



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

to strengthen teaching in public schools®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2012 Volume IV: Narratives of Citizenship and Race since Emancipation

From Three Rivers to Arlington: Mexican American Civil Rights to 1954

Guide for Curriculum Unit 12.04.05, published September 2012
by Matthew Kelly

Keywords: Citizenship, Civil Rights, Deportation, Desegregation, Great Depression, Integration, Mexican Spanish, NAACP, Serviceman, Spanish, Texas, World War II

The proper primary focus for the study of culture in the American Spanish classroom is the culture and history of Spanish speakers in the American context. The Mexican American struggle for civil rights was an integral part of the Civil Rights movement. In this interdisciplinary unit for students of Spanish and of U.S. history, students will learn about points of intersection between the African American and Mexican American experiences of segregation and disenfranchisement. The centerpiece of the unit is an exploration of the struggle of the widow of a decorated Mexican American serviceman to provide an appropriate burial for her husband in segregated East Texas. As background information, students will learn about the Texas border violence of 1915-1919, the mass deportations of Mexican American during the Great Depression, the nature of segregation in Texas and the West and the state of desegregation today, and the collaboration between Mexican American activists and the NAACP in the long court struggle that led to *Brown v. Board of Education*. Students will also learn to recognize key elements differentiating Mexican American spoken Spanish from the "Latin American Standard" Spanish taught in schools.

(Developed for Spanish III and IV, grades 9-12; recommended for Spanish III and IV, grades 9-12)

<https://teachers.yale.edu>

©2023 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University, All Rights Reserved. Yale National Initiative®, Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute®, On Common Ground®, and League of Teachers Institutes® are registered trademarks of Yale University.

For terms of use visit https://teachers.yale.edu/terms_of_use