves taking a specific topic and building a variety of activities which are connected to that topic. C. *Types of Activities for the Unit*

They could be in a variety of ways:

- Active or passive

- Group or individually oriented choosing from:
- Creative arts
- Language arts, (stories, music, dramatics, writing).
- Subject matter: problem solving
- Physical education; physical play
- Leisure education; free play, field trips to libraries
- Show and tell; share and tell, magic circle
- Group projects

Part VII

TEACHING PLAN (3)

This is a teaching plan for each book in the unit. The structure of each plan is similar. Each plan begins with these appropriate questions:

- What happened?
- Where, when, and how did it happen?
- Who did it?
- Why?

These are the usual reading comprehension questions, and children will be more eager to prepare themselves for the theme presented.

TEACHING SEQUENCE

Consists of three steps:

- Shared Reading* Will provide modeling strategies to share the reading process with children.
- Responding*
Will provide a variety of ways to interpret each story personally.
- Rereading*
Will offer specific and fun rereading

The teaching sequence for each read aloud book also consists of three steps.

(See part Basic Goals)

Listening

1. Literature appreciation

As you read aloud, provides a purpose to engage children with the story or poem.

2. *Responding*

Offers way to interpret each story personally in the light of one's own experiences and emotions.

3. *Rereading*

Provides ideas, assessing what they have learned, comparing books, finishing activities, and reviews of the ongoing goals and objectives.

Even more important is the transferability of attitudes, because reading is a skill that is acquired with practice, we need to foster it with easy and attractive activities. With a positive attitude and confidence, children will acquire the love of reading.

Part VIII

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

A. Lesson Plan I Designed for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade Level.

Theme : Selected Poems by Different Authors From a Variety of Latin American Countries.

Authors selected for the lesson:

- a. Gabriela Mistral (Chile) Poems: "Close to Me",
"Apegado A Mi", "Pan", "Muro",
"La Noche", "Night", "Balada de la Estrella". "Ballad of the Star".
- b. Nicolás Guillén (Cuba) "Selected Poems", "Un Son Para Ni-os Antillanos", "Por El Mar De Las Antillas",
"Canto Para Matar Una Culebra"- "Sense Mayá," "Chant for Killing a Snake".

(Chile)
 "Selected
 Odes of
 Pablo
 Neruda",
 "Oda Al
 Libro (II)",
 "Ode To
 c. The
 Pablo Book(II)",
 Neruda "Oda Al
 Tercer
 D'a", "Ode
 To The
 Third Day",
 "Oda Al
 Tomate",
 "Ode to
 Tomatoes".

B. Lesson Plan II—designed for 3rd and 4th grades.

Theme : Selected Short Novels, Stories and Poetry of the Latin Americas

Authors selected for the lesson:

- a. Gabriel Garc'a Márquez (Colombia) *No One Writes to the Colonel, and Other Stories* "One of these Days".
- b. Pablo Neruda (Chile) *Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair* "Poems XV and XX".

C. Lesson Plan III designed for middle and high school students

Novels, Stories of the Latin Americas

Authors selected for the lesson:

- a. Isabel Allende (Chile) Novel: *La Casa De Los Esp'ritus: The House of the Spirits* Story Selected: "La Ni-a Clara y su perro Barrabás".
- b. Octavio Paz (Mexico) Poems: "La Arboleda", "The Grove", "Viento, Agua, Piedra", "Wind, and Water and Stone".
- c. Alberto Manguel (editor) (Argentina) "Short Fictions by Latin American Women. *Other Fires*.

Part IX

LEARNING EXPERIENCES LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

¥ CONFIDENCE

¥ ARTICULATION

¥ PRODUCTION

¥ VOCABULARY

¥ COMMUNICATION

¥ UNDERSTANDING

¥ WORD PLAY

¥ LISTENING SKILLS

ART

FINGER PAINTING CONTEMPORARY EXPERIENCE HOW
SPONGE PAINTING LATIN AMERICAN DIFFERENT THINGS
BRUSH PAINTING WRITERS SMELL, FEEL AND
PLAY DOUGH TASTE
PAPER PASTE PLANTS
COLLAGES ANIMALS
SAND PAINTING

SCIENCE

MATH CONCEPTS

¥ SHAPES

¥ COLORS

¥ SIZE

¥ CLASSIFICATION

¥ SERIATION

¥ NUMBER

Part X

Lesson Plan I

SUBJECT AREAS: GRADES K TO 2
LANGUAGE ARTS

ESL

MATH

SCIENCE

TITLE : “Selected Poems” (Pablo Neruda), (Gabriela Mistral), (Nicolás Guillén)

Theme : “Oda Al Libro” “Ode to the Book”

“Oda Al Tomate” “Ode to Tomatoes”

Aim : What is this poem about?

MANAGEMENT/TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

- a. Talk with the students as they explore props. Many appropriate related activities are also possible.
- b. Make books, pictures, and tapes relevant to the theme available.
- c. Plan a trip to the “site” (nursery-park, etc.) to refresh and expand your children’s knowledge.
- d. Invite a guest relevant to the theme, who may want to join the children and recite or read a poem.
- e. Encourage vocabulary by supplying correct labels for props, roles and ideas. Related to the content you are reading to the children.
- f. Allow sufficient time in the daily schedule for children to listen and repeat the poem.
- g. Allow for repetition throughout the week so children can all participate and learn/copy the poem chosen.

Time : This is a 1 week program.

Goal : Incorporation of contemporary Latin American Writers and Poets

Objectives :

General—The students will enrich their knowledge incorporating Latin American literature, (poems), through reading, role playing, puppets, and other related activities.

Specific—The students will improve their reading, drawing, and speaking skills.

Materials : Selected poems from books, paper, magazines.

Tools : Crayons, pencils, markers, scissors.

Directions : Have children first select a poem of the poets presented in the unit.

Monday

-Activity (Gabriela Mistral, Pablo Neruda, Nicolás Guillén). Then copy it onto large paper. They can then decorate the paper with pictures from magazines. When completed, the group can take turns reading their selected poems. (Advanced group) Older children can help younger children.

Tuesday

-Activity

Goal: To improve creativity. (see Chapter IV Basic Goals)

Objective: The students will learn about the poem *Ode to Tomatoes* .

Materials: Tomatoes, 2 large marshmallows, raisins, gum drops, small and large.

Tools: Toothpicks or pipecleaners.

Directions: Make the tomato the main body. Put small gum drop and marshmallow on toothpick or pipecleaners for arms, and legs. Make “Hands-on”eyes and nose out of raisins and a mouth cut from a small gum drop.

Activity

Wednesday

Activity

Objectives: Math, reading, motor readiness will focus on weekly poem selection.

Featured books will be presented in a variety of formats:

- Flannel board material (teacher’s made material)
- Puppets
- Dramatic play
- Theme play areas

Directions : During the week, the book and poems chosen will be related to readiness activities.

- Children may receive paperback copies of the poems at the end of the week, with the goal of extending classroom experiences to home, and promoting pride in ownership.
 - a. The teacher reads the poem selected to the class.
 - b. Have students identify the characters, places and plot of the poem. Have them identify what they think may or may not happen.
 - c. Ask them if they would like or not like to find a snake. (when reading the poem “Sensemayá” from Nicolás Guillén).
 - d. Ask them if there is a place they really do not like to go, and have them discuss why.
 - e. Finish reading the poem selected to the class.
 - f. Let students learn the poem and tell about it in their own words.

Follow-up Activities:

Thursday

Activity

1. Draw or color a scene from the poem selected.
2. Create puppets with sticks and paper and let the students work with them to express their feelings regarding to the poem.

Friday

Evaluating Student Progress

Directions:

Check Progress:

- ¥ Observe reactions
- ¥ Look at written work
- ¥ Ask questions
- ¥ Conference
- ¥ Listen

Diagnose:

- ¥ What do they know?
- ¥ What do you need to reteach?
- ¥ What do you need to enrich?
- ¥ What are their interests?
- ¥ What resources would be best?
- ¥ What's next?

Report Feedback

Information to:

- ¥ Students

¥ Parents

¥ Administrators

¥ The Community

LESSON PLAN II

SUBJECT AREA: LANGUAGE ARTS—SOCIAL STUDIES

TITLE: *CONTEMPORARY LATIN AMERICAN*

WRITERS AND POETS OF THE XXTH CENTURY

I. OVERVIEW AND APPROACH

Time Frame

This is a 4-5 week lesson designed to introduce students of 3rd and 4th grades to Latin American writers and poets of the XXth Century, with emphasis on historical and economic significance, artistic and vocabulary building.

Approaches to the lesson will be by a) “Displays of the books of different contemporary Latin American Writers and poets of the XXth Century.”; b) Reading aloud the title and name of the author (see teaching plan).

II. OBJECTIVE

At the end of the unit the students will be able to reflect on what they have learned about some of the contemporary Latin American writers and poets chosen.

Strategies

Part One: Initial Reactions

The students will read brief passages from contemporary Latin Americans writers and poets. This anticipatory lesson should arouse students curiosity and raise specific questions in their minds. At the end of the unit they will be able to compare their first reaction with later impressions.

Part Two: Historical Backgrounds

- a) Students will examine passages and illustrations from the Latin American History and Geography. Through discussions they will draw conclusions concerning the reasons for the nature of some of the stories presented for the lesson.
- b) The teacher will present basic outline of Latin American History from the colonial period to the present day while stimulating discussion on points of comparison with the United States History.

Part Three: *Contemporary Latin American Society*

- a) After examining simple statistical charts and viewing films, (see students and teacher resources) the students will draw conclusions as to the contrasts of poverty and wealth, of modernity and traditionalism, which are evident in many Latin American societies.
- b) The students will explore examples of the various uses of the fantastic, (ex. *No One Writes to the Colonel and Other Stories*, by Gabriel García Márquez). And magical beliefs and practices by viewing anthropological films and reading field studies of various Latin American cultures.

Part Four: *Selected Short Stories and Poems*

- a) After reading the short story and a poem the students should be able to interpret it in light of the material already covered.
- b) Tapes, films and students role playing will be presented as questions raise for general discussions. The teacher should give some biographical and interesting backgrounds of each writer.

Part Five: *Conclusions*

- a) Students will discuss similarities and differences about each writer chosen for the unit.
- b) Upon completion of this lesson the student will discuss the concepts of “fantastic” “Magical beliefs” and make comments and opinions of the contemporary Latin American writers.

Activities:

Language Arts:

1. The teacher divides the students into small groups, giving each photocopies of a brief passage from a short novel, story or poem. The members of each group read their passage, discuss it among themselves and prepare 6 sentences to present on the following day (Pauker Strategies).
2. The members of each group will describe their passage to the class, giving time for reactions and questions. After all the groups have reported, the teacher raises questions for general discussions.
3. (In English and Spanish-see Basic Goals)

ESL Copy the poem onto chart paper (selected by the teacher). Suggestions: Author, Pablo Neruda. "Poem XV" "I like for you to be still" from *Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair* or Poem XX, "Tonight I Can Write". (Penguin: USA Twentieth Century Classics 1993). Read and discuss. Check the students comprehension by completing the sheet (see next page.)

Name _____ Date _____

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS FOR POEM #XX (PABLO NERUDA)

"TONIGHT I CAN WRITE"

1. What is the poem about?
2. What happens "When the stars are blue and shiver in the distance"?
3. Where does it happen?
4. What does he feel?
5. Think of a word in the poem that rhymes with:

Night Stars Sky
Wind Blue Verse

Spanish—ESL

Noche Estrellas Cielo
Viento Azul Verso

4. Extended Activity

Time frame: to extend the activity for 10 to 15 days.

Purpose: The teacher will supply the necessary literacy reference, materials, directions, encouragement and guidance in order to help students to create and illustrate a *booklet containing sections from Latin American Literature*.

Procedure:

Activity I

Before this activity can be started a formal study of Latin American literature should be completed. This is necessary so the student can have a panoramic view and fundamental understanding of Latin American literature-short stories and poetry. With this accomplished the teacher can then proceed to distribute anthologies and texts of Latin American works (see suggested reading list for 3rd and 4th grades). Encourage the students to select works which he/she can envision as relatively easy to illustrate.

Titles serve as visual clues or metaphors, they also should copy the selections, the title of the work, the

author's complete name, and the source from which the selections were extracted.

Activity II

Once the selections have been made, the students work with the teacher to understand and capture any visual, graphic images which the fragment may convey. Use a sample of a short story to illustrate specific themes like: love, war, death, hope, etc.) for their entire booklet. Students should be assisted in the translation from Spanish to English.

Activity III

The teacher should consult with each student about ideas for illustrating each selection on an individual basis. Ideas and possibilities for illustrations should come from the students.

Activity IV

Each literary fragment by a different author will be accompanied in the booklet by a brief biography. It should contain some information such as important dates, events in their lives and the title of famous works. The teacher may provide anthologies, a dictionary or a history of Latin American Literature. Also maps of America, pointing which countries speak Spanish.

Activity V

The teacher should distribute copies of all selections to the class so each member can follow along as she/he gives pointers and hints about oral improvements of the fragment. (see Part IV Basic Goals).

Activity VI

The class should now be prepared to begin the assembly of the project by completing a cover page (title of the fragment chosen, the student's name, date, class and the author's name). It is recommended to use an artist's sketchbook bound that absorbs water colors (do not use markers).

Activity VII

Students may exchange the booklets after they have been completed; in order to review orally the material previously covered.

Evaluation

- A. Vocabulary quiz
- B. Evaluation of taped oral pronunciation of words in English and Spanish
- C. Quality of the booklet presented based on neatness, methods of presentation, clarity and accuracy of translations.
- D. Graphic interpretations of selections and
- E. Originality

LESSON PLAN III FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

TIME: For one passage selected: a week.

For the whole book: three weeks.

SUBJECT

AREA: Language Arts (comprehension, vocabulary, oral and written exercises, questionnaire).

THEME: Novel written as magical reality or realism. Classified as imagination and fiction.

OBJECTIVE: At the end of the lesson or mini-unit the student will be able to:

- a) Understand a variety of texts about the Spanish speaking Latin Americas.
- b) Express doubt-uncertainty, and improbability.
- c) Talk about the world of the imagination and unreality.
- d) Talk about conditions contrary to fact.
- e) Support student opinions.

TITLE: *The House of the Spirits*

AUTHOR: Isabel Allende (Chile)

Personal Note:

I met her when she was a journalist in Chile (1970), and I was the Public Relations Director of LAN Chile Airlines. It was a brief encounter when she invited me to her house for an interview but in some way knowing her changed my life. We struggled all the years of the dictatorship in Chile and both decided to exile and leave the country we loved so much. Decision taken in separate way but coincidentally at the same time. She went first to Caracas, Venezuela where she begun to write her first novel: *La Casa de los Esp'ritus* (1981) *The House of the Spirits*.

Now, she lives in San Francisco, California, where she settled down with her family. Later, I came to the USA following my dream of independence leaving behind everything. Losing all material and spiritual belongings. I know her, she has been my inspiration. I followed her struggles, her pain, her triumphs. Most of all, I feel proud to belong to the same soil, the same roots. This belonging makes us equal.

This is a homage to her talent, to her triumph. To introduce her novels, short stories in the Curriculum Unit for the Spanish and English speaking students in New Haven, Connecticut.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

DAY ONE

DIRECTIONS:

1. Introduce some basic information about Latin American topics which will provide background for the stories to be read within the next two weeks. Topics like: geography, showing a contrast between the Americas and Europe. It would be beneficial to point out that North-Central and South America are related by their names “America”, and “New World”. With special attention given to the countries to be studied. Another topic is historical information and the influence of Spain and the Indian civilizations. A brief discussion of the many popular authors of Latin America would be appropriate as they ought to be familiar with some of the prominent writers.

2. Introduce Isabel Allende.

- A. Life
- B. Chile
- C. Works
- D. Accomplishments
- E. Themes, concerns
- F. Politics

DAY TWO

1. Review briefly background of Isabel Allende.
2. Read the story “The Little Girl Clara and her Dog Barrabás”. (“La Ni-a Clara y su perro Barrabás”). Stop periodically to ask questions to insure comprehension. (See Objectives.)

DAY THREE

1. Review orally the material read and discussed the previous day.
2. Discuss new words-vocabulary and translation (cross cultural and understanding for English

and Spanish—see Part IV Goals).

3. Prepare a questionnaire as homework.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Answer these questions in English and Spanish about the story.

1. When the little dog came to Clara's house, how did she treat it?

Cuando llegó el perrito a la casa, ¿Cómo lo trató la ni-a Clara?

2. What did Clara say if Barrabás could not stay with her?

¿Qué dijo Clara qué har'a si Barrabás no pudiera quedarse con ella?

3. Where did Barrabás sleep?

¿Dónde dorm'a Barrabás?

4. At dinner time, where did the dog eat when it wasn't locked up?

¿Qué hac'a el perro a la hora de la comida cuando no lo encerraban?

DAY FOUR AND FIVE

OBJECTIVE:

After reading the passage the student will be able to understand what a myth is.

PROCEDURE:

Have students say in English what they think a myth is. Ask for examples from their own and other cultures. Point out that just because something is mythical does not mean that is not true in a symbolic sense. Discuss myths and legends as a kind of collective sharing of views, beliefs, dreams, and interactions, often rooted in actual events that are passed on from one generation to another in a society. Develop a list of myths and legends together, writing them on the board. Example: Santa Claus, Halloween, Easter, The Pot of Gold, Etc. (5).

FOLLOWING WEEKS:

Reader Generated Questions

Techniques that invite students to generate sets of questions which will guide them as they read. For example:

The teacher is preparing to read the book aloud, she may first present the class with a description of the story. Then the teacher invites questions. Questions are written in plain view of the students. The list can be answered during the reading or left for discussion at the end.

PROCEDURE:

- A. Read a passage from the book.
- B. Present the topic of the reading material and invite discussion about what students already know about the passage, “La Ni-a Clara y su perro Barrabás”.
- C. The teacher may dress up as the main character, introducing and describing herself briefly.
- D. Invite a writer to visit the school who may talk about the process of writing a book.
- E. Show the film after reading the book. (The House of the Spirits, available at Visual Arts Department and Video Stores.)
- F. After, students raise questions individually or as a group. They can also attempt to answer the questions using their imagination.
- G. Questions may be referred to as the text is read or saved for final discussion.

CONCLUSION:

“The power of reading is reading.” The three “R’s—Reading, Reading, Reading. The importance of reading literature to students long after the unit ends will bring books to life.

Notes

1. Carpentier Alejo. “Prólogo” *El Reino De Este Mundo* (1, P.17)
Mexico: Compa-’a General de Ediciones, 1971.
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4. Ada Flor Alma. “ *D’as y D’as de Poes’a*” Anthology. Hampton and Brown Books, for Bilingual Education, P.O. Box 223220, Carmel, California 93922. USA (4, p.9)
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Y.U.T.

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