



# YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

*to strengthen teaching in public schools®*

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

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

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## **"Viva La Raza", Students inherit their Culture through Art research**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 05.02.04, published September 2005

by Mayra Muller-Schmidt

How much time do we really devote to reviewing how a current society has been affected by another? This unit's work is all about reviewing and reflecting of what the Mesoamericans have contributed to our society especially in the state of Texas.

Civilizations get created slowly as people get together share their knowledge, improve their living conditions and progress together. This unit is an exploration of what happened to a particular civilization that existed before Cortez discovered Mexico, the indigenous Indians known as Mesoamericans. Students will explore and research the art, skill and ingenuity of these peoples quite extensively. The lessons are devoted to three rich cultures, the Olmecs, Mayas and Aztecs. Students are to investigate what makes a civilization tick... scrutinizing what clues these ancient civilizations had, with looking at carefully the architecture, sculpture, communication, and hierarchy structure of daily life.

(Developed for General Art and Magnet Graphic Design, grades 6-8; recommended for Fine Arts, Spanish, and Social Science, grades 6-10)

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