

Hispanic Literature

In Partnership with the **Denver Public Schools**
and the **Metropolitan State College of Denver**



El Alma de la Raza Project



Hispanic Literature

By Flor Amaro

Grades 3-4

Implementation Time
for Unit of Study: optional

Goals 2000 - Partnerships for
Educating Colorado Students
El Alma de la Raza Curriculum
and Teacher Training Project

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Introduction

This unit about Hispanic literature has been developed with the idea of bringing into the classroom an opportunity for children to tap into or immerse themselves into the Hispanic culture. The literature selected for each of the 16 lessons in the unit is available in English and Spanish so that teachers can implement them according to the make up and language(s) of instruction in their classroom. The books are optimal for primary language teaching, teaching English to Spanish speakers, and teaching Spanish to English speakers, where appropriate.

The books selected for this unit present information about the different aspects of the Indian-Hispanic experience and are only a few examples of what is available. They can be used to teach a variety of concepts, processes, skills and strategies to meet State Standards in the different content areas. This unit addresses Reading and Writing, Science, History, Geography and Math standards. It is aimed to integrate concepts taught in the 3rd and 4th grade curriculum. In third grade, for example, students are expected to learn mapping skills and concepts such as community. They need to be aware of their immediate surroundings. This concept can be expanded to the world community. In the fourth grade, children study their state—Colorado in this case. The lessons in this unit target this and other skills and concepts.

The lessons can also be adapted to match the curriculum of other grade levels. There is not a time line determined for this unit because each literature piece can be taught separately. The various ways in which these lessons can be implemented include literacy block time in which the classroom teacher brings 5 or 6 students for small group (guided reading) instruction while the other children work on reading and writing independently. Large group teaching is also manageable. The lessons are optimal for Title 1 reading instruction. The options for implementation are endless. Each book alone can serve to develop extended lessons and or thematic units. The instructional uses given to each book in this unit are only examples of what can be done, but they are not limited to the suggested lessons.

About the Author

*My mission as an educator is to facilitate the way
for children to have the opportunity to develop their potential for biliteracy
and to practice their right to learn about other cultures.*

Flor Amaro was born in 1961 in Boco de Rio Chico, Fresnillo, Zacatecas, México. La Boca, as her place of birth was called, is located in a rural area in Zacatecas where agriculture and stock were the means of life. When Flor started school, she was living in Mexico City where she attended kindergarten and first grade. Then, back in Zacatecas, she completed elementary school and one year of business school. She grew up listening to children's programs. She immersed herself in fairy tales, folk tales and stories on the radio. Flor loved riddles, rhymes and songs as well as games. The radio program made up for the scarcity of books. Most of the literature she could access was through textbooks. She learned to love the poetry of Amado Nervo, Gabriela Mistral, Jose Martí and many other Latin American writers. She was an outstanding student with excellent grades.

At age 17, Flor came to the United States and stayed. Her initial schooling here was not as fulfilling as it had been in Mexico. In high school, she did not receive the good grades that she had until then, but she did not give up her education. Although English was a struggle for her, she pursued a career in teaching, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree and a teaching certificate in 1990. Eleven years after her arrival in the United States, she was a bilingual teacher. Flor has educational priorities that reflect her mission. She believes that 1) as an educator, her students' literacy in their native language takes precedence; 2) as an immigrant, it is essential that her students learn English from the day they are exposed to it; and 3) as an intellectual, she knows the social and cognitive value of being biliterate and promotes biliteracy.

Standards Addressed by this Unit

Reading and Writing

- Standard 1 Students read and understand a variety of materials.
- Standard 2 Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- Standard 4 Students apply thinking skills to reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.
- Standard 6 Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience.

Geography

- Standard 1 Students know how to use and construct maps and other geographic tools to locate and derive information about people, places and environments.

History

- Standard 3 Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time.
- Standard 4 Students understand how science, technology and economic activity have developed, changed and affected societies throughout history.
- Standard 6 Students know that religious and philosophical ideas have been powerful forces throughout history.

Science

- Standard 1 Students understand the processes of scientific investigation and design, conduct, communicate about, and evaluate such investigations.

Mathematics

- Standard 7 Technology—Students understand and use appropriate technologies to perform mathematical constructions and computations, simulate mathematical experiences, and access, process, and communicate information related to the application of mathematics in problem-solving situations.

Lesson 1

What will students be learning?	
Benchmark	Specifics
<p>Students will read and understand a variety of materials.</p> <p>Students will use comprehension strategies and make connections between prior knowledge and what they need to know about a topic before reading about it.</p>	<p>Students will use a full range of strategies, including prior knowledge, previewing, predicting, inferring, comparing and contrasting, re-reading, self-monitoring, summarizing, identifying the author's purpose, determining the main idea, and applying knowledge of identified figures of speech.</p>

What will be done to help students learn this?		
Instructional Strategies	Student Activities	Resources/ Materials
<p>Discuss the influence of agriculture in Colorado and other states, the people that form the work force, and their origins. Relate a personal experience about moving from or remaining in a place where one can make a living.</p> <p>Divide students into small groups (guided reading) to silently read <i>Amelia's Road</i> by Linda Jacobs Altman. Intervene only when comprehension is lost and the student needs to work on a specific reading skill or strategy.</p>	<p>Students share their own experiences about moving and how important it is to be with people who know you by name.</p> <p>Students read <i>Amelia's Road</i>. They discuss what strategies they used to construct the meaning of the story and why they chose these strategies.</p>	<p>Multiple copies of <i>Amelia's Road</i> by Linda Jacobs Altman</p>
	<p>List strategies students used on the chalkboard.</p>	

How will students apply what they are learning?

Performance Task	Scoring Rubric
<p>Instructional Information Within the guided reading groups, students think, share and respond to questions about personal experience related to Amelia's. Teacher discusses inferring information from text and background knowledge. Model where to get explicit and implicit information.</p> <p>Benchmark Students will read, understand and recognize literature as testimony of the human experience.</p> <p>Task Students respond to a teacher-elaborated questionnaire of explicit and implicit comprehension questions about <i>Amelia's Road</i> and about their own personal experiences related to Amelia's.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Answers indicate excellent comprehension and understanding of connection to own personal experiences.3. Answers to questions show adequate comprehension and some connection to own personal experiences.2. Attempts to answer questions indicate lack of comprehension.1. Demonstrated a lack of understanding of the task.

Lesson 2

What will students be learning?	
Benchmark	Specifics
<p>Students will read and recognize literature as a record of human experience.</p> <p>Students will read literature to investigate common issues and interests in relation to self and others and to understand places, people, events and vocabulary, both familiar and unfamiliar.</p>	<p>Students will read, respond to, and discuss literature to explore similarities and differences.</p>

What will be done to help students learn this?		
Instructional Strategies	Student Activities	Resources/ Materials
<p>Provide students with a list of vocabulary words taken from <i>Amelia's Road</i>.</p>	<p>Using context clues, inferring, using prior knowledge, and the dictionary, where necessary, students will define a list of vocabulary words. The responses will be shared with the class. Students will indicate how they came up with their definition and all these strategies will be listed and discussed.</p>	<p>Multiple copies of <i>Amelia's Road</i> by Linda Jacobs Altman</p> <p>Vocabulary list</p>

Lesson 3

What will students be learning?	
Benchmark	Specifics
Students will understand that societies are diverse and that economic activity has developed, changed and affected societies over time.	Students will recognize and describe the presence, interactions and contributions of Hispanic immigrants in Colorado and in surrounding agricultural states.

What will be done to help students learn this?		
Instructional Strategies	Student Activities	Resources/ Materials
Be a resource and guide for student research on crops, agriculture, and migrant workers in the United States.	Using the internet or the library, students will do research on main agricultural states, migrant workers and crops. They will select data and materials in their area of interest. They will create artwork that connects to their written work A research rubric will provide the basis for a self-evaluation of their work.	Computer laboratory Library Research rubric

Rubric for Written Research Report

	Content	Process and Mechanics	Research	Artwork
Exceeds Standards	More than three different ideas.	Correct punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure and spelling; rewrites.	Independently seeks more than three sources for information.	Artwork demonstrates imagination and creativity and elaborates with details. Child creates independently.
Meets Standards	Three different ideas in sequential order.	Rough draft, revises and rewrites; has periods at the end of sentences; "I" and the first word of the sentences are capitalized.	Gathers information from three sources.	Artwork matches story. Good composition and attention to detail connected to the report.
Attempts Standards	Less than three written ideas focused on the topic.	Rough draft; does not rewrite. Inventive spelling.	Gathers information from one source.	Artwork is not consistent in matching story or artwork matches story but lacks detail.
Lacks Understanding	Not able to write about the subject.	No attempt at mechanics. Difficulty in the creation of the words. Copies.	Does not seek sources for information; copies from others.	Artwork does not match story.

Lesson 4

What will students be learning?	
Benchmark	Specifics
Students will understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time.	Students will describe important components of the diverse cultural heritage of the United States.
Students will know a society has been affected by contact and exchanges among diverse people.	Students will recognize that there are families and cultures around the world.

What will be done to help students learn this?		
Instructional Strategies	Student Activities	Resources/ Materials
<p>Read <i>Encounter</i> by Jane Yolen to students and ask students questions about their interpretation of the story.</p> <p>Use a KWL chart to indicate what students know, what they want to learn, and what they have learned about the perspective of Native Americans at the arrival of Christopher Columbus in America.</p> <p>Serve as a resource and guide to further readings about this topic.</p>	<p>Students listen to the teacher read <i>Encounter</i> by Jane Yolen.</p> <p>Students share what they know about the arrival of Christopher Columbus to America.</p> <p>Students share what they would like to learn about this topic.</p>	<p>KWL chart</p> <p><i>Encounter</i> by Jane Yolen</p>

Arrival of Christopher Columbus to the Americas

KWL Activity

Name _____

Topic _____

K:What I already know _____

W:What I **want** to find out _____

L:What I **learned** after doing the activity _____

Lesson 5

What will students be learning?	
Benchmark	Specifics
<p>Students will understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time.</p> <p>Students will apply thinking skills to reading.</p>	<p>Students will understand how a society has been affected by contacts and exchanges among diverse people.</p> <p>Students will predict, analyze and draw conclusions in reading.</p> <p>Students will formulate questions about what they hear (reading) and view.</p>

What will be done to help students learn this?		
Instructional Strategies	Student Activities	Resources/ Materials
<p>Introduce and model “Reciprocal Teaching” questions as a reading strategy for better comprehension. Demonstrate use of “Reciprocal Teaching” chart.</p>	<p>Students and teacher read <i>Encounter</i> silently. Form small groups. Each student takes turns being the teacher and conducting the question in “Reciprocal Teaching.” Refer to “Reciprocal Teaching” chart for the format of questioning.</p>	<p>Multiple copies of <i>Encounter</i> by Jane Yolen.</p> <p>“Reciprocal Teaching” chart or poster</p>

Plan for Reciprocal Teaching Students' Guide

1. Once a text has been selected, decide how many pages to read.
2. Each person gets a book and reads it silently. When finished, they wait quietly.
3. Each person thinks of one question until every one finishes reading.
4. The teacher leads the dialogue with the following questions:
 - Does anyone need anything clarified?
 - Does anyone have any questions?
 - Could someone please summarize what they have read?
 - Who can predict what might happen next?
5. Each member of the group participates in the evaluation of progress.

Lesson 5

What will students be learning?	
Benchmark	Specifics
Students will know how to use maps to locate and drive information about people, places, and environments.	Students will develop knowledge of Earth to locate people, places, and environments.

What will be done to help students learn this?		
Instructional Strategies	Student Activities	Resources/ Materials
<p>Using multimedia resources or the Internet, have students view and identify major geographic features of the Earth as seen from space or the moon.</p> <p>Demonstrating step by step, draw a map of the continents and oceans, identify and label them so students can do the same.</p> <p>With the help of students, identify on a map of the World the Spanish explorers' departure and arrival points as well as their journey.</p>	<p>While viewing an overhead projection or computer screen representing a view of the Earth from space, students depict the shapes of the continents for future drawing.</p> <p>Students draw a World map, manually or with computer graphics, to the best of their ability. They draw and label all the continents and oceans.</p> <p>With help, they identify Spain and the New World so that they can trace the journey Columbus and the Spaniards took.</p>	<p>Overhead projector</p> <p>Computer accessible to Internet or CD-ROM with encyclopedia of geographic maps</p> <p>World map</p> <p>Clean transparency and Vis-A-Vis markers</p>

How will students apply what they are learning?

Performance Task	Scoring Rubric
<p>Instructional Information Introduce or review the concept of spatial relationships as simply as possible. Have students provide examples of ways one person can see their own back or hair, for example, and how different things will look from an outside perspective, such as the Earth from the Moon. Discuss how we can't see the whole earth unless we travel into space. In the same manner, talk about the different ways in which we see things that happen, depending on how what happens affects us.</p> <p>Benchmark Students know how to use and draw maps to locate and derive information about people, places and events.</p> <p>Task Draw a world map with continents and oceans labeled. Identify and mark Columbus' journey from beginning to end.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Map of World drawn highly accurately, with all continents and oceans correctly labeled, and journey correctly indicated.3. Map of World drawn fairly accurately, with most of the continents /and oceans correctly labeled and journey correctly indicated.2. Map of World is drawn, but map is inaccurate; continents/oceans missing or mislabeled; journey missing or inaccurate.1. Demonstrated a lack of understanding of the task.

Lesson 6

What will students be learning?	
Benchmark	Specifics
<p>Students will understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time.</p> <p>Students will apply thinking skills to writing.</p>	<p>Students will understand how a society has been affected by contact and exchanges among diverse people.</p> <p>Students will use writing together data, define the problem and apply problem-solving skills.</p>

What will be done to help students learn this?		
Instructional Strategies	Student Activities	Resources/ Materials
<p>Write on a poster or chart a question that asks students to reflect on the perspective of the book <i>Encounter</i> and to write about what the perspective would be of a Spanish child if the “Indians” had been the ones to journey to Spain.</p> <p>Guide students through the writing process using the chart of the writing stages such as provided in <i>Dancing with the Pen</i>.</p>	<p>Students think about the proposed question by the teacher. Then they plan, write, check and share their writing.</p>	<p>Poster or chart with question</p> <p><i>Dancing with the Pen</i>, Richard C. Owen, Publishers</p>

Lesson 7

What will students be learning?	
Benchmark	Specifics
Students will understand the processes of scientific investigation and design, conduct, communicate about and evaluate such investigations.	<p>Students will ask questions and state predictions (hypotheses) that can be addressed through scientific investigation.</p> <p>Students will use data based on observations to construct reasonable explanations and communicate about investigations and explanations.</p>

What will be done to help students learn this?		
Instructional Strategies	Student Activities	Resources/ Materials
<p>Read a thought-provoking piece of literature, such as <i>Carlos and the Squash Plant</i> by Jan Romero Stevens, that triggers the desire to design and conduct an experiment.</p> <p>Model the scientific process of formulating hypotheses, conducting an experiment, observing and recording and analyzing data.</p>	<p>Class or small group (guided reading) of <i>Carlos and the Squash Plant</i>.</p> <p>Students summarize the story and indicate what could not happen or be true in real life.</p> <p>With the help of the teacher, students formulate hypotheses about squash seeds sprouting speed in water compared to their sprouting speed in soil and water.</p> <p>Students plant seeds, observe, record in journal, analyze data, and come to a conclusion.</p>	<p>Multiple copies of <i>Carlos and the Squash Plant</i> by Jan Romero Stevens</p> <p>Chart paper and markers</p> <p>Containers of dirt</p> <p>Squash seeds</p> <p>Calendar</p> <p>Journals</p>

Lesson 8

What will students be learning?	
Benchmark	Specifics
Students will understand the process of scientific investigation using a variety of means to gather data and present information.	Students will select an area of interest to investigate and collect data and present findings.

What will be done to help students learn this?		
Instructional Strategies	Student Activities	Resources/ Materials
Demonstrate how to use a simple worksheet with the scientific process of “How to...,” outlined.	<p>Students read about a craft of their choice, such as <i>The Piñata Maker</i> and focus on the detailed description of the processes involved in making a their craft.</p> <p>As a class, students make rubric that will represent a standard of evaluation. Students meet regularly with the teacher to assess their progress and performance, using the rubric.</p> <p>Students write and present a “How to...” report. If they also produce a tangible product, they earn extra credit.</p>	<p>Multiple copies of <i>The Piñata Maker</i> by George Anacona</p> <p>Class-developed rubric</p>

Lesson 9

What will students be learning?		What will be done to help students learn this?		
Benchmark	Specifics	Instructional Strategies	Student Activities	Resources/ Materials
Students will know that religious ideas have been powerful forces throughout history.	<p>Students will know about the historical development of religious and how a form of expression, such as Christmas, reflects a religious belief.</p> <p>Students will recognize that people develop traditions that transmit their beliefs and ideas (example: feasts).</p>	<p>To externalize students' prior knowledge about Christmas or other winter celebrations, ask them to draw a picture of how they spend winter break.</p> <p>Divide students into small groups, and ask them to read (guided reading) the story <i>Too Many Tamales</i> by Gary Soto. To develop thinking skills and comprehension, do before, during and after reading questions. List and define the Spanish vocabulary in the book.</p>	<p>Students sketch and share winter break activities in relation to their religious beliefs.</p> <p>Students read the story <i>Too Many Tamales</i> silently, stopping to summarize events to maintain the meaning of the story. Students discuss the story's plot and the family tradition it describes.</p> <p>Conclude with a discussion about family traditions that are or might have once been religious.</p>	Multiple copies of <i>Too Many Tamales</i> by Gary Soto

Lesson 10

What will students be learning?	
Benchmark	Specifics
Students will understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time.	Students will recognize that cultural heritage is represented in books, the classroom and the larger school community.

What will be done to help students learn this?		
Instructional Strategies	Student Activities	Resources/ Materials
Divide class into Jigsaw groups to read and discuss the selected book. Assign each student a role in the reading groups.	Students read <i>Friends from the Other Side</i> and <i>Molly's Pilgrim</i> or <i>The Night Crossing</i> . Each student takes a role in their reading group to report a summary of their story to other groups. Students compare the experiences of the main characters in the stories and contrast countries of origin.	Multiple copies of <i>Friends from the Other Side</i> by Gloria Anzuldúa and <i>Molly's Pilgrim</i> by Barbara Cohen or <i>The Night Crossing</i> by Karen Ackerman World map

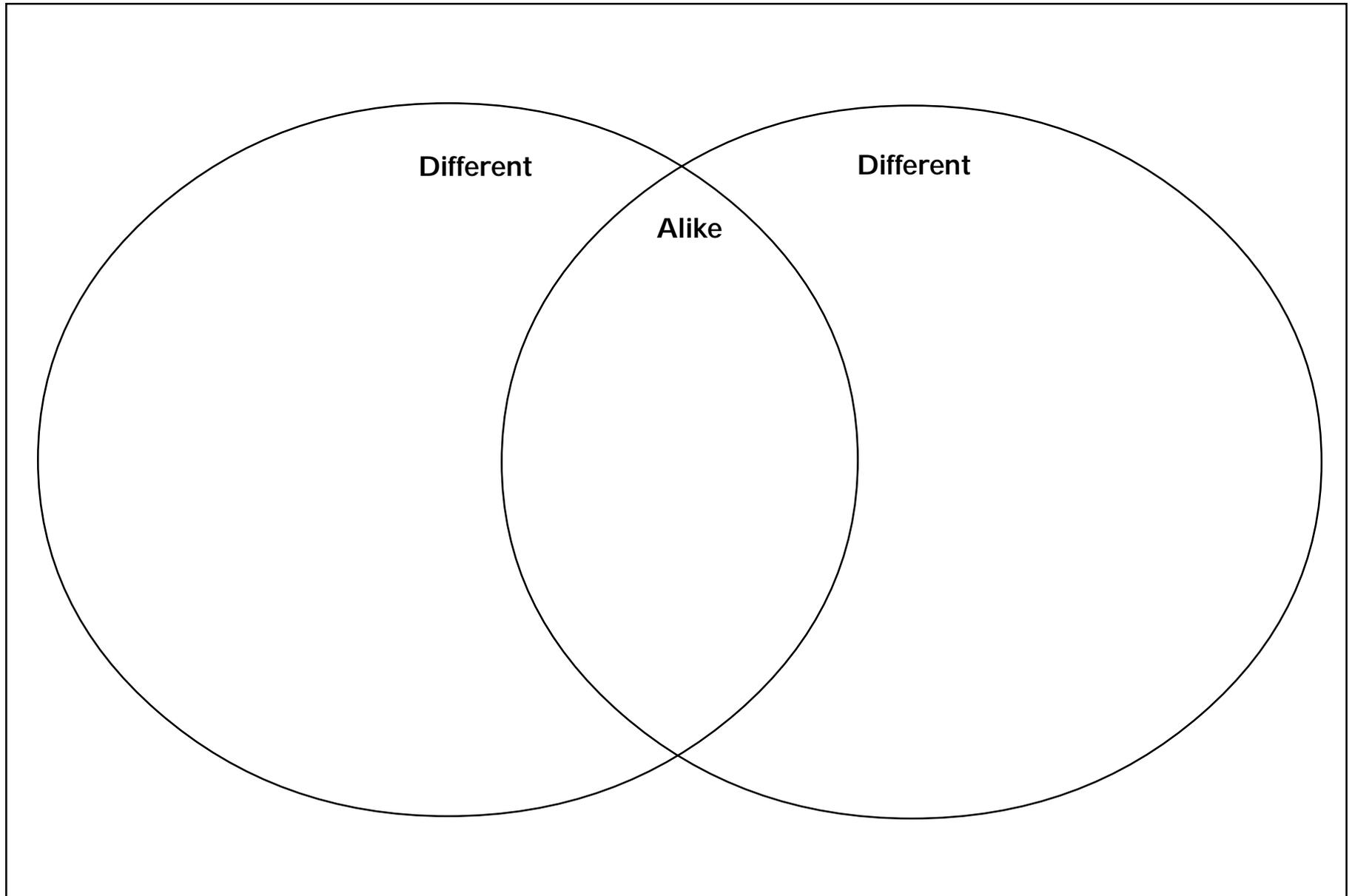
Lesson 11

What will students be learning?	
Benchmark	Specifics
Students will understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time.	Students will recognize that cultural heritage is represented in books, the classroom and the larger school community.

What will be done to help students learn this?		
Instructional Strategies	Student Activities	Resources/ Materials
Demonstrate use of a Venn diagram to compare and contrast Joaquin's and Clara's experiences.	<p>Students read <i>Friends from the Other Side</i> and <i>Molly's Pilgrim</i> or <i>The Night Crossing</i>.</p> <p>Students, as a class, participate in comparing and contrasting the experiences of the main characters in each story read, using a Venn diagram.</p> <p>Students discuss friends or relatives who came or know some one who came from another country, and students identify that country on a World map.</p>	<p>Multiple copies of <i>Friends from the Other Side</i> by Gloria Anzuldúa and <i>Molly's Pilgrim</i> by Barbara Cohen or <i>The Night Crossing</i> by Karen Ackerman</p> <p>Chart paper to draw Venn diagram and to record analysis</p> <p>Markers</p> <p>World map</p>

Venn Diagram

Name _____



Lesson 12

What will students be learning?	
Benchmark	Specifics
Students will read and write to recognize literature as a record of human experience.	Students will read and respond to contemporary literature of the United States and the world about the experiences of diverse ethnic groups.

What will be done to help students learn this?		
Instructional Strategies	Student Activities	Resources/ Materials
Ask students to use response journals to describe a time in their life when they or someone they know was faced with uncertainty. Ask them to think and write about what they learned from the experience and what advice could be given to others in similar situations.	After reading, discussing and reflecting on the experiences of Joaquin, Molly and Clara, students think and write about a difficult experience in their life or in the life of someone they know. They share their writing with their original Jigsaw group (see lesson 10).	Multiple copies of <i>Friends from the Other Side</i> by Gloria Anzuldúa and <i>Molly's Pilgrim</i> by Barbara Cohen or <i>The Night Crossing</i> by Karen Ackerman Student journals and pencils

Lesson 13

What will students be learning?	
Benchmark	Specifics
Students will know and use literary terminology.	Students will use literary terminology such as setting, plot, character, problem/solution and point of view.

What will be done to help students learn this?		
Instructional Strategies	Student Activities	Resources/ Materials
<p>Lecture on literary elements.</p> <p>Demonstrate the story elements on a story map using a familiar story like "Goldilocks."</p>	<p>Students write literary terms and their definitions in their notebooks, including such terms as setting, plot, character, problem/solution and point of view.</p> <p>Students do a story map of <i>Frida Maria</i> to identify the literary elements.</p> <p>Students choose one character and focus on the personality, appearance and feeling of this character. They write a character summary of their chosen character in their notebook.</p>	<p>Multiple copies of <i>Frida Maria</i> by Deborah Nourse Lattimore</p> <p>Student notebooks and/or composition notebooks</p>

Lesson 14

What will students be learning?	
Benchmark	Specifics
Students will understand and use appropriate mathematical vocabulary and understand the use of numbers and number relationships in problem-solving situations.	Students will interpret number meanings through hands-on materials and relate these meanings to mathematical symbols and numbers.

What will be done to help students learn this?		
Instructional Strategies	Student Activities	Resources/ Materials
<p>Read aloud <i>The Desert Mermaid</i>.</p> <p>Discuss the mathematical and cultural art of illustration.</p> <p>Ask students to calculate the number of crosses, spaces and other characters they need to form the shape of a Mermaid using a computer or typewriter.</p>	<p>Students read the story and then select what letter from the key pad will help them to form different pictures (x will work nicely).</p> <pre> xxx x o o x xx > xx xxx ~ xxx xxx xxxxxxxx xx xxx xx xx xxx xx x x x (xxx) xxxxx xxxxx xxx xxx x xxx xx xx xx xx x x </pre>	<p><i>The Desert Mermaid</i> by Alberto Blanco</p> <p>Typewriter or computer</p>

How will students apply what they are learning?

Performance Task	Scoring Rubric
<p>Instructional Information Review the process of making illustrations out of computer and typewriter characters and spaces and of calculating the number of characters used.</p> <p>Benchmark Students will interpret number meanings through hands-on materials and relate these meanings to mathematical symbols and numbers.</p> <p>Task Students create additional illustrations (other than the mermaid) from the story, <i>The Desert Mermaid</i>, using computer or typewriter characters and spaces. Students calculate the number of each character they use and the total number of characters they use to form their illustrations.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Excellent illustrations and accurate calculations.3. Illustration adequate and calculations mostly correct.2. Illustration not well developed and/or calculations incorrect.1. Demonstrated a lack of understanding of the task.

Lesson 15

What will students be learning?	
Benchmark	Specifics
Students will write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences.	Students will write and speak to present an analytical response to literature by using strategies such as lists, outlining, and narration.

What will be done to help students learn this?		
Instructional Strategies	Student Activities	Resources/ Materials
<p>Demonstrate how to use a literature response log.</p> <p>Ask students to read <i>Thomás y la Señora de la Biblioteca</i> silently and write their thoughts, questions, and reactions on a literature response log.</p>	<p>Students read <i>Thomás y la Señora de la Biblioteca</i> silently.</p> <p>Students write a list or an outline of thoughts, questions and reactions the story inspires in them. They record these reactions in their literature response log. Finally, they present orally on their reaction to the literature.</p>	<p><i>Thomás y la Señora de la Biblioteca</i> by Pat Mora</p> <p>Literature response log</p>

Annotated Bibliography

Lattimore, Deborah Nourse. *Frida Maria*. Harcourt Brace and Company, 1994 (English); 1997 (Spanish).

Frida Maria does not seem to fit the role of a homemaker as her mother expects. Her mother changes her mind when Frida does a good deed using her abilities.

Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Friends from the Other Side*. China: Marwin Productions, 1993.

When Joaquín feels terrified that he is going to lose the opportunity to achieve a brighter future, Prietita saves the day.

Cohen, Barbara. *Molly's Pilgrim*. New York: William Morrow and Company, 1993.

As if being the new kid at school was not scary enough for Molly, her classmates make fun of her accent and the way she dresses. Her family had moved from Russia to America to find freedom, but Molly did not think she had found it at school. Then Thanksgiving day comes and the children are reading about the Pilgrims. Molly's assignment is to bring a doll Pilgrim to class. Her mother makes a doll that resembles her when she was young. When Molly finds out it is too late to make another doll and she reluctantly takes it to school. Now she thinks her doll will be rejected.

Ackerman, Karen. *The Night Crossing*. New York: Random House, 1994.

Fearful for their safety, Clara and her family see themselves forced to leave their country. It is impossible to travel to a new land with all their belongings. Clara takes her grandmother's straw dolls with her. It is Clara's valor and her dolls that save the family.

Soto, Gary. *Too Many Tamales*. New York: The Putnam and Grosset Group, 1993 (English); 1996 (Spanish).

It all happens on a Christmas day when the family prepares tamales for the occasion. Maria, in her effort to feel grown up, insists on helping her mother in the kitchen. She wears makeup, puts on her mother's apron and asks her mother to let her borrow her mother's diamond ring. In the commotion, she loses track of the ring. When her cousins arrive and they are entertained in their room, Maria suddenly remembers the ring. They immediately take off to the kitchen and begin eating tamales until they are stuffed, but the ring does not seem to be in any of the tamales. When all 24 tamales are gone, Maria wonders whether someone has eaten the ring without noticing. She wonders whether she should tell her mother that the ring is probably stuck in her cousin's throat, or even worse, in his stomach.

Acona, George. *The Piñata Maker*. New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1994.

The art of making piñatas is Don Ricardo's forté. At 77, he makes dreams come true for the little boys and girls of his native village in southern Mexico. Don Ricardo demonstrates every step in making his piñatas and shows how the people of the village contribute to or benefit from his art. He is so much like a family member to people that he even attends the birthday parties for which he makes the piñatas.

Stevens, Jan Romero. *Carlos and the Squash Plant*. Flagstaff, AZ: Northland Publishing Co., 1995.

Living in a rural area in New Mexico, Carlos finds himself help-

Annotated Bibliography (cont.)

ing his brother and father with the farming chores. He worked hard and got dirty, but taking a bath or washing his ears were not favorite activities. To his mother's question about washing well, he always replied that he had. His mother told him that if he did not wash properly, a squash plant would grow inside his ear. No one could be as skeptical as Carlos, but soon he wasn't able to find a hat big enough to cover up the plant growing in his left ear. Short of excuses for wearing a big hat, Carlos has no choice but to ask his mother for help in solving his problem.

Yolen, Jane. *Encounter*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1992 (English); 1996 (Spanish).

A child's dream is an omen of the future. His dream gets interrupted by its becoming reality. Three canoes arrive carrying space creatures. He is terrified by how the strange passengers are received by the native inhabitants—with a celebration. He tries to warn others of the risks involved in trusting these newcomers, but does not possess the power or status to change the situation. This young man sees with sadness that an unfair exchange of goods takes place between the two races and that the greediness of one and the wishfulness of the other leaves his people at a disadvantage. In time, he sees that nothing will be the same after the arrival of the strange creatures. He feels that his identity and the identity of his race were lost. Now his only hope is that this lesson is learned and passed on by new generations.

Altman, Linda Jacobs. *Amelia's Road*. New York: Lee Y Low Books, Inc., 1993.

Amelia wishes her family would not have to travel so much and work so hard. She dreams of a place of her own. She does not enjoy traveling from city to city and state to state following the seasonal crops. She thinks it is sad that her parents cannot remember important dates, such as her birthday, because they have moved so often. They vaguely remember locations and events, such as the crop in season and the city where Amelia was born. At school, teachers and students do not even learn her name well before it is time for her to move again. A turning point comes for Amelia when she attends a specific class taught by a certain teacher. This teacher remembers her name. She encourages Amelia and her classmates to write about what they wish the most. Amelia wishes for a place she can call home and her wish comes true in a special way.

Blanco, Alberto. *The Desert Mermaid*. San Francisco: Children's Book Press, 1992.

"The desert mermaid lives alone in an oasis in the Sonora desert, and day by day, her beautiful oasis is growing smaller. She learns that her people are disappearing because they have forgotten the songs of their ancestors and so she sets out on an epic journey to find the lost songs. Riding on a magic horse called Silver Star she discovers the missing melodies and poems which lead her to the sea and her salvation." Alberto Blanco.

Annotated Bibliography (cont.)

Mora, Pat. *Tomás y la Señora de la Biblioteca*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997.

Tomás, the child of migrant workers, travels with his family from Texas to Iowa to work in the fields. Tomás' grandpa tells him stories at night after the hard working days. Tomás learns them all and grandpa tells him, he can find more at the library. What does he find there?

Almada, Patricia. *Oscar and Tatiana*. New Zealand: Shortland Publications, Ltd., 1995.

Oscar and Tatiana go to their grandparents' house during summer break from school while their mother stays home. One letter comes, one letter goes, as Oscar and his mom write to each other to keep up to date with what is going on with each other. They keep in touch through letters while the kids are away. While mom shares how much she is missing them and wishes to be there, Oscar tells her the things he and his sister do with their grandparents. Oscar, who is older than Tatiana (Tati) comforts her in the absence of their mother. This time away from home gives the children an invaluable opportunity to be closer than ever to their mother through their letters.

Castañeda, Oscar S. *Abuela's Weave*. New York: Lee and Low Books, 1993.

Esperanza lives with her family in Santa Cruz. She and her grandmother make tapestries and clothing to sell. Esperanza is afraid that when they go to the city to sell their things, people will make fun of her grandmother's birthmark. So when they go, her grandmother pretends to be a stranger. Esperanza is worried no one will buy her things, and she'll have to go home

empty handed, but she sells everything, her grandmother comes over, and they are happy.

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