



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2013 Volume I: Picture Writing

Medals, Monuments, and Money: Nationalist Art in Spain and Mexico

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by Matthew Kelly

In my unit, students of Spanish will explore nationalist art, architecture, and propaganda of Spain and Mexico. The specific pieces they examine will vary in terms of medium and national origin. They will range from the small (medals awarded by the Franco regime in Spain and currency notes issued by Mexico) to the very large (a monumental housing project in Mexico City.) Students will analyze these pieces of art in terms of their historical and political setting and will analyze the relationship between the medium and the message. We will talk about the interplay between text and image in the works selected. Students will become more aware of the images that bombard them and will become conscious consumers of art and design, especially work that is intended to influence their behavior. Furthermore, we will elevate students' overall schema of the history of Spain and Mexico in the twentieth century and of the twentieth century in general. Students will finish the unit by creating "nationalist" art of their own using a combination of text and visual art elements.

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

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