



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2007 Volume IV: Latino Cultures and Communities

Boricua, Morena: Latin-Caribbean American and African American Cultural Connections En ciudad de Filadelfia

Guide for Curriculum Unit 07.04.01, published September 2007
by Samuel A. Reed, III

This unit draws upon social studies, performing arts and literature to show the interconnections between Latino and African-American cultures. It is intended for middle grade students (grades 6th-8th) at a predominately African American school. The unit involves an inquiry process where students learn about Latino culture while also learning about their selves. The films *Mad Hot Ballroom* and *West Side Story* will serve as anchors for exploring how Latin-Caribbean culture interrelates with African American culture. Students will conduct their own inquiry, using the essential question "what cultural connections do Puerto Ricans and Dominicans share with African Americans?" Concurrently, students will explore and analyze popular Latin Caribbean dance movements, music, bilingual poetry, historical and current events to uncover the connections Puerto Ricans, Dominicans and African Americans share. To enhance the inquiry process, students will participate in a pen-pal exchange with sixth and seventh grade students at the Hon. Luís Muñoz Marín School, a predominately Latino school located in the Central East Region of the School District of Philadelphia. To culminate this unit, students will present multi-media renditions of what they learned about the connections between Latin-Caribbean and African American cultures.

(Recommended for Social Studies and Literacy, grades 6-8.)

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