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Examining Mexican Immigration Thru First Person Point-of-view

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Objectives

Introduction

I am an 8th grade language arts teacher at Northwest School of the Arts in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school district, Charlotte, North Carolina. NWSA is unique in several ways. The school houses grades 6-12, totaling about 1,200- 1,250 students of which 450 are middle school students. Approximately 75% of the students are African-American, 20% Caucasian, with less than 5% Latino or multi-racial. The economic backgrounds range from upper-middle class to poverty. Most of our students probably fall in the range of lower-middle class. A magnet school, NWSA's middle school students do not follow the typical language arts schedule. Instead of having language arts every day for 90 minutes, our students follow an A-day/B-day schedule which allows them to take four electives per semester as opposed to the two offered in the traditional setting. Each middle school grade level has only one core teacher in language arts, science and social studies - a big difference from the much larger middle schools that may have up to six language arts teachers per grade level.

My interest in this seminar is quite simple; I want my students to understand a culture that is very prevalent in the city of Charlotte, North Carolina. Too often I find my students jumping to conclusions and passing judgment about Mexican Americans or other Latino cultures in their communities. I am hoping to use the unit as an experiment of sorts to see if the students still have the same negative stereotypes about Latinos, specifically Mexicans, after reading the articles, personal narratives, poems, and political cartoons and viewing a docu-drama film. The overarching goal for my entire unit is to provide students with enough information about Mexican immigration that they will be able to create their own viewpoints by drawing conclusions about the information I will expose to them.

The school district breaks its middle school language arts classes into three categories: Standard, Standard Plus and Honors. My unit will be taught in my Standard Plus and Honors classes, consisting of about 115 of the 140 students in the eighth grade. As mentioned above I see these classes for 90 minutes every other day. Ninety percent of the reading I use in this class is the same as my Honors classes; the modifications lie in the activities and pacing. The Honors students score above grade level on the EOG test and are capable of higher-level activities; most of the class is driven by discussion of topics in the texts read in and out of class. This unit will be taught during the first nine weeks. Because the texts I choose in the beginning of the year for my Standard students (who score below grade level on the EOG test) are usually a lower lexile (reading) level, I

will likely select only a few of the resources mentioned in this unit. The texts and activities for my Standard classes will be modified in order to achieve the necessary level of mastery for each objective.

The principal of NWSA believes more strongly in the quality of instruction than the quantity of instructional time and I strongly agree with him. For example, NWSA consistently scores above the average CMS traditional middle school on the Reading EOG despite having only half of the instructional time of the traditional middle school teacher. Since NWSA is not a *Focus* (low performing) school, I do not have to adhere to the scripted *Focus Lessons* mandated in such schools. This allows me to integrate my choice of literature, film and other readings into the mandated *Pacing Guide*. The *Pacing Guide* divides the year into four 9-week grading periods.

Instead of using the preferred readings listed in the *Pacing Guide*, which include many different articles (none of which are connected by an overarching theme) illustrating all of the text organizers, I have chosen articles that all center around the concept of Mexican immigration. Doing so will enable students to have a cohesive unit that incorporates the reading strategies with meaningful text. The unit will last approximately four to five weeks and has all the signs of an inter-disciplinary adventure, always welcome in middle school curriculum, even as it adheres to the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* and meets objectives in five of the six Competency Goals.

Juan González's *Harvest of Empire* serves as a great tool for me to introduce facts about Mexican immigration. I will begin introducing historical facts during the time of "Manifest Destiny" by having students copy notes provided on the overhead, outlining excerpts of *Harvest of Empire*. Students will then analyze how crippling this doctrine was to races and cultures in the past and how it presently affects certain races in America thru a class discussion. Next, I will create a timeline of events that outlines the waves of Mexican immigration throughout the 19th and 20th centuries that will be distributed to the students. Students will also view *Hispanics at Mid-Decade*, tables and charts providing statistics on immigration available on the Pew Hispanic Center website. I will ask them what the statistics reveal about Mexican immigration in the U.S. This will provide a summary of past and present immigration trends in the U.S. Students will create cause-effect graphic aids on why Mexicans immigrate to the U.S. and the impact their migration has on Mexico and the U.S. Students will read an article from *The Center for Immigration Studies* that briefly summarizes why Mexicans continue to immigrate since the first major wave 150 years ago. They will analyze a speech by Susan Myrick, and other primary sources from both sides of the immigration debate in order to learn how to compare and contrast different perspectives. Our on-going discussion of the problems immigrants face and the possible solutions to their struggles will culminate in an essay at the end of the unit.

Although most of the unit is comprised mostly of non-fiction texts, I refer back to the title of the unit, *Examining Mexican Immigration Thru First Person Point-of-view*. I find that when teaching any one genre of literature it is imperative to make connections to other genres to enhance the overall understanding of the concepts taught in the unit. Introducing short stories, poems and political cartoons from *Lengua Fresca*, a book comprised of contemporary Latino writers, edited by Harold Augenbraum and Ilan Stavans, will provide many different perspectives on immigrant life in Mexico and the U.S. I will also use *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros, which I have taught for the last five years. While reading the book I ask students to explore themes surrounding the patriarchal community from which the main character yearns to one day escape. This book will accompany me in my unit in several ways - by demonstrating the first person point-of-view as well as illustrating the debilitating stereotypes faced by a migrant immigrant who disappears into the North. I am most excited that my once small unit on *The House on Mango Street* has developed into one that now incorporates news articles, graphic aids, fiction, poetry and film to illuminate the perspectives of Mexican migrant families on both sides of the border. The fictional and poetic language of Cisneros juxtaposed with the

sobering statistics and personal stories of the non-fiction text will make the topic real and meaningful to my students.

I am excited to present the film *Alambrista*, whose title alone will enable a discussion of epic proportion. The word *alambrista* has several meanings; it translates to mean "undocumented immigrant" or "acrobat" because the word's stem derives from the Spanish word for wire (Carasco, 140). Conventionally it means 'wire jumper' since the border in some places is protected by a barbed wire fence. Being able to explain the significance of the symbolism of an illegal immigrant's migration to the U.S. as a perpetual journey over a "tightrope" requires the type of critical thinking skills my Honors students need to employ in this unit. While viewing the film, students will have to answer discussion questions in their notebook; the book *Alambrista and the U.S. Mexico Border* provides a wealth of higher-level thinking questions. After viewing the film my summative assessment will require students to write an essay comparing the main character's journey throughout the film to those studied in the texts described above, thereby synthesizing all of the knowledge they gleaned from the first-person perspectives provided in this unit.

Latinos in North Carolina

The Latino population in Charlotte is growing rapidly; from 1990-2000 it increased nearly 400% (Miller). The need for more education about Latino history and its impact on the present-day United States, the conflicts faced by Mexican immigrants living in North Carolina, and contributions by Latino authors has become a necessity in Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools.

NWSA has a very diverse student body, but it does not have a large Latino population. The students I have taught at NWSA have parents who arrived from Puerto Rico, Mexico, Cuba, and El Salvador; many of those students are multi-racial. Three years prior to teaching at NWSA I taught at a school that had a very high number of foreign-born Latino students, many of whom did not speak English. During my three years there I did not see much of an effort to change the curriculum despite the changing faces of the school. I think this unit will open the eyes of my students, many of whom have developed harsh stereotypes about Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants. I have witnessed these stereotypes in class discussions and in actions and reactions around the school. I also want to make the important connection to the few Latino students I teach. In the past Latino writers, except Cisneros, were not included in my curriculum. Since the number of Latinos in Charlotte is growing rapidly, I anticipate the number of Latino students in my classes will increase - prompting a needed change in the curriculum.

Living in Charlotte for the past five years I have witnessed the ever-changing face of the city. Teaching in CMS has afforded me the opportunity to watch the demographics of the classroom change culturally, racially and socially. Despite the rapid increase of Latinos in North Carolina there is no focus on cultural "equity" in the curriculum - very few Latino authors listed in the *Pacing Guide* and no attention paid to the historical, cultural and economical significance Latino immigrants have on the United States or North Carolina. According to a study by the Center for Immigration Studies', North Carolina's immigrant population has increased over 300% between 1995 and 2005 ("NC Immigration Court Fact Sheet"). Although this report did not include an ethnic breakdown of the immigrants, other studies have shown that Latinos are the largest immigrant group in the United States, Mexico accounts for 6.2 million, or 56% of the 11.1 million illegal Latin American immigrants, according to one estimate. The number from most other regions of Latin American remained more or less constant between 2000 and 2005, while the number of unauthorized Mexicans increased by 1.5 million (Pew Hispanic Center).

These migrations have become a hot political issue in North Carolina. Politicians and business leaders are

constantly blasted across the front page of the *Charlotte Observer* debating whether or not the immigrant population is having a positive or negative effect on the community. Sue Myrick, the Republican House Representative for North Carolina's 9th district (which includes Mecklenburg County) and former two-term mayor of Charlotte, recently spoke in response to a Senate Immigration Proposal in 2007. One of her comments really struck me: "No provision in bill to end anchor babies (automatic citizenship for children of illegals born here). Why?" (Myrick). Hers is just one of the many negative viewpoints on immigration that my students frequently encounter in the local media. After reading this my mind immediately flashed to the final scene of the film *Alambrista* where a Mexican woman is literally clinging to a pole on the U.S. side of the border-crossing station, as she gives birth, to ensure that her child will be born a U.S. citizen and will never need papers to cross - symbolizing the pain an immigrant parent goes through to give her child security- the innate desire to help her child that defines all communities in this countries.

My responsibility is to deliver the facts about Mexican immigration in the U.S. and in North Carolina from the point-of-view of immigrants and their families so students can begin to foster their own understanding of the community changing right before their eyes. I want my students to understand that family concerns motivate most Mexicans who emigrate to the U.S. Statistics support the notion that parents are making the dangerous journey to the U.S. to ensure a better life for their families. The number of male immigrants illegally crossing the border is 5.4 million or 49% of the unauthorized population compared to the 3.9 million females , or 35% of the unauthorized population as estimated in March 2005 (Pew Hispanic Center). The study also noted that of the children of unauthorized parents, 1.8 million are also unauthorized, in contrast to the 3.1 million who are U.S. citizens by birth. The idea that immigrants are coming to the U.S. to provide a better life for their children is evidenced in the numbers above - they stay in the U.S. for a considerable amount of years and have imbedded themselves for the benefit of their families.

I want my students to read immigrants' own accounts of their migration and their time in the United States. In 2006 a 28-year old Mexican father, when asked if the dangers of border crossing affected his decision to cross, told an interviewer, "We don't care if we have to walk eight days, fifteen days - it doesn't matter the danger we put ourselves in. If and when we cross alive, we will have a job to give our families the best" (Cornelius). This first-person perspective is so important to share with my students. After they read articles that describe the conditions of some of the border-crossing areas, and comments of politicians for and against more severe immigration restrictions, they can draw their own conclusions about the debate and see the human side of these issues.

It is important for my all of my students to be able to make a connection between themselves and the city in which they live. My experience as a chaperone for a local field trip has been one catalyst for this unit. Eighth grade students are required to take a field trip to the *Levine Museum of the New South*, located in downtown Charlotte, as part of their social studies curriculum. The museum is very hands-on and takes the students on a journey from the newly industrialized South of the late 1800s to present-day Charlotte home to several *Fortune 500* companies. The maze that leads them from the cotton barrels to the building blocks offers walls of Civil Rights Movement artifacts, sound-bytes and photographs. Every year students utter the same responses as the pass the hood of the a former Grand Master of the KKK, or pictures of the first African-American student attending a familiar high school that resides just down the street from NWSA. *This really happened in Charlotte? That's where I'm going to high school next year. Something like that could never happen in Charlotte today.* Those images resonate so deeply with the students because it has meaning to them - they recognize the names of the schools, the buildings in their neighborhoods, and the color of the faces of those involved. The ability of a student to see someone else who is his age, his race in his community allows him to make a connection, to identify himself in that exhibit. Reading the first-hand accounts of

segregation and integration by students in all the above-mentioned realms makes the experience personal. That experience cannot be replicated by reading a textbook. Before we exit the glass doors leading us back to the lobby there is a very small section devoted to the rising Latino population in Charlotte. I want to provide my Latino students with the same opportunity to personally connect to a story about a student their age, of their color, in their community because there is a major transformation taking place in Charlotte today. A connection needs to be made to their culture, race and community by taking them on journey through time that illustrates the contributions Mexican immigrants have made and are making to the United States.

Background and Strategies

Early Immigration and Stereotypes

Understanding that there is a tremendous amount of historical background information needed to teach this unit, I have provided many resources within this section that provide further explanation.

In keeping with my overarching goal of breaking down stereotypes and making my students more accepting of the growing population in Charlotte, I must begin my unit by providing an understanding of the way Latinos have been stereotyped and mistreated over the last 150 years. Juan González's *Harvest of Empire* provides an eye-opening explanation of Mexican migration to the U.S. during from the days of early Spanish colonists to the present. In order for my students to understand the significance of Mexicans living in the U.S. today I must take them on a journey throughout time, beginning in 1845 with the inception of "Manifest Destiny" into the minds of Americans.

Since the unit I teach prior to this unit illustrates the suppression of African-Americans during slavery in *Frederick Douglass: Narrative of a Slave*, students will be able to connect the ideas of racial superiority as a means of economic growth to the similar motives behind racial superiority of white Europeans over Indians, blacks, and Mexicans during the era of "Manifest Destiny." This term serves as a label for the notions of Latin American inferiority in the eyes of many racist white Europeans who relished in their "nation's prosperity. . .its amazing new networks of canals, steamboats, and railroads, as proof of their God-given destiny to conquer the frontier" (González, 43). Phrenologist Dr. Josiah C. Nott, a proponent for "Manifest Destiny" in 1845 wrote, "Whenever in the history of the world the inferior races have been conquered and mixed in with the Caucasian, the latter have sunk into barbarism" (González, 43). As a guide for the teacher, there are several questions to think about when providing your students with this information. These questions can act as a journal or class discussion as the material is being presented or to guide you in teaching this information. *What is your reaction to this quote? Are you multi-racial? What would happen if Dr. Nott were living in the present-day U.S.? What connections can be made to slavery in the U.S. (think about bi-racial slave children)? Are there any organizations today that support the ideas of "Manifest Destiny?"* During the late 1840s, many Caucasians felt that the world owed them for their marveled discoveries, inventions and conquests and therefore they were afforded the right to continue spreading their ingenuity in any territory in the West they had not yet conquered, influenced or assimilated. Waging war with Mexico to secure Texas, California, and other parts of the Mexican north as part of the Union was necessary in President Polk's eyes. However, with racial superiority and fear of mixed-race barbarians dotting the landscape of the newly acquired land, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was created. It forced Mexico to relinquish the section of its territory that was *least densely* populated. That section of Mexico developed into present-day New Mexico, California, Nevada, parts of Arizona, Utah and Texas (González, 44). The threat of being over-populated by racially mixed Mexicans was the motivating factor in establishing the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Again, the theme of fear by the "superior" race is examined. The connection to slavery cannot be ignored here.

I want my students to understand some basic facts about the Mexican Americans who were incorporated into the United States in 1848. The relinquishment of the Nueces Strip now created a problem for its Mexican inhabitants. Families were no longer separated by a river, but by a border between two feuding countries. The Rio Grande is actually the name Anglo settlers gave to river; it was called the Rio Bravo by its previous occupants. So, the conflicts between the Spanish-speaking Mexicans living on the U.S. side of the Nueces Strip become more than just a language barrier - families, who at one time could traverse the river without regulations, were now governed under different laws. The Anglo settlers took advantage of illiteracy and the language barrier of their new neighbors and cheated the Mexicans out of land that was (in their minds) rightfully theirs. Here are several questions to guide the teacher's lesson. *Were the Anglos fair in their scheme? Why or why not? What was their motivation in stealing the land?* The responses will be guided back to "Manifest Destiny" and the job of removing the "obstacle to progress" (González, 100). Violence against Mexicans became more and more prevalent around 1855, with lynching of Mexicans being witnessed into the early 1900s and as late as 1917 (González, 100). More interdisciplinary questions or cross-curricular questions to think about. *Slavery and the lynching of Mexicans are happening concurrently. What are similarities both races face? How are their struggles different? How does the quote, "We didn't cross the border, the border crossed us" apply here?*

I hope to present additional historical material to my students. I want them to know that Mexicans began migrating to the North in the late 1840s during the California Gold Rush. Thousands of immigrants became migrant laborers over the following decades. I want them to know that cowboy culture developed in the aftermath of the Mexican War, with help from Mexican and Mexican American workers. South Texas had cattle numbering in the millions which profited its new Anglo settlers, but *mestizo* (Indian and Spanish descent) or *mulato* (Indian and black descent) cowboys commonly worked the range. Spanish words such as *bronco*, *canyon*, *rodeo*, *ariat*, and *loco* were commonly used by Anglos in that industry (González, 44-45). Mexicans did other types of work. When railroads were built during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, thousands of Mexicans labored in construction and maintenance jobs. As González notes, ". . .this historic Mexican contribution has been virtually obliterated from popular frontier history, replaced by the enduring myth of the lazy, shiftless Mexican" (González, 47). As mentioned in my objectives I see this myth alive today in the minds of my own students. The questions that remain are: *Where are all the mestizo cowboys in Hollywood's famous Westerns? What does this reveal about the representation of Latin American influence in American history?*

To discuss stereotypes and racism in connection with Mexican immigration, I will provide my students with information that contrasts the journey, values and assimilation of early European immigrants to those of Mexican immigrants. The attention in this part of the unit will be on family. *What risks did European families face? Why? How did they combat those fears? What risks do Mexican families face? How do they combat those fears? What is being done to help and hinder their journeys to the U.S.?*

I also want my students to understand that the U.S.-Mexican border has changed over time. Before 1924, when the Border Patrol was created, travel back and forth between the two countries was often casual and relatively easy; proper authorization was not needed and the term "illegal alien" did not exist (Aldama). Thus, the idea of a "borderless economy with a barricaded border" is an excellent representation of the struggles Mexicans migrating to the U.S. began facing (Carrasco, 103). By the mid-20th century the situation had changed dramatically. Mexico and the U.S. were involved in a migration policy that lasted over 20 years, the Bracero Program. The Program was implemented in 1942 as a response to U.S. labor shortages resulting from WWII and it became the "largest and most significant guest worker program of the 20th century ("America on the Move: Guard at Collection Point"). Since the unemployment situation in Mexico was so dire, many Mexicans came in droves. The Program officially ended in 1964 when the U.S. economy began lagging

(Aldama). I will present this information to my students, in more detail, in the form of a scavenger hunt. *The National Museum of American History* has an excellent website (see Teacher Resources) that students will navigate using a list of teacher-made questions. There are pictures of men standing in line waiting for a contract, being sprayed with DDT on their way into the U.S., sleeping in deplorable conditions at a Texan ranch. The most recognizable photograph is of the short handed hoe that caused so much controversy because of its debilitating effects to the worker's backs. In response to the staggering number of Mexican immigrants living in the U.S., "Operation Wetback" was launched by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) in 1954. The nation's negative reaction to the number of immigrants they began seeing in the southwestern U.S. stirred fears of job competition and prompted the government to round up as many undocumented workers and other immigrants and deport them back to Mexico (Aldama). Many of the 1 million immigrants deported were taken deep into Mexican territory making it more difficult to make their way back to the border (Aldama). The topic of "Operation Wetback" opens the floor for many possible discussions in class, including racial profiling, civil rights as well as parallels to the current immigrant raids being conducted across U.S. cities.

The debate over immigration often leads itself to the comparison of European immigrants of the early 1900s and the influx of Mexican immigrants of the last few decades. In an effort to illustrate the similarities and differences between the two groups, students will read "How Grandma Got Legal," *Border Battles* July 28, 2006 by Mae Ngai. Students will create a Venn Diagram, on the dry-erase board and in their notebook, comparing and contrasting their journeys. The major point of contention, as one historian pointed out, is not the idea that many Mexicans are crossing the border into the U.S. to work, but that they are doing so illegally (Ngai). Early European immigrants contributed to U.S. industrialization by providing cheap, unskilled labor by digging sewers, subway tunnels and sewing clothing. Similarly, they too were faced with the attitude that they were stealing jobs, were ignorant, criminal or did not seek citizenship (Ngai). Italians, Irish, Jews and Poles were once referred to as "degraded races of Europe" (Ngai). *What caused people to have so much animosity toward the new immigrants?* The major difference between these two groups of immigrants is that the trip to Europe was so lengthy and costly, most immigrants came here, immersed themselves in the language and sought citizenship. They could, over time, arrange for their family to join them in the U.S., which at that time had very lax immigration laws. "Illegal" immigration was not a buzz word because virtually all European immigrants who arrived in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries were allowed to stay in the U.S. without the fear of deportation. Only 1% of the 25 million who arrived were excluded (Ngai). The myth of the lazy Mexican is dispelled in the following statistics. Illegal immigrants are 94% employed in the U.S. labor force (Cornelius). Of the 11.1 million illegal immigrants surveyed in 2005, Mexicans account for 6.2 million, or 56% of the Latin American immigrant population (Pew Hispanic Center). Overall, 7.2 million "unauthorized migrants" were employed in 2005 in areas such as farming, cleaning, construction, and food preparation (Pew Hispanic Center). Unskilled professions seen here are a reminder of the work done by European immigrants 100 year ago. Latino immigration will continue well into the 21st century for several reasons: the economic crisis in Mexico, the fact that the Latino immigration is of urban workers, not the rural peasants of old Europe and Asia, historically Mexicans have been pushed and pulled across the U.S. border to fulfill job shortages, and there is a great need for unskilled workers as the U.S. population ages (González, 199-205).

Border Control

After discussing with my students why Mexicans immigrate to the U.S. in such large numbers I want to share with them some of the most unsettling information I came across in my research for this unit. In order for my students to understand just how much of a "tightrope" walk the journey to the U.S. is for illegal Mexican immigrants, my students will read about the recent tactics to dissuade illegal border crossings. In March 2005,

a group of members of Mexican legislatures, federal government officials, academia members, foreign policy experts, and civil society organizations (specific names of all participants are listed in the document) collaborated to create a national migration policy in working toward a *shared responsibility* between the U.S. and Mexican governments. Both Houses of Mexico's Federal Congress adopted it as a Concurrent Resolution in February 2006, meaning all political forces of Mexico support the positions of this policy ("Mexico and the Migration Phenomenon"). It summarizes the causes of the influx of Mexican immigrants into the U.S. Its accessible language will allow me to introduce two issues with my students: The economic factors in Mexico that lead residents to migrate, and the sacred bonds of family that remain the first priority for many Mexicans. As a U.S. citizen it is odd to hear the word "family" so many times in a document of this genre. This report treats immigrants as real people with authentic stories, not just statistics. I would like my students to consider the author's hope that the two countries create immigration policy defined by ". . . respect for human rights" as well as the ". . . prevention and prosecution of human smuggling, especially women and children, and the protection of the victims of that crime ("Mexico and the Migration Phenomenon").

In addition to this report, I will read other non-fiction reports on Mexican immigration with my students. I have accumulated many articles on border-crossing from various sources such as *The New York Times*, *Charlotte Observer*, *Yale Herald*, *SSRC*, *Alambrista and the U.S. Mexico Border*, and Pew Hispanic Center. All are annotated in the Teacher Resources section of this unit. These sources will allow my class to explore, for example, the debate about building a fence at the Mexican border. Students will read an excerpt from *Alambrista and the U.S. Mexico Border* that explains Operation Gatekeeper. A border-control policy instituted along the California-Mexico border in 1994, it was established with the philosophy of "control through deterrence" (Carrasco, 79). The idea of Operation Gatekeeper was to barricade the border in the more accessible crossing points to deter the passage of illegal immigrants. However, the willpower of Mexicans to cross the border is immutable no matter how life-threatening or costly the journey. Migrants were not deterred to stay on their side of the border, they were simply being redirected to more dangerous crossing areas resulting in the deaths of nearly 800 people since its inception in 1994 (Carrasco, 79). The new routes are virtual death traps for the migrants who face hypothermia, heat stroke and drowning. The areas in California that migrants are *inadvertently* averted to are "more difficult terrain" and "the most hazardous areas" as stated by border patrol officials (Carrasco, 85). Coyotes, who smuggle migrants into the United States, are in high demand with tighter border security; they can charge thousands of dollars per person, exploit women by demanding sex in exchange for smuggling, and carry serious mortal danger for those being transported (Cornelius). Students will create a cause-effect chart on the dry-erase board and in their notebooks. I will lead the class in a discussion based on the following questions: *What is the correlation between Operation Gatekeeper and the fate of migrants? What does this reveal about the U.S. attitude toward the respect for human life? How does this relate to current border-control debates?* Other problems facing the post-Operation Gatekeeper policy are important to consider. As border crossing becomes more dangerous, migrants have often decided to settle permanently in the U.S., unlike migrants 100 years ago who could work for wages here and return to their families in Mexico with virtually no barricades to hurdle (Cornelius). Robert M. Young, director of *Alambrista* illustrated the familial struggles so many migrants face by noting that, "This film is about people who pick the fruit and vegetables we eat, but because they are moving they don't have time to ripen themselves. . . separated from their family and roots" (Carrasco, 160). All of these concerns and many more are explored extensively in "Impacts of Border Enforcement on Unauthorized Mexican Migration to the United States", Wayne A. Cornelius, if you would like to have your students further dissect the debate on immigration reform. I will assign students to write an editorial based on their perspective on Operation Gatekeeper.

Additional Strategies

Reading comprehension strategies in the first nine weeks of the *Pacing* Guide are implemented through non-fiction texts. The North Carolina Department of Instruction creates their EOG Reading test questions based on the higher-level thinking models of Dr. Robert Marzano and Bloom's Taxonomy. The NCDPI generates their test question stems which employ the following levels of thinking: knowledge, organizing, applying, analyzing, generating, integrating, and evaluating (Munk). During this part of the year, teachers often feel so overwhelmed teaching multiple-choice question stems in preparation for the state End-of-Grade Reading Test and are left with little time to focus on teaching the student how to analyze longer works. The focus on reading comprehension strategies can also make it difficult for teachers to help students become excited about reading.

I typically use a lot of unrelated articles to teach the components of a news article, editorial, feature story, and political cartoon; in the past I have done also used unrelated texts when teaching text organizers (chronological order, compare/contrast order, cause/effect order and problem/solution order). Since I focused this unit around stories of Mexican immigration I have selected specific texts to implement these strategies.

5W & H ? Chart

I will use the 5W & H ? Chart to teach my students what questions a news article should answer. The chart will contain two columns labeled *Questions* and *Answers*. The six rows will be labeled with the following questions: *Who? What? Where? When?, Why? How?* Students will read aloud "Bush Signs Mexico Fence Into Law," from *BBC News*, October 10, 2006. This article provides a non-biased summary of the causes for the law, its provisions and consequences on both Mexico and the U.S. Students will work in pairs to complete the 5W & H ? Chart; students must highlight where they found the answers in the text. This will provide students with an understanding of the purpose of a news article as well as serve as a reference for the biased editorials they will read on the same topic.

Timeline

I have selected three articles from *The New York Times* to teach the components of a feature story (see Student Resources). The series of three articles, written December 19-21, 2006, examine the lives of Raquel, Verónica and Irma - three sisters born in Monterrey, Mexico who eventually make the journey to the United States. Raquel lives in the U.S. legally on a temporary visa, Verónica lives illegally in a neighboring town and Irma moved back to Mexico after living in the U.S. for several years. Each sister provides a different perspective on immigrant life in the U.S. and Mexico. Students will read these stories over the course of three class periods. Since feature stories provide more than just the basic facts of a news story, I want my students to generate a graphic aid that is more creative than a traditional timeline. Below are several types of timelines appropriate for the feature stories.

Story board - students draw the events in story board form, chronicling the intersecting lives of the three sisters (similar to a comic book or graphic novel)

Picture timeline - almost like a traditional timeline, however, in lieu of text students draw pictures depicting major events in the lives of the three sisters

Map - students draw a map of Mexico and Texas; instead of traditional images on a map they map the journey of each sister; create a symbol for each sister and create a legend or key for readers so they can track the lives of each sister.

Mood timeline - students color-code the timeline so the events on the timeline correspond to the mood each sister felt at that time; students must use quotes from the text to support their answers on the timeline

Fact/Opinion Chart

Students will read two editorials (listed under Student Resources), "Our View: Border Fence Trivializes a Complex Issue," and "Another Election Year Gimick?" Both editorials provide a very anti-border fence perspective. Since they already read the news article about the Border Fence law they will be privy of this debate. My students have a difficult time analyzing and writing editorials. They will create a two-column Fact/Opinion chart. After reading each editorial students will list all the facts written in the article in one column and all of the opinions listed in second. The purpose of this is for students to see how the facts in an editorial are so outweighed by the opinions. Students will also have to highlight words in the text that signal an opinion. Next, students will have to re-write one editorial as a new article - using only the facts stated in the editorial they chose. This provides a great opportunity for students to take a critic's stance and evaluate the validity of each editorial. The first editorial listed is more fact-based, as opposed to the second which is full of sarcasm and little fact.

Activities

Activity One

Activity One will be the first lesson I teach for this unit. Journals usually serve as a 5-7 minute warm-up activity that tie a quote or a series of open-ended questions to a topic being taught in class. Journal writing is an essential component of a middle school Language Arts classroom. It allows for meaningful connections to curriculum that may or may not be appealing to the developing, distracted, or disgruntled adolescent. I read journal entries when I collect notebooks, about twice a quarter. Historically, this journal topic has lasted the entire class period, 90 minutes. I have found that students really appreciate taking the entire class to discuss this topic because the topic relates directly to them, it is often a topic not tackled in a classroom setting and I allow everyone to contribute. In order to ensure the discussion of each question in one class period I will designate about 10 minutes of discussion per question. When the 10-minute mark approaches I say that we only have time for one or two more comments, making sure to first select any student who volunteered to speak but has not yet shared. As with any other transitional activity in the classroom, if the side-chatter becomes excessive I will count to 3. Students are aware that by three they are to be seated and silent. This strategy will probably be implemented because the students get so passionate about their personal experiences. Because of the high-level of student interest, this activity will be extended over a two-class period.

Day One

I have two objectives for today's activity.

1. The students will be able to make personal connections to literature.
2. The students will be able to understand the causes and effects of racism and stereotypes by writing about personal experiences in a journal.

The overhead is another tool used daily in my classroom. Middle school students need a routine so when they arrive to my class there will always be a warm-up on the overhead. Students know that I give a timed warm-up every class period. I will have the following questions on an overhead transparency when the students arrive. *Define racism (in your own words). Does racism exist a) in your school b) in your neighborhood c) in Charlotte? What is a stereotype? Why do people stereotype others? Have you ever been stereotyped, if yes, how did it make you feel? When have you stereotyped others?* The students respond to their questions in the Interactive Notebook, a spiral notebook that houses all work done in Language Arts for the entire year. The questions are designed to stimulate their brain and get them ready for the critical thinking skills they need to employ throughout the unit. They will be given about 20 minutes to write. Before they share their answers to the stereotype questions I will read the chapter "Those Who Don't" from Sandra Cisneros's *The House on Mango Street*. This chapter describes, in beautiful language, how other races are scared to come into the main character, Esperanza's, neighborhood because it is home to Latinos. I will ask the students to identify stereotypes and racism evident in the chapter. By juxtaposing this chapter with their responses the students will be able to use critical thinking skills to make connections between their experiences and those on Mango Street. This will be the first of many first-person Latino perspectives examined in the unit. Then the discussion ensues. I will remind students that only one person may speak at a time and to be respectful of their peer's opinions. I will call on students to raise their hands. At times I will have to mediate, but for the most part the students really take control of the discussion. Their homework will be to write one paragraph (in their Interactive Notebook) summarizing the class discussion.

Day Two

I have two objectives for today's activity.

1. The students will be able to identify text organizers in non-fiction text by reading a selection and locating chronological order signal words and by generating a graphic aid.
2. The students will be able to identify and analyze cause/effect relationships in non-fiction text by reading a selection from Cheech Marin's *Chicano Visions American Painters on the Verge*, comparing and contrasting two maps, and creating a graphic aid.

The warm-up for today is a one-paragraph response to the question: "Historically, what causes one culture to discriminate against another?"

The excerpt my students will read falls under the heading "The Roots of Migrant Consciousness," which in ten brief paragraphs summarizes the origin of the term Chicano, or "politicized Mexican-American who have resided in what is today the Southwestern United States since the earliest days of Spanish exploration in this region, the early 1600s" (Marin, 12). Students will read the excerpt aloud. The strategy I use for read-alouds is as follows: starting on one side of the room, going up and down each row, each student reads one paragraph, no matter how short or long, without stopping. This strategy has many great attributes: the students must pay attention so they know when to begin reading, I do not have to interrupt the fluidity by calling on several students to read, and all students know the expectations - making read-alouds more comfortable. I always pause at key points during the reading and ask comprehension questions to keep the students engaged and to assess their understanding. One of the key elements of non-fiction text is that the 5W & H questions are always answered. This will serve as the teacher modeling and guided practice components of the lesson.

Together we will begin to complete a 5W & H Chart (who, what, where, when, why, how questions). I will draw one on the overhead and students will record one in their notebook. I will begin the chart with them by answering the "who" question: Aztecs, Spaniard settlers and Chicanos. The most important strategy for reading comprehension is referencing the text. My students have been taught to go back in the text and highlight where they find their answers. I will model this strategy on the overhead by underlining the sentences that tell the reader "who" the selection is discussing. Students will work in pairs to complete the rest of the chart - of course going back and highlighting their answer in the selection. For now students may write their response in phrases; as the unit progresses, they will take the responses generated on the 5W & H chart and create a written summary in paragraph form using transitional words they learned throughout the study of text organizers in the unit.

I mentioned above that students will work in pairs to complete the 5W & H chart. Another essential element in middle school classrooms is cooperative learning. My desks are arranged in pairs. During a typical lesson I will model the skill being taught that day, guide them through a practice activity and then allow them to work in pairs on the next activity. Students learn so much more when they are constructively working with their peers. Often times, when working on EOG-style multiple choice questions or open-ended teacher-made questions they will actually debate over who has the correct answer. By making them go back and justify their answers by highlighting the text they have an easier time supporting their answer choice. Cooperative learning fosters discussion, respect and participation among my students.

Next I will distribute maps of the original "Aztlán" region and of present-day Mexico and the U.S. I will model how to use the text organizers such as titles, legends, and graphics to understand the information on a map. I will do so by asking questions such as: *What can I learn from the title? What countries do you see? Why is the date significant?* These questions will foster the critical thinking skills needed to analyze similarities and differences of the Aztlán map and the present-day U.S./Mexico map. The two maps will serve as an example of a non-fiction text as well as a reference for future readings.

The "independent" practice segment of the lesson will also be done with a partner. The following questions will be answered in the Interactive Notebook. *Describe the clash between the Aztecs and the Spaniards. Historically, how did Spaniards treat other cultures? What were the results of the Spanish and Indian violence? What caused the earliest wave of Mexican immigration? What does it mean to be Chicano?* I want these questions answered in pairs because it will allow the students to see each other's perspectives. Since some of the questions are direct reading comprehension questions they will be able to reference the text in their answers. When students answer orally I always make one of the two justify how they came to a consensus about their answer. The students are accountable for taking an active role in the paired activity because they never know who will be the one to justify.

The lesson will conclude with a wrap-up discussion on the current stereotypes Mexican-Americans, Mexican immigrants and Chicanos currently face in the U.S. as well as any other questions that were unanswered in the warm-up activity. For homework students will create a timeline of events from "The Roots of Migrant Consciousness." Students can choose to create a traditional timeline, a picture timeline, a story-board or any other graphic representation of the events in chronological order. The flexibility in the homework assignment allows the learning styles of the students to flourish. As I mentioned in the Introduction, NWSA is a magnet art school and our students come up with very creative ways to organize their knowledge. Although I gave them creative license on this assignment, all students are still producing a graphic aid depicting the chronological order of the text read in class. Creating a product is one of the best ways for a student to enhance his understanding of a concept.

Activity Two

This objective for this lesson is:

1. The students will be able to make thematic connections and comparisons between different types of texts by listening to and reading a *corrido*, reading a short story and viewing a film.

This activity will extend through at least two class periods. *Corridos* have a longstanding place in the oral traditions of Mexico. They are folk ballads of the border region which emerged by the beginning of the 20th century and many narrate social injustices and community responses to them. The book *Alambrista and the U.S. Mexico Border* includes a DVD of the film *Alambrista* as well as the CD of the soundtrack which includes *corridos*. The penultimate chapter of the book, which provides lyrics to many of its *corrido*-style songs, allows students to see how oral traditions used to serve as a way of delivering news throughout communities.

I will read aloud the short story by Daniel Chacón, "Godoy Lives." This short story takes the reader on a journey through the border-crossing station through the eyes of a very nervous Mexican illegal immigrant. At the beginning of the story, Juan is about to embark on an adventure to the U.S. at the encouragement and assistance of his wife Maria. He must take the identity of a deceased man named Miguel Valencia Godoy. "Godoy" encounters an INS officer who tells him that he is his long lost cousin. The INS officer takes him in to live with his family, finds him a job and eventually tells him that he has inherited a large sum of money and that his mother suffers from memory loss. Throughout the series ironic, yet fortunate, events, Godoy begins to love his job, his money and eventually the company of a beautiful, young woman. I want the students to examine why Juan decides to stay in the U.S. and live as "Godoy." Working in pairs throughout the entire activity today, students will create a character chart. In one column the students will list his character traits, another will contain dialogue, another will contain his emotions, and another will contain his actions. Students will need to reference the text and provide quotes from the story as their response in the chart. Their answers will lead them to the character's motivation to leave his wife in Mexico and take on another man's identity in the U.S.

Students will then read (and listen to) the *corrido* "Adiós California" sung from the point-of-view of an immigrant who affirms that once he reaps the benefits of laboring he will be able to return to his homeland and provide for his family. The line "I'll return, I'll return, I'll return" is repeated four times to emphasize his devotion to Mexico and his family. Students will be asked to cite lines in the *corrido* that either support the motives Juan illustrates in "Godoy Lives" or contradict his actions. Students will also read excerpts from *Alambrista and the U.S. Mexico Border* on p. 67-70. These pages provide first-hand accounts of the difficulty and rewards of the journey across the border. Next, students will read the chapter "Geraldo No Last Name," from Cisneros's *The House on Mango Street*. Not only does this chapter illustrate the lonely, desperate life of a migrant worker, it also provides the reader with society's viewpoint of these men. Words like *brazier* and *wetback* are used to refer to Geraldo. The reader, in one short vignette, is privy to the pain, anonymity, stereotypes, racism and isolation Geraldo faced. His death represents so many others who have gone North and never returned. Students will be able to now compare and contrast all four texts as well as discuss society's view on these three men. Their homework will be to write a *corrido*-style epilogue from Juan's perspective.

Activity Three

I have two objectives for this activity.

1. The students will be able to create an authentic Mexican immigrant persona by writing a series of vignettes from his/her point-of-view.
2. The students will be able to use facts from non-fiction passages in order to create authentic fictional stories.

This activity will take place toward the end of the unit. I want to expose students to as many different first-person narratives about Mexican immigration as possible before assigning this writing activity. By now students will have encountered the history of Mexican culture, news articles (*NY Times*, *Charlotte Observer*), editorials (*Yale Herald*, *The New York Times*), political cartoons and short stories (from *Lengua Fresca*), corridos, and excerpts from *The House on Mango Street*. Their study of non-fiction at this point is extensive, reading text structured by four types of text organizers, and creating graphic representations of the information read. This activity allows students to work independently and create a persona - a present-day Mexican immigrant living on either side of the border.

The students will be able to synthesize the facts learned about Mexican immigration by writing a series of ten vignettes from the point-of-view of a Mexican immigrant. Students will demonstrate their ability to create a persona and maintain consistency throughout the series of writing. The activity will extend over a two-class period. Students will be required to create a cover page and a table of contents. The cover page must include any colors, symbols, or illustrations that are significant to their persona (representing the tone or mood of the writing, the struggles, fears, joys, etc.). The entire project will be worth 150 points, 10 points for each vignette, 10 points for the table of contents, 10 for mechanics, 10 for neatness and creativity and 20 points for the cover page. The content will be graded on how accurate or authentic the writing is for the persona created.

Assessment

The culminating assessment will be an essay that requires students to write from the point-of-view of a Mexican immigrant; this will be one test grade (100 points). Throughout the essay, students must use examples they have learned in the readings and film as well as class discussions. The following is a list of topics they need to cover in their essay: their motivation to immigrate, their journey across the border (physically and emotionally), and their decision to stay in the U.S. indefinitely or return to Mexico.

Resources

Teacher Resources

Alba, Richard. "Looking Beyond the Moment: American Immigration Seen From Historically and Internationally Comparative Perspectives." *Border Battles: the U.S. Immigration Debates*. 28 July 2006. 4 July 2007 <http://borderbattles.ssrc.org/Alba/printable.html>>.

Candelaria, Cordelia C., Arturo J. Aldama, and Peter J. Garcia, eds. "Bracero Program" *Encyclopedia of Latino Popular Culture [Two Volumes]*" 2004. Greenwood Press. 4 July 2007 <http://testlae.greenwood.com>>.

This article is from an online encyclopedia and it provides a brief background on the causes and effects of the Bracero Program on Mexicans and the U.S.

Candelaria, Cordelia C., Arturo J. Aldama, and Peter J. Garcia, eds. "Operation Wetback" *Encyclopedia of Latino Popular Culture [Two Volumes]*" 2004. Greenwood Press. 4 July 2007 <http://testlae.greenwood.com>>.

This article is from the same online encyclopedia as mentioned above. It discusses why and how the U.S. government wanted to return many of the Mexican laborers hired to work in agricultural jobs back to Mexico. The article is concise and I will use it to teach the components of a non-fiction selection.

Cornelius, Wayne A. "Impacts of Border Enforcement on Unauthorized Mexican Migration to the United States" *Border Battles: the U.S. Immigration Debates*. 26 Sept. 2006. 5 July 2007 [http://borderbattles.ssrc.org/ Cornelius/](http://borderbattles.ssrc.org/Cornelius/)>.

This article discusses how the lives of many migrant workers are being lost because of new dangers in border crossing. This is an interesting article because I developed several discussion questions to guide a class discussion on the pros and cons of the new border security.

González, Juan. *Harvest of Empire*. New York: Penguin Books, 2000.

I cannot say enough about this book. It has become my right-hand man for this unit. It provides a wealth of information about the history of Latinos in the U.S., the history of U.S. involvement in Central and Latin America - a history often left out of classroom textbooks.

Herald, Matthew, and Samuel Post. "Shots Fired Over the Mexican Border" *The Yale Herald*. 3 Nov. 2006. 6 July 2007 www.yaleherald.com/article-p.php? Article=5010>.

This article is very different from the other editorials listed in this section. It is a conversation between two graduate students. One is very supportive of the new fence being built on the U.S.-Mexico border and the other point out why he feels the fence will hurt relations with Mexico and it will not solve the bigger problem of border security. It could be used in the classroom to compare/contrast the ideas in a Venn Diagram or to create a problem-solution chart.

"Lincoln County to Cut Services Used by Illegal Residents" *WSOCTV.Com*. 21 June 2007. The Associated Press. 4 July 2007 www.wsocv.com/print/13545625/detail.html>.

I did not use this article in my unit, however it discusses how one county in North Carolina is trying to make life for illegal immigrants more difficult. The proponents of these policies believe that they are draining the public services and do not deserve them. My students might be interested in this since it is so close to home.

"Mexico and the Migration Phenomenon" Oct. 2005. 3 July 2007 [www.consejomexicano.org/ download.php?id=71026,747,7](http://www.consejomexicano.org/download.php?id=71026,747,7)>.

This is the website that I found the document created by Mexican government officials, local Mexican officials, and Mexican civil rights leaders. It describes the policies that need to be created in order to create a safe and legal journey to the U.S.

It struck me as very enlightening because it stresses the need to protect the basic human rights of the Mexican immigrants as well as the importance of keeping families together.

Miller, Scott. "Hispanics Replace African Americans as Largest U.S. Minority Group." *USINFO.STATE.GOV*. Office of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. 13 Aug. 2007 <http://usinfo.state.gov>>.

This article provides a lot of statistics about the rapid growth of the Latino population across the U.S.

Munk, Tom. "North Carolina Thinking Skills: An Introduction." *Learn NC*. University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. 25 July 2007 <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/thinkingskills0403>>.

This website provides a great synopsis of Marzano and Bloom's theory of higher order thinking skills. It is a great resource for teachers who want to create their own multiple-choice or open-ended questions while staying aligned with their state guidelines.

Myrick, Sue. "Remarks Made by Rep. Sue Myrick Press Conference Re: Senate Immigration Proposal" *Susan Myrick*. 21 May 2007. 6 July 2007 www.myrick.house.gov/senateimmigrationmay2007.shtml>.

This is the speech Sue Myrick made in reaction to the failure of the Immigration Proposal in the Senate. It allows the students to see just how unsupportive one of their

local elected officials is in regards to legalizing illegal immigrants in North Carolina.

"NC Standard Course of Study." *Public Schools of North Carolina*. 2004. 4 July 2007 www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/languagearts/scos/2004/25grade8>.

All of the objectives and goals I need to follow when teaching the Pacing Guide are listed on this website.

Ngai, Mae. "How Grandma Got Legal" *Border Battles: the U.S. Immigration Debates*. 28 July 2006. 5 July 2007 <http://borderbattles.ssrc.org/Ngai/>>.

This article provides a great argument on why European immigrants of the late 19th and early 20th centuries should not be compared to present-day Mexican immigrants. I used a lot of information from this article to write my unit. Students can compare/contrast

the motivation, journeys and struggles faced by both groups of immigrants.

"North Carolina Immigration Court Fact Sheet" *Susan Myrick*. 6 July 2007
www.myrick.house.gov/NCImmigrationCourtFactSheet.shtml>.

This article is from Sue Myrick's website. It provides some statistics on Latino immigrants in North Carolina.

Passel, Jeffrey S. "The Size and Characteristics of the Unauthorized Migrant Population in the U.S. Estimates Based on March 2005 Current Population Survey" *Pew Hispanic Center*. 7 Mar. 2006. 4 July 2007 www.pewhispanic.org>.

The Pew Hispanic Center is an excellent resource for statistics on Latinos in the U.S.

in just about every category. As opposed to the information in González's book, which is about five years old, this website has current statistics that I can share with my students.

Pear, Robert, and Carl Hulse. "Immigrant Bill Dies in Senate; Defeat for Bush" *The New York Times*. 29 June 2007. 4 July 2007 www.nytimes.com>.

This article could be used to teach students about how a bill is passed. It briefly summarizes the bill's contents and poses possible consequences to its failure to pass in the Senate.

Student Resources

Alambrista: the Director's Cut. Dir. Robert M. Young. Perf. Domingo Ambriz. DVD. Bobwin Studios, 2004.

My students will view this film at the beginning of the unit. I purchased the book listed below and it came with this dvd and the soundtrack to the film.

Alvarez, Lizette. "Three Sisters: Fear and Hope in Immigrant's Furtive Existence" *The New York Times*. 20 Dec. 2006. 26 June 2006 www.nytimes.com>.

This is one of three feature articles. It is used at the beginning of the unit to teach the components of a feature story as well as teach the different stories of three sisters who left Mexico for a better life in the U.S.

"Another Election Year Gimmick?" *National Immigration Forum*. 2 Oct. 2006. Argus Observer. 8 July 2007 www.immigrationforum.org>.

This is one of the two editorials my students will read. The author is very sarcastic and

I know this piece will really grab their attention. I will use this to teach the components of an editorial.

"America on the Move" *National Museum of American History*. 4 July 2007 <http://americanhistory.si.edu/ONTHEMOVE/collection>>.

This is the website that they will use to do a scavenger hunt about the Bracero

Program. It has a lot of pictures from that time period including the small-handled hoe,

workers being sprayed with DDT, and their living quarters. They can learn about the struggles faced by the workers just by looking at the pictures.

Augenbraum, Harold, ed. *Lengua Fresca*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006.

This book has "Godoy Lives" in it. It is an anthology of some really great short stories written by contemporary Latino writers. Some stories are not suitable for middle school students, but several could be used with high school students. I am also going to show my students some of the political cartoons in this book that focus on immigration. It is a great book to read and share with students.

"Bush Signs Mexico Fence Into Law" *BBC News*. 26 Oct. 2006. 12 July 2007 <http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk>>.

This article summarizes the new law that requires the 700 miles of fence to be built on the U.S.-Mexico border. It is concise and I will use this to teach the components of a news article as well as compare it to an editorial on the same subject.

Cisneros, Sandra. *The House on Mango Street*. Vintage Press; New York. 1984.

I will use several chapters from this beautifully written novel of vignettes. In the past my students really enjoyed reading this novel because it reads like poetry and is so layered. This book can be taught on the middle school, high school and college levels.

Cull, Nicholas J., and David Carrasco, eds. *Alambrista and the U.S.-Mexico Border*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico P, 2004.

I used this book as a reference for facts I will need to present to my students, however they will read excerpts from this book as well. It is comprised of essays written about the topics illustrated in the film of the same name. The essays serve as a critique of the film as well as research on related subjects.

Davis, Marilyn P. *Mexican Voices American Dreams: an Oral History of Mexican Immigration to the US*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1991.

Students will read excerpts of this book. It is written from the perspective of Mexican immigrants and will serve as a great model on first person point-of-view writing for my students.

Marin, Cheech. *Chicano Visions American Painters on the Verge*. Boston: Bulfinch Press, 2002. 12-13.

I will pass this around so my students can see the beautiful artwork that cover the pages of this book. They will read an excerpt from the beginning of the book where

Marin explains what the Chicano School of Painting is, why chicanos have historically faced racism in America, and the influence chicano painters are having on the U.S. today.

Navarro, Mireya. "Three Sisters: for Divided Family, Border is Sorrowful Barrier" *The New York Times*. 21 Dec. 2006. 26 June 2007 www.nytimes.com>.

This is one of the three feature articles I mentioned above.

"Our View: Border Fence Trivializes a Complex Issue" *National Immigration Forum*. 3 Oct. 2006. Idaho Statesman. 8 July 2007 www.immigrationforum.org>.

This is the second of two editorials my students will read regarding building the 700 mile fence. It does not have the sarcastic tone of the first one and provides more fact than opinion.

Preston, Julia. "Three Sisters: Making a Life in the U.S., But Feeling Mexico's Tug" *The New York Times*. 19 Dec. 2006. 30 June 2007 www.nytimes.com>.

This is one of the three feature articles I mentioned above.

Materials

Overhead projector, transparencies, vis-à-vis markers, white board, dry erase markers, erasers, television, dvd player, cd player, construction paper, markers, crayons, colored pencils, computer paper, rulers, scissors, Interactive Notebook, glue

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