



Yale-New Haven
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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1999 Volume II: Art and Identity in Mexico, from the Olmec to Modern Times

Learning to Appreciate Art: The Influence of Mesoamerica on Mexican Art

Guide for Curriculum Unit 99.02.08
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For a high school course Latin America Art and Culture this curriculum will give an opportunity to teach and encourage and support students who may become future artists.

Art appreciation is a special learning experience. Artists and their work represent the creativity that human beings are capable of; and, for those of us who were not given that gift, understanding and appreciating beauty and its uniqueness can be a joy. For students, especially those involved in the arts, it is important to recognize the importance of art not just in their lives, but the importance that art plays in their cultures.

The curriculum introduces students to native cultures of Mesoamerica; the influence of native cultures on art, especially Mexican cultures.

The unit covers the Mexican artist Frida Kahlo and how she used the ancient civilizations of Mexico in her artistic creation. She was able to blend most effectively those native artistic roots with a very modern European art development, surrealism.

This unit can serve also as an introduction to Mexican and interesting aspects of Maya art. For young women artists Frida Kahlo can serve as a role model because of her unique experiences during her life.

(Recommended for Art and Social Studies, grades 11-12.)

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