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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

2005 Volume II: Art and Identity in Mexico, from Olmec Times to the Present

Studying the Biographies of Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera

Guide for Curriculum Unit 05.02.03, published September 2005

by Karlene McGowen

This unit is designed to introduce the genre of non-fiction by teaching biographies. The biographies of Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera will be used. Two biographies of Frida Kahlo will be read aloud by the teacher. The students will complete KWLS charts to synthesize their understanding. They will also create summaries of each book as well as create a Venn Diagram comparing the two books. The biography of Diego Rivera will be read in small groups. Each group will create a presentation on the life of Diego Rivera. Students will also each be assigned a short biography to read and summarize. Finally each student will create an autobiography by using entries that correspond to the letters of the alphabet. This is a great unit to tie in Reading and Art. The students will enjoy reading about the interesting lives of these two famous Mexican artists.

(Developed for Reading, grade 6; recommended for Reading and Language Arts, grades 5-7)

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