



Tales from the Chihuahuan Desert:

Borderlands Narratives about Identity and Binationalism

National Endowment for the Humanities and The University of Texas at El Paso
2017 Summer Institute for Secondary School Teachers (Grades 6th–12th)

Instructional Lesson Plan Framework with 5E Model for E-Portfolio with Artifacts and Readings

TITLE AND AUTHOR OF LESSON PLAN

TITLE: NI DE AQUÍ, NI DE ALLÁ: EXPLORING BICULTURAL IDENTITY IN ETHNIC ADOLESCENTS

AUTHOR: ESMERALDA L. SOTO

Esmeralda L. Soto is from Mastic Beach, New York. She teaches Spanish and Italian through the World Language Department at Brentwood High School in Brentwood, New York. Esmeralda was a featured lecturer at Stony Brook University Graduate Lecture Series where she presented “Fragmented Identities: An Exploratory Study of Cultural Identity Formation Through the Evolution of Caribbean Music in the Spanish Caribbean and its Migratory Diffusion in The United States.” She has traveled to Nicaragua to aid with humanitarian efforts for a rural community and actively volunteers for animal rescue organizations. Esmeralda plans to apply her knowledge of the Chihuahuan Desert histories and narratives through a comparative analysis on borderland people’s identities and identity formation in adolescent immigrants in Long Island, New York. She can be reached at esmeraldaveras@hotmail.com.

Notes from the author:

- This serves as a guide towards building up to the final assessment (Oral History Video Project). Thus a formal lesson plan has not been provided due to the pacing of the lessons being student driven.
- This unit assumes students’ prior knowledge and review of Preterite and Imperfect Tenses.
- The Sample Video and Worksheets are in English to allow for access across disciplines. All content/material will be translated to Spanish for use in the Spanish Language classroom.

CONTENT OR SUBJECT AREAS WITH KEYWORDS

Subject area: Spanish

Keywords: Spanish, Foreign Language, Immigration, Identity, Bilingualism, Binational, Bicultural



GRADE LEVELS AND TIME REQUIRED

10th/11th Grade

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES AND STUDENT LEARNING

National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies:

- (1) Culture
- (2) Time, Continuity, and Change
- (3) People, Places, and Environments
- (4) Individual Development and Identity
- (9) Global Connections

Common Core State Standards, English Language Arts, Literacy

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.3 Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6 Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9 Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

How do we define ourselves?

What role does culture play in defining our identity?

How does other people's perspective affect how I define myself?

What does it mean to be bicultural or binational?

What role, if any, does our ancestral background play in the formation of our identity?

How does our narrative differ from the immigrant experience? How are they the same or different? (compare/contrast)

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Recording device (ex: smartphone or digital recorder)

Laptop or computer

Smartboard or projector

Audio speakers

Internet access

Paper and pen

INTRODUCTION



“Unlike a drop of water which loses its identity when it joins the ocean, man does not lose his being in the society in which he lives. Man’s life is independent. He is born not for the development of the society alone, but for the development of his self.”

-B.R. Ambedkar

Many immigrants have crossed land and sea borders for various reasons and, in doing so, have helped shape the course of United States history. While the motivating factors for immigrating to the U.S. range from economic, political, and/or social struggles in their homelands are varied, immigrants all face the challenge of how the U.S. impacts their identity.

Through careful analysis, in this lesson students explore the effect immigration and biculturalism play in their identity formation. Students will explore various artifacts (poems, writings, media, visual art) as they begin to formulate their personal narratives to answer the question “Who Am I?”.

INSTRUCTIONAL AND LESSON ACTIVITIES (ENGAGE, EXPLORE, EXPLAIN)

ENGAGE:

Learners think about their identity and what are some identifying markers that are factored into the formation of their identity (i.e. country, culture, family, religion, binationalism and/or biculturalism, etc.)

EXPLORE:

Learners will evaluate their own identity and compare and contrast information and the diverse perspectives that are portrayed in the media regarding the Hispanic immigrant.

EXPLAIN:

Learners will create a video narrating their own history and identity compared with the Hispanic immigrant experience.

ACTIVITY 1: RAFT activity

RAFT Activity to introduce the topic of “Identity”. Project an image of Juan Gabriel mural in the town of Ciudad Juarez. Teacher will draw on students’ knowledge of Juan Gabriel and explain who he is, teacher will supplement.

- **Role of writer** (famous celebrity)
- **Audience reading** (readers of a magazine)
- **Format of writing** (mini auto-biography)
- **Topic** (What do readers need to know about who you are as a person?)

ACTIVITY 2: Defining Identity: What is Identity? How do we define ourselves?



Write/display the word **IDENTITY** in large letters on the board and have students generate a definition of Identity.

Distribute **Worksheet 1: CITAS DE IDENTIDAD**. In groups of 2-4 students read the definition, explain the statement in their own words, and tell whether they agree or disagree with it, and which quote they feel they most connected with and why.

Discuss as a class which term best defined Identity and provide justification.

Discuss what role does culture play in our identity.

ACTIVITY 3: Perceptions and Stereotypes: How do other people see me?

Whole group activity:

- Students will write “My Name Is: (insert name)” onto a piece of construction paper.
- Underneath, they will write “I am ...” and tape the paper onto their backs.
- Students will go around and write down a descriptive word or small phrase onto someone else’s paper. (3 minutes)
- Students will read what other people wrote about them.

Teacher will pose the question “How does other people’s perspective affect how I define myself?”

Distribute **Victoria Volker Creative Writing**. Discuss how the narrator see themselves? How does the narrator think other people view her? How has this shaped the narrators identity?

ACTIVITY 4: Exploring Biculturalism: What does it mean to be bicultural or binational?

Pose the question “How do you feel about being of an ethnic culture living in The United States?”

Discuss how Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Dominicans and Central Americans have similar experience and how they have adapted to new environments as Latinos.

Distribute **Worksheet 2: IDENTITY AND BICULTURALISM**. Students will read the poem in pairs and take notes and/or write their reactions to the poem “Two Worlds” by Pat Mora.



Teacher will show the video "[Latino-Americanos: The Children of an Oscuro Pasado](#)". Students will individually take notes and/or write their reactions to the video onto **Worksheet 2: IDENTITY AND BICULTURALISM.**

Teacher will guide classroom in a discussion comparing/contrasting the two artifacts and share their notes/reactions.

Students will complete the first box on the bottom of **Worksheet 2: IDENTITY AND BICULTURALISM.**

ACTIVITY 5: History and Me: What role, if any, does our ancestral background play in the formation of our identity? How is my narrative different/same as a person from another country immigrant experience?

Teacher will show their **Oral History Video (Sample)** to introduce;
a) the role our ancestral history plays in the formation of our identity,
b) the visual narrative and the immigrant experience

Teacher will discuss the project and guide students in generating Guiding Questions that allow for the telling of a story (*possibilities: When and why did you immigrate here? Can you tell me about an experience you had that changed your life?, ...*)

Students will ask a parents' and/or grandparents' to tell their story using the Guiding Questions they generated in class. Students will prepare their oral narration.

ACTIVITY 6: Art As The Storyteller

Teacher will discuss visual artifacts chosen for the visual narrative and its purpose in storytelling. Students will compare/contrast Latino art from Spanish Caribbean artists and Mexican/Central American artists.

Samples from video below



self-portrait by Dominican artist, Arlette Cepeda



mural in Downtown El Paso, Texas



mural at Casa Anunciación



source: theatlantic.com

Distribute **Art Graphic Organizer**. Students will research and select three works of Latino-American art, from a country other than their own, that they will include in the telling of their own story.

ACTIVITY 7: Now You See Me

Distribute **Video Assessment Rubric**. Students will begin working on the technological component of their video projects.

EXTEND/ELABORATE: Additional Learning

1. Have students write a poem, as the artist, narrating one of the art pieces included in their Oral History Project.
2. Have students research the Hugs Not Walls event. Students can compose a letter in the role of a legalized immigrant writing a letter to a relative in anticipation of meeting them at the Hugs Not Walls event.
3. Have students complete a RAFT activity. Role of writer (immigrant who has just crossed the border), Audience (relative in their home country), Format (letter),



Topic (What are you experiencing (emotions, challenges, successes) now that you are in the United States?).

4. Have students research how a traditional cultural recipe has changed and/or been influenced due to Americanization.
5. Have students view the movie *West Side Story* and host a group discussion in class: How, if at all, has the story of the immigrant experience changed from 1961, when the movie was made, up to present day?

ASSESSMENT

Learners will create a video narrating their ancestral immigrant experience through their present development of their identity. (see sample)

ACCOMMODATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS

Suggestions for accommodations for Foreign Language instruction:

Multisensory

- Teach the language using multiple input/output strategies – visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic.
- Use several learning channels simultaneously (listening, speaking, reading, writing, and mnemonic devices for memory). Research findings suggest that hearing, seeing, and saying a word (concept) simultaneously enhances memory.
- Use visual aids when appropriate. Examples are picture clues for words, hand and mouth movements to illustrate a sound, or color coded endings to illustrate gender and subject/verb agreement.

Repetitive

- For reinforcement, provide ample time to discover, practice, and use meaningful mnemonic devices, such as songs with specified grammatical sentence structures or special rhythms; reinforce concepts by using acronyms (for example, USA = United States of America), drawings, and gestures.

Structured

- Teach language concepts in a logical progression and help the student categorize concepts.
- Provide structured, explicit overviews of the material covered. Examples include study guides of the day's activities, summary sheets, graphic representations, and semantic maps.
- Directly and explicitly teach grammatical, syntactic, and morphological patterns engaging all learning channels for maximum outcomes.

Metacognitive

- Help the student think about the language concept to be learned and to explain the concept in his/her own words. This process helps the student understand why certain rules or procedures occur in the language of study. Knowing why assists the



student in learning to develop self-confidence in identifying and correcting his/her own errors.

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS (OPTIONAL)

[ACTFL World Readiness Standards](#)

Communication:	Interpersonal, Interpretive, Presentational
Cultures:	Relating Cultural Practices to Perspectives
Connections:	Making Connections, Acquiring Information and Diverse Perspectives
Comparisons:	Language Comparisons, Cultural Comparisons
Communities:	School and Global Communities, Lifelong Learning

[College and Career Readiness Standards](#)

English/Language Arts Standards

- Writing: Compose a variety of texts that demonstrate clear focus, the logical development of ideas in well-organized paragraphs, and the use of appropriate language that advances the author’s purpose.
- Reading: Describe how literary and other texts evoke personal experience and reveal character in particular historical circumstances.
- Speaking: Develop effective speaking styles for both group and one-on-one situations.
- Listening: Apply listening skills as an individual and as a member of a group in a variety of settings (e.g., lectures, discussions, conversations, team projects, presentations, interviews).

Cross-disciplinary Standards

- Key Cognitive Skills: Intellectual curiosity, Reasoning, Work habits, Academic integrity
- Foundational Skills: Reading across the curriculum, Research across the curriculum, Use of data, Technology

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Worksheet 1: CITAS DE IDENTIDAD

Victoria Volker Creative Writing

Worksheet 2: IDENTITY AND BICULTURALISM.

[Latino-Americans: The Children of an Oscuro Pasado](#)

Oral History Video (Sample)



Art Graphic Organizer

Video Assessment Rubric

PBS documentary, [Latino Americans](#), features an [interview with Julia Alvarez](#) discussing her experience as a Dominican immigrant. Her work explores the concept of bicultural identity formation.

CNN article including video of speech by [Larissa Martinez](#), and undocumented immigrant and McKinney Boyd High School valedictorian. Her speech reveals the impact the immigrant experience has upon her life, how she defines herself and how she is defined by her status.

REFERENCES (OR WORKS CITED)

Mora, Pat. *My Own True Name New and Selected Poems for Young Adults, 1984-1999*. N.p.: Paw Prints, 2008. Print.

Ganschow, Leonore, and Elke Schneider. "Assisting Students with Foreign Language Learning Difficulties in School." *Assisting Students with Foreign Language Learning Difficulties in School | LD Topics | LD OnLine*. LD Online, n.d. Web. 23 July 2017.

REFLECTION

Due to the demographic of the students within my district (Hispanic immigrant, children of Hispanic immigrants, Hispanic undocumented minors) I knew I wanted my students to explore their own concepts of identity, immigration among various Spanish-speaking countries, biculturalism, and evaluate different perspectives. I knew the final outcome would be an oral history to narrate their conclusion of how they identify themselves, so I began from final product.

The mini-lessons or activities are open to interpretation and were designed to allow for a) flexibility in teaching style and, b) Socratic Questioning which allows for critical thinking and exploring complex ideas on behalf of the students. Many of the suggestions for the Extend/Elaborate section can be incorporated to modify, supplement and/or expand the unit.