

1. Title and Authors:

The Human Spirit Lives On: Overcoming Conflicts in Borderlands Through Introspection

By: Mary DeWine and Hugo Jacobo

2. Subject Area with Key Words:

American Studies, English, Humanities, US History, Ethnic Studies, Literature, Social Studies
Border, Binationalism, Nepantla, Identity, Duality, Hope, Liminality, Conflict, United States, Culture, Community, Humanities, Literature, Gilded Age, Gender, Body Image, Mental Health, Navigating Bicultural Identities, Interracial Relationships, Family Expectations, Adolescence, Sexuality, Immigration, Americanization, Deculturalization, Chicano/a, Latino/a, Hispanic, Mestiza

3. Grade Levels and Time Period:

11-12th Grade

4-6 Weeks

4. Instructional Objectives and Student Learning:

[California History Social Studies Standards](#)

11.2 Students analyze the relationship among the rise of industrialization, large-scale rural-to-urban migration, and massive immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe.

1. Know the effects of industrialization on living and working conditions, including the portrayal of working conditions and food safety in Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*.
2. Describe the changing landscape, including the growth of cities linked by industry and trade, and the development of cities divided according to race, ethnicity, and class.
3. Trace the effect of the Americanization movement.

11.11 Students analyze the major social problems and domestic policy issues in contemporary American society.

6. Analyze the persistence of poverty and how different analyses of this issue influence welfare reform, health insurance reform, and other social policies.
7. Explain how the federal, state, and local governments have responded to demographic and social changes such as population shifts to the suburbs, racial concentrations in the cities, Frostbelt-to-Sunbelt migration, international migration, decline of family farms, increases in out-of-wedlock births, and drug abuse.

California English Language Arts Anchor Standards (Common Core)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.3

Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.10

Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Production and Distribution of Writing:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.5

Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.6

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Comprehension and Collaboration:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2

Integrate and evaluate the information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.3

Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

5. Guiding Questions:

1. What are borders? What are borderlands? Do borders matter?
2. What is [Nepantla](#)?
3. How does understanding Nepantla impact how we see others, ourselves, people in our community?
4. What is binationalism?

5. How does binationalism inform (writer's) border people's cultures and literary production?
6. How does a sense of place impact one's identity?
7. How do we use literature to navigate our identities? How do we tell our stories?

6. Materials and Resources:

Various non political and historical maps that show the southwest. Can use Israel/ Palestine maps for comparison.

Art supplies: Glue, Scissors, collage pictures from magazines, fine tip pens and plain paper

I'm Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter (A Novel) by Erika Sanchez

To live in the Borderlands means you by Gloria Anzaldua

How to Tame a Wild Tongue Chapter 7 by Gloria Anzaldua

El Norte by Gregory Nava (1983)

Classics Illustrated #9: The Jungle by Upton Sinclair, Peter Kuper (Artist)

7. Introduction:

Gloria Anzaldua wrote in *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, "the work of mestiza consciousness is to break down the subject-object duality that keeps her a prisoner and to show in the flesh and through the images in her work how duality is transcended. The answer to the problem between the white race and the colored, between males and females, lies in healing the split that originates in the very foundation of our lives, our culture, our languages, our thoughts. A massive uprooting of dualistic thinking in the individual and collective consciousness is the beginning of a long struggle, but one that could, in our best hopes, bring us to the end of rape, of violence, of war."

This unit plan focuses on the sociopolitical dynamics of borderland identities as context to how this identity can manifest itself in literature. Before this unit on Erica Sanchez's novel, students through a humanitas lens, will trace the evolution of social and political sentiments on borderland communities in the United States. Students will compare and contrast early sentiments of American migration from the early 19th century to present-day. Through this historical juxtaposition, the goal is for students to recognize the differences and similarities in attitudes and government response to communities that have crossed borders to live in the United States. Using the American Gilded Age (1870s to early 1900s) as a historical frame of reference, students will engage with the various push and pull factors that have contributed to American migration. Students will learn about landmark federal policies that have contributed towards protecting or restricting immigration.

To compliment this historical juxtaposition, students will engage with a variety of literary and multimedia narratives to frame a lens of borderland peoples. Through this narratology framework, students will be asked to examine their own socio-cultural identities to further understand their own intersectionality.

Assessments and instructional activities for this unit plan will focus heavily on discourse. With personal introspection being a key component to this unit, students will engage in a variety of activities that are aimed to elicit verbal discourse through, but not limited to: literature circles, freewrites, Harkness Method seminars and the arts.

The overall goal of this unit is for students to deconstruct and construct the sociopolitical dynamics of borderland identities, while reflecting on their own social identity and intersectionality. Through this critical analysis of borderland narratives and personal introspection the aim is for students to feel empowered by taking inventory of their own narrative, their own dualities and the new space created from such spaces.

8. Instructional Objectives and Student Learning:

See Evaluate: Assessment and Activities

Evaluate: Assessment and Activities

Students will be evaluated through a series of summative and formative assessments tailored to fit Bloom's Taxonomy. Students will be engaging in activities that will assess their ability to remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate and create new ideas based on their cognitive processing of the topics covered in this unit.

Remember

Students will be assessed on their ability to *recall* information of content based on the following activities and assessments:

1. Quizzes: Because this is a relatively easy read for high school students, weekly reading quizzes and or unit exams on historical content, literature comprehension and academic language should be engaging and complex. **Activity:** Sanchez does not name chapters, so students could write chapter titles and argue for the most apt.
2. Daily journal writing: The goal is to foster students' understanding of Julia's complex identities and search for deeper understanding of her evolving self while also reflecting on their own. Because the character is a raw narrator, transparent about her grief, duality, poverty and mental health, this book lends itself to topics that may be triggering to students. Keeping in mind, that Julia is the same age as our students, it is helpful to be explicit about one of the questions we are exploring: *How do we use literature to navigate our identities? How do we tell our stories?* Journal prompts can begin with students reflecting on what Julia is processing and move to their own introspection. Bringing in a social worker or school counselor is a good idea at any point. **Activity:** Model to students how to create journal prompts for both a section in the book, and then a question based on Julia's experience, about their own personal exploration, centering around the title of this unit: Triumph of the Human Spirit. After two days of modeling, have students work in pairs and sign up for presenting a journal activity at the start of each class, for the remainder of the reading. They can use pictures, poetry, music, etc.
3. Vocabulary practice: Before starting the book, addressing the key words from this unit in graphics, word webs, and flow charts can help students be more comfortable in discussion.
4. Lecture presentations

Understand

Students will participate in informal and formal discussions with peers that demonstrate their *understanding* of literary content and academic language based on the following activities and assessments:

1. Literature Circles (Every other week).
2. Harkness Method or Socratic Seminar (Every other week)
3. Pair-Share
4. Four Corners
5. Class Divide
6. Table Talks

Art & Reflection Activity

Materials and Resources:

Images from magazines, glue sticks or tape and plain paper

Directions:

1. Arrange enough photos and words from magazines in the front of the classroom so that students can pick three images.
2. Ask students to choose three images or words that relate to the concept of perfection, how they see perfection. They can be images of their own definition of perfection, their families' or societies'.
3. Students glue or tape the images in any order on the paper and write a poem or reflection that inspects what the definition of perfection means to them.
4. Have students share out in small groups of three- make sure they read and explain their art and writing. You may need to let them know ahead of time that they will be sharing out. OR create a gallery walk.
5. At the end of the time, ask students to share out loud commonalities and differences they heard. Make a list for everyone to see.
6. As a class discuss who defines perfection and if it is attainable.

Short essay or discussion: Based on your discussion and reflection around the word perfect, in what ways do Julia's dualities overlap with some of your own experiences? Find passages from throughout the novel that you can make personal connections to.

Analyze

Large Poster Discussion

At different points throughout the reading, have students get into groups no larger than four and place a poster size paper in front of the group. Have each student research 3 passage that represent how others treat Julia or how she thinks about herself. Write them down (in large font) in spaces all over the paper (page number included). Then, let students facilitate a conversation about how passages interact with each other to create a fuller picture of Julia's identities. Students should draw lines to passages that connect and write a claim (a complete sentence) on the line. There should be numerous claims coming out of each passage.

Alternative: This activity could be divided by themes encountered in the novel such as: Mental Health, Navigating Bicultural Identities, Interracial Relationships, Family Expectations,

Adolescence, Sexuality, Immigration, Americanization, Deculturalization, Identity, Duality, Hope and Conflict.

Follow up activity: Students walk around the room, investigating other posters and write rationales/ analysis under the claims they encounter, so in crowdsourcing their ideas, there are micro essays all over each paper.

9. Evaluate

Document-Based Question (DBQ) In-Class Timed Essay

Directions:

Students will *appraise* the historical evolution of borderland peoples arrival to the United States. Students will complete an in-class timed (DBQ) where they will take a stance on the following question: *How has the United States has both provided hope and dehumanized individuals, families that have crossed borders?*

Documents that students may use to *defend* their claim on this question may include:

1. Excerpts from the novel, *I'm Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter* by Erika Sanchez
2. Excerpts and/or images from the graphic novel, *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair
3. Excerpts and/or images from the film, *El Norte* by Gregory Nava
4. Excerpts from *To live in the Borderlands means you* or *How to Tame a Wild Tongue Chapter 7* by Gloria Anzaldua
5. The Immigration Control and Reform Act of 1986
6. Excerpt from Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882
7. Excerpt from Executive Order 13780 of 2017
8. President Lyndon B. Johnson's speech following passage of Immigration Act of 1965
9. Gilded Age era photographs from Jacob Riis

Rationale:

The purpose of this formative assessment is to engage students with formal academic writing that measures their ability to synthesize information and provide textual evidence to defend a stance. Lastly, this assessment also provides students an opportunity to engage with a task and a lens of thinking demonstrated by historians.

Create

Nepantla Typography Art Project

[insert images: example 1, example 2, example 3]

Definition: Typography is the art and technique of arranging words to make written language legible, readable, and appealing when displayed.

Directions:

1. Design a typography art piece that showcases the intersection of your explored identities, one that validate your sense of self.

2. Using, an 11 X 16 inch paper, organize words, phrases, poetry, music, etc that showcase your sense of self. Some of your ideas can include ways you see yourself in the future.
3. You will use the shadow or outline of your fingerprint as your outline to the writing.

Rationale: Through intentional comparisons and analysis of another person's journey, we can reflect on our own. Throughout this unit we have both explored Julia's identities, dualities and our own. In our final discussions about Julia's evolving nepantla state, we were able to articulate this middle space she is encountering.

The ability to reflect on our own social identities, dualities and the middle space created is arguably some of the most important work one can do to understand self and sense of place in the world. This project is meant for you to begin or continue this process.

Requirements/ Musts/ AKA Checklist:

_____ Fingerprint uses entire space of paper 11 X 16 (small margins allowed)

_____ Words or excerpts *from your writing* over the unit that showcase your exploration of your many identities and dualities.

_____ Excerpts *from poetry, literature or documents that we have explored in class*, during the unit that speak to your understanding of sense of self. Do use quotes and cite the last name of the author to give credit.

_____ Snippets of outside song lyrics, poetry, etc *that you find* speak to the understanding of your sense of self. These could be ones you already use and know in your life or ones that you research.

_____ *Intentional repetition of words* that describe your nepantla space, the space you either are in because of your dual identities or the space you want to occupy in the future.

_____ *Intentional placement* of words and phrases throughout. There must be a sense or why you placed words and why.

_____ *Intentional use of color* throughout poster.

_____ Poster is "art gallery ready": not folded, bent, rolled, wet, smudged, etc.

_____ After gallery walk, students complete in class micro essay addressing what they understand better about navigating their own life, and what they learned from looking at other students' finger prints.

10. Extend/Elaborate: Additional Learning

Accommodations and Modifications:

1. Pairing visual and auditory learning, including academic language.
2. Use of graphic organizers, sentence starters and word banks for academic language reinforcement.
3. Breaking down larger assessments, tasks, to smaller, manageable tasks.
4. Using structured, collaborative tasks to build confidence in tasks.
5. Providing students with discussion questions, tasks prior to commencement.
6. Using rubrics to grade/assess for growth.
7. Providing audiobook and Spanish-language translation of novel.

11. Works Cited:

Anzaldúa, Gloria. "Chapter 5: How to Tame a Wild Tongue." Borderlands / La frontera: The New Mestiza (2nd ed.). Aunt Lute Press, 2012, pp. 75-86. (e-file)

Anzaldúa, Gloria. "To Live in the Borderlands Means You." Borderlands / La frontera: The New Mestiza (2nd ed.). Aunt Lute Press, 2012, pp. 216-217. (e-file)

Sánchez, Erika L. I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter. Alfred A. Knopf, 2017.

Sinclair, Upton. Classics #9: The Jungle. 2010.

12. Reflection:

Hugo's

Identity and binationalism are complex topics that require introspection. I have dealt with them consciously and unconsciously my entire life. Often times, introspection has required me to analyze and think critically about the elements that have shaped who I am and who I may become. This has challenged me to explore and learn about various topics and narratives that have helped shine a light towards my own consciousness and lack thereof.

My experience in this summer institute has helped me recognize the multiple layers of narratives, realities and contradictions that exist within this issue, and to all issues that are complex. Perhaps this relates to the universal human condition. Aren't we all just trying to navigate how are intersectionalities fit into a world that is filled with contradictions, doublethink and injustice. Yet, through it all, it appears that civilization and the human spirit tends to find ways to overcome these borders. The borders that help us find ourselves, that help us find humanity.

I hope that this unit plan will allow students to mutually tackle the multiple layers of borderland narratives. The overarching goal is for both student and teacher to engage in excavating through the layers of stories that may infuse personal introspection to achieve a sense of our identity.

Mary:

A photo of a mother hiding under her four year old; she squats in a finite kind of despair, a Mexican soldier between her and freedom. An empty shelter for detainees, waiting for the next policy change, doors will be open, ready. Walking along the border, footsteps in the sand, fingers can't poke through layered iron lattice, wondering if my footsteps will be hunted as the border agent boasts about their ability to "track em and sack em."

I came to El Paso to study an area and its people. Stories and experiences now replace once learned statistics, maps and news reports. There are so many realities to be heard and shared from my two weeks here. I have met contradictions, truths and untruths at every juncture. Humans, all of us, are shape shifters, evolving in resistance to the powers that circulate around us, over us and through us. The desert people of this Borderland region lay proof that one's humanity is impervious to fences and boundaries and borders. Strength is my lasting impression here.

As I leave this space, I want to teach novels like Erica Sanchez's novel to demonstrate the interconnectedness of the Borderland to the rest of the "American" narrative. Because not only do stories come from somewhere, they evolve into new and equally complex narratives.

Biographical Notes:

Mary DeWine lives in Tacoma, Washington, and teaches English and World Cultures at the Science and Math Institute, a unique Tacoma public high school in the middle of a forest, zoo, and on the Puget Sound. She spends life with family, my dog and nature. Mary helped begin a college program in the local women's prison, where she taught and serves on the Board of Directors.

Hugo Leonel Jacobo grew up in Santa Ana, CA. He currently teaches 11th grade American Studies in small project based learning school located in downtown Los Angeles. He enjoys reading, exercising and hiking. From a professional level, he plans to apply his knowledge of the Chihuahuan Desert histories and narratives to current curriculum projects on topics like: Westward Expansion, immigration, bi-culturalism and Americanization. From a personal level, he would like to use this course of study as an opportunity to reflect on his own perspective and cultural identity as a Mexican/Guatemalan/American.