



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2026 Volume II: Latinx Histories, Cultures, and Communities

Migration and the Coming-of-Age Tradition of the Quinceañera

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This curriculum will help explore the idea of migration shaping cultural identity through celebrations and understand how migration is not only just the idea of moving from one place to another. This unit is in the service of encouraging the reluctant ELL learner to become more involved and invested in the classroom. A huge reason for migration for many of my students is the personal experience of violence they have encountered and the yearning for a better life overall. Students will explore the main cultural celebration of the Quinceañera, while learning or acquiring new vocabulary content. During this unit, students will be able to compare different cultural celebrations with an emphasis and base of learning about the Quinceañera. They will be able to read about them, share stories about similar customs they have, and become actual participants. Students will discuss celebrations such as festivals, music and the one common unifier: food. They will also understand the importance of self-expression while connecting within their own communities and possibly others. Also, explore the idea of migration driving the initiative to create and share art, language and an established social structure. Along with the process of developing learners who create, express, and identify cultural connections in their lives and the world around them. Finally, this unit will enable the student to recognize celebrations as both a response to hardship and a powerful expression of a positive future.

(Developed for ESI, grade 5; recommended for ESL, grades K-6)

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