



Chicano Identity in the Poetry of Lorna Dee Cervantes and Ramon Del Castillo

Denver Public Schools



In partnership with Metropolitan State College of Denver

THE ALMA PROJECT
A Cultural Curriculum Infusion Model



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**Chicano Identity in the Poetry
of Lorna Dee Cervantes
and Ramon Del Castillo**

by Lisa Simms

Grades 9–12

Implementation Time: 4–6 Weeks

Published 2004

**Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado
The Alma Curriculum and Teacher Training Project
Loyola A. Martinez, Project Director**



Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado

ABOUT THE ALMA PROJECT

The Alma Curriculum and Teacher Training Project

The Alma Curriculum and Teacher Training Project was made possible with funding from a Goals 2000 Partnerships for Educating Colorado Students grant awarded to the Denver Public Schools in July 1996. The Project is currently being funded by the Denver Public Schools.

The intent of the Project is to have teachers in the Denver Public Schools develop instructional units of study (ECE-12) on the history, contributions, and issues pertinent to Latinos and Hispanics in the southwest United States. Other experts, volunteers, and community organizations have also been directly involved in the development of content in history, literature, science, art, and music, as well as in teacher training. As instructional units are developed and field-tested, feedback from teachers is extremely valuable for making any necessary modifications in the topic development of future units of study. Each instructional unit is based on the best scholarly information available and is tied directly to the state and district Academic Content Standards. The scope of the materials includes the history of indigenous peoples in the Americas, contacts of Spanish explorers in the New World, exploration of Mexico and areas of the present-day United States, colonization of New Mexico and southern Colorado, and contemporary history, developments, events, and issues concerning Latinos in the southwest United States. The instructional units also address areas that need to be strengthened in our curriculum with regard to the cultural and historical contributions of Latinos and other predominant ethnicities represented in the Denver Public Schools' student population.

The Project has reaped numerous benefits from partnerships with various colleges and universities. We hope to continue to secure agreements with curriculum experts from various institutions and teachers to work directly with the Project. As the Project continues, these partnerships will allow us to broaden the range of topics to be developed.

Basic Premise of the Project

This curriculum innovation will serve several major purposes.

- It will provide the opportunity for every teacher in the Denver Public Schools to integrate fully developed instructional units (ECE-12) tied to state and district standards into the curriculum at every grade level in language arts, social studies, history, art, and music.
- It will broaden a teacher's ability to teach a more inclusive and accurate curriculum.
- The instructional units will facilitate the infusion of the cultural and historical contributions of Latinos and other predominant ethnicities represented in the student population.
- The Project will have a positive effect on the engagement and achievement of Latino students in the Denver Public Schools and other districts that utilize these resources or replicate the project.
- A formal link has been developed between the Denver Public Schools and various colleges and universities throughout the state of Colorado.



The instructional units were developed by teachers (ECE-12) from the Denver Public Schools beginning in March 1997. The Denver-based Mid-Continental Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL) provided a standards-based framework that is used in the development of the instructional units.

Alma instructional units are currently available on the Alma Project web site. (<http://almaproject.dpsk12.org>).

For more information on the Alma Project, please contact:

ALMA PROJECT

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The undertaking of a project of this magnitude and importance would not have been possible without the Goals 2000 grant awarded to Denver Public Schools in July 1996. We are indebted to former superintendent Irv Moskowitz, the assistance and support of the Colorado Department of Education, members of the Board of Education, Department of Educational Services, and the Metropolitan State College at Denver.

Special thanks are extended to the following professors who gave freely of their time and expertise. Their great contributions were key factors in the initial and continued success of the Project.

Dr. Luis Torres, Chicano Studies Department Chair
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Department of Hispanic Studies
University of Northern Colorado

Dr. Margarita Barcelo, Professor of Chicano/Chicana Studies and English
Metropolitan State College of Denver



INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The Alma instructional units are *not* to be used in isolation, but rather to be infused or integrated into the adopted Scope and Sequence for ECE-8 grade levels. Units at the high school level can be integrated into the recommended courses for a more in-depth, broader based scope of the topic. All Alma units can be translated into Spanish upon request.

The framework for the instructional units was provided by Dr. Diane Paynter with the Denver-based Mid-Continental Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL).

The individual lesson components contain the following:

Content Knowledge

The standard/benchmark information students should understand within a specified content domain and the skills or processes they should be able to do within that domain.

Specifics

Identification of relevant supporting knowledge that will help students understand the information.

Instructional Strategies

Any instructional strategy to be used by the teacher based on what students already know and how students can make sense of the new information and the learning patterns and relationships.

Preteaching

Concepts or skills that may need review or introduction.

Preliminary Lesson Preparation

Concepts and/or skills that the teacher should reinforce before beginning.

Student Activities

The activities in which students will be involved and that will help them process new content knowledge. They should be purposeful activities that are a means to an end, which is that students attain an understanding of the information they are learning.

Vocabulary

Definitions and translations of specialized words and concepts in English and Spanish that may be unfamiliar to the students and even to teachers are provided in this section. This is your opportunity to focus attention on vocabulary development and on the understanding of critical concepts you want the students to learn.

Resources/Materials

Required or suggested sources such as textbooks, audio- and videotapes, guest speakers, lectures, field trips, CDs and laser discs, software sources, newspapers, magazines, brochures, encyclopedias, trade books and literature, charts, exhibits, TV programs, community resources, murals, advertisements, journals, and filmstrips to be used to provide students with information related to the identified content knowledge.

Performance Task

A rigorous task that asks students to apply the content knowledge they have been learning within a highly contextualized, real-world setting.

Scoring Rubric

A set of criteria that describes levels of expected performance or understanding that includes four levels of performance.

Additional Evidence

Pieces of any other assessments or evidence that can be used to determine the degree to which students have mastered the identified knowledge.

Each lesson contains a set of key components, which are listed below.

What will students be learning?

- Standards
- Benchmarks
- Instructional objectives
- Specifics

What will be done to help students learn this?

- Instructional strategies
- Preteaching (optional)
- Preliminary lesson preparation (optional)
- Activities
- Vocabulary (optional)
- Resources/materials for specific lesson
- Assessment
- Extensions

The Alma instructional units can be integrated into the regular course of study at a particular grade level according to content standards. Each unit is specific to either primary, intermediate, middle, or high school. The basic premise for the integration of the Alma instructional units is that a more accurate, more diversified perspective can be taught, given the content and resources to support a particular topic.

The instructional units are available on the Internet to teachers who wish to preview the study guides and check out materials for integration into their curriculums. Teachers in the Denver Public Schools have the opportunity to draw from a large pool of Alma materials/kits housed in the Yuma Street Center. The Center is located at 2320 West 4th Avenue, Denver, Colorado. Contact the Alma office for checkout procedure.

Teachers who implement Alma units/materials into their curriculum are asked to complete an evaluation questionnaire for data collection purposes.



CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS

The following Denver Public Schools teachers are to be commended for their significant contributions to the Alma Project. Their contributions will greatly benefit all students both in Denver Public Schools and other school districts in the nation.

1998-1999		
Contributing Author	Topic	School
Flor Amaro	Exploring Literary Genre Through Latin American Literature	Cheltenham Elementary
	Hispanic Literature	
Leni Arnett	The Spanish Conquest and the Role of La Llorona	Denver School of the Arts
Stella Garcia Baca	Study Guide for Among the Volcanoes by Omar S. Castañeda	Lake Middle School
Sallie Baker	The Clash of Cultures: Moctezuma Hosts Cortes	Denver School of the Arts
Shanna Birkholz	Día de Los Muertos	Gilpin Elementary
Richard Bock	Coming of Age	West High School
Virginia Coors	Essential Values Woven Through Hispanic Literature	Florence Crittendon School
Susanna DeLeon	The Importance of Music in the Life of the Aztec People	Smedley Elementary
Amanda Dibbern	Everyone Has a Tale	Lake Middle School
Gabe Garcia	Twin Hero Myths in Literature of the Americas	West High School
Steven Garner	The Impact of the Mexican Revolution on the United States	West High School
Hilary Garnsey	Heralding Our Heroes Times	Montclair Elementary
Deborah Hanley	Music of the Aldean Altiplano	Knapp Elementary
Janet Hensen	Viva Mexico! A Celebration of Diez y Seis de Septiembre, Mexican Independence Day	Montclair Elementary
Irene Hernandez	California Missions	Denver School of the Arts
	Heart of Aztlán Study Guide	
Leigh Heister	Latina Women	Knapp Elementary
Dorothea Hogue	Science of the People	Florence Crittendon School
Pat Hurrieta	El Día de los Muertos	Cheltenham Elementary
Heidi Hursh	Latino Legacy: A Community Oral History Project	West High School
Pat Dubrava Keuning	Changing Borders and Flags	Denver School of the Arts
Jon Kuhns	The Rise of the United Farmworkers Union: A Study of the Chicano Civil Rights Movement	Florence Crittendon School
Lu Liñan	Curanderismo: Healing	West High School
Charlene Meives	Santos and Santeros	Rishel Middle School
Frances Mora	Spanish Settlement and Hispanic History of Denver and Colorado	Schenck Elementary

1998-1999 (Continued)		
Contributing Author	Topic	School
Julie Murgel	Mayan Mathematics and Architecture	Lake Middle School
Jerrilynn Pepper	Spanish Missions in Florida, Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona	Bryant-Webster Elementary
Kristina Riley	Biographies of Famous Hispanics/Latinos/Chicanos	Cheltenham Elementary
	Piñatas!	
Sharon Robinett	Francisco Vasquez de Coronado	McGlone Elementary
Kathleen Stone	Latinos in War: The American Military Experience	West High School
Dan Villescas	Mother Culture of Mexico: The Olmecs	Lake Middle School
Joanna Vincenti	Our Stories, Our Families, Our Culture	Florence Crittendon School
Linda Weiss	Spanish Exploration of Colorado	Schenck Elementary
1999-2000		
Contributing Author	Topic	School
Leni Arnett	Americans Move West: The Santa Fe Trail	Denver School of the Arts
Stella Garcia Baca	Study Guide for Walking Stars	Lake Middle School
Suzi Bowman	In Memory of Sand Creek	Brown Elementary
Conchita Domenech	An Introduction to the Navajo Culture	West High School
Denise Engstrom	Exploring Northeast Native Americans: The Iroquois	Early Childhood Education Specialist
Debbie Frances	La Mariposa/The Butterfly	Kaiser Elementary
	The Desert	
	Easter/Spring Celebration	
	From Corn to Tortillas	
Jennifer Henry	The Mexican Muralist Movement and an Exploration of Public Art	Student
Ronald Ingle II	Music of the Tex-Mex Border Region	Smith Elementary
Lu Liñan	The Voice of a Latina Writer: Author Study on Sandra Cisneros	West High School
Cleo McElliot	Families.....A Celebration	Kaiser Elementary
	Plants/Las Plantas	
Sandy Miller	Pepper, Pepper, Plants!	Samuels Elementary
Maria Salazar	The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo	Lake Middle School
Jessica Schiefelbein	Diego Rivera	Doull Elementary School
Sandy Stokely	Haiky and Beyond: A Study of Japanese Literature	Ellis Elementary
Dan Villescas	The Conquest of the Aztec Civilization	Alma Project Curriculum Specialist
	The Mexican American War	



2000-2001		
Contributing Author	Topic	School
Denise Engstrom	Thanksgiving - An American Tradition	ECE Specialist
	Denver March Powwow	
	American Indian Storytelling: A Tradition	
Astid Parr	Cinco de Mayo - A Historical Celebration	Swansea Elementary
Sandra Miller	Mercado - Trading at the Marketplace	Samuels Elementary
Nina Daugherty	Aztec Folk Literature - Two Legends and a Folktale	Centennial Elementary
	Three Latin American Folktales	
Ron Ingle II &	Celebration of Mexicanos through Music,	Kaiser Elementary
Dan Vallescas	Dance & Art	Alma Curriculum Development Specialist
Deborah Francis	The Cowboys/Vaqueros	Grant Ranch Elementary
Barbara J. Williams	Lessons in Courage: Maritin Luther King, Rosa Parks and Ruby Bridges	Maxwell Elementary
Jessica Schiefelbein	Faith Ringgold	University Park Elementary
2001-2002		
Contributing Author	Topic	School
Deborah Francis	Alma Flor Ada: An Author Study	Grant Ranch Elementary
	Pat Mora: An Author Study	
	Jan Romero Stevens: 1953-2000	
	Carmen Lomas Garza: Chicana Author and Illustrator	
Sara Hensen	Good Intentions, Misunderstanding, Betrayal: A study of the first encounters between Native Americans and Pilgrims	Goldrick Elementary
Stephanie A. Herrera	Fiesta Mexicana: A Summer Latin Dance Experience	DPS Latin Dance Coordinator
Tania Hogan	Alma Flor Ada: Latina Author	Goldrick Elementary
Kathy Hoops	Beyond the Glass Slipper: Cinderella Stories from Around the World	Goldrick Elementary
Barbara Williams	Infinite Skies: Bessie Coleman, Mae Jemison, and Ellen Ochoa	Maxwell Elementary



2002-2003		
Contributing Author	Topic	School
Melanie Bertrand	A Comparison of Holidays: Ramadan, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa	Philips Elementary
Steve Garner	Shaping the Law of the Land: Hispanics in the Colorado Legislature	Polyglot, Inc.
Darius Smith	American Indian Mascots: Hype, Insult, or Ignorance	Alma Project Curriculum Development Specialist
Arthur L. Campa, Ph.D., Ellen J. Campa, and Steve Garner	Conquerors and Victims: An Exploration of Race, Identity, and Advocacy through Latino History	Metro State College and Polyglot, Inc.
2003-2004		
Contributing Author	Topic	School
Julia Shepard and Cindy Krayhill	Chinese New Year	Bromwell Elementary
Lisa Simms	Chicano Identity in the Poetry of Lorna Dee Cervantes and Ramon Del Castillo	Horace Mann Middle School



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Unit Concepts

- Universal themes in Chicano poetry
- Historical, social and cultural forces that inspire writers of contemporary Chicano poetry
- Meso-American mythology archetypes
- Literary elements of poetry
- Cultural identity
- Historical influences

Standards Addressed by This Unit

READING AND WRITING

Standard 1: Reading Comprehension—Students read and understand a variety of materials.

Standard 2: Oral and Written Communication—Students write and speak for a variety of purposes.

Standard 3: Oral and Written Conventionality—Students write and speak using formal grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization and spelling.

Standard 4: Higher-Level Thinking Skills—Students apply thinking skills to their writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

Standard 5: Students read to locate, select, evaluate and make use of relevant information from a variety of media, reference and technological sources

Standard 6: Literature to Understand Human Experience - Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience.



Introduction

Chicano poetry often defines and preserves priceless snapshots of an American point of view that has not had a voice in traditional literary canons. In the Chicano tradition, poetry has not only been a powerful means of expression, but a valuable form of exploring and discovering cultural identity as well. According to Colorado poet Ramon Del Castillo, Chicano literature was created out of a need to expose and connect La Raza to a new cultural, political and social identity.

Prevalent in Chicano poetry—as in all poetry—are universal themes that have traveled from ancient times to the present, reflecting the human experience in an ever-changing world. This unit invites students to explore elements that are unique to Chicano poetry. A few of the central themes that encapsulate the essence of the poetry that students will read in this study are

- references to mythology and archetypes from Meso-American history
- the influences of historical forces such as colonization, the *Mestizaje* identity, and Mexican-American relations
- the struggle to maintain cultural identity and traditions
- current issues related to immigration, language, race and gender

This unit introduces two Colorado poets—Lorna Dee Cervantes and Ramon Del Castillo—and their works. Students explore various poetic elements such as imagery, symbolism, metaphor, simile, personification and tone. Students will also examine their own frames of reference as they begin to extract lines from their daily writings—lines that will become their own poetry.

This snapshot of two local poets and their work can give all students a better understanding of the Chicano experience. In the process, students will gain a deeper appreciation for poetry as a means of recording and discovering their own identities, voices, and creative impulses as writers and readers.

Implementation Guidelines

Poetry and the Chicano: A Thematic Study of Chicano Identity through Poetry can be integrated into literature courses—specifically American Literature I, American Literature II, and Hispanic American Literature II as a means to strengthen and diversify the study of poetry.

Before students begin studying the genre, immerse them in poetry by enriching your classroom library with many books by poets whose ethnic backgrounds represent the students in your classroom. Be sure to include the works of Del Castillo and Cervantes, as well as other Chicano poets. Allow students to *hear* a range of poetry. You may wish to invite the poets highlighted in this unit to visit your classroom and meet with and talk to the students.

Help students gain conceptual understandings of how our lives are surrounded by the *stuff* that makes great poetry. Invite them to become poets and begin reading poems as poets. This will help them see how poems are arranged and the relationship between print and sound.

When students write and read poetry, they express feelings and experiences that they may have blocked or pushed into the far recesses of their consciousness. Poetry as therapy has helped many persons remember and deal with events or experiences that call for validation and acknowledgment.



Allow time for students to immerse themselves in the messages, thoughts and experiences that the poems convey. Teaching this unit is not about staying on schedule—it is about planting seeds and validating what students want to share with others.

Complete List of Resources for All Lessons

Required Resources

- *500 Years of Mexican History* by Elizabeth Martinez
- *Chicano: History of Mexican American Civil Rights*, Chicano PBS series LA 1968 Video 3, “Taking Back Our Schools”
- *From the Corazon of a Bato Loco* by Ramon Del Castillo
- *Infinite Divisions: An Anthology of Chicana Literature*, edited by Diana Robellodo & Eliana S. Rivero
- *The Mexican American Heritage* by Carlos M. Jimenez
- *Tales of a Michoacáno* by Ramon Del Castillo
- *Writing Poetry* by Shelly Tucker

Supplemental Resources

The resources listed here are not required to teach the lesson. They do, however, lay a foundation and provide a context for the unit.

- *I am Joaquin: An Epic Poem* by Rudolfo Gonzales
- *Incorporating Mexican American History and Culture into the Social Studies Classroom* article by Kathy Escamilla, University of Colorado, Denver
- *LARASA/Report*, “La Raza – Identify Yourself,” newsletter by LARAZA., June 1993 issue
- *Practice of Poetry* edited by Robin Behn & Chase Twichell

Unit Assessment:

Students will reflect on the concepts of identity, immigration, language barriers, the mother land, historical influences, Mestizaje, Atzlan and other concepts that may have emerged in the poems and compose a final essay. Students will be assessed on their focus, development, organizational style, expression and mechanics of their writing on a four-point rubric.



Lesson Abstracts

Lesson 1: Somos lo que Somos/We Are What We Are

Students will begin exploring ideas about poetry and begin an inquiry about the genre followed by an introduction to poet/author Lorna Dee Cervantes and her poems “Beneath the Shadow of a Freeway” and “Refugee Ship” from *Infinite Divisions: An Anthology of Chicana Literature*. The relationship between self and others and the poetic elements of metaphor and imagery will be explored. Generational, cultural, and historical influences of the Chicana(o) experience will be emphasized.

Lesson 2: Yo Se Quien Soy/I Know Who I Am

Students are introduced to Colorado poet/author Ramon Del Castillo and his widely recognized poem, “Bato Loco” from the book entitled *From the Corazón of a Bato Loco*. Students explore the “Bato Loco” persona amidst the themes of alienation, cultural identity, and cycles of self-destructive behavior.

Lesson 3: Raices Historicas/Historical Roots

Students are introduced to various Meso-American archetypes represented in Chicano poetry in “Take Me Back to Atzlan” from Del Castillo’s *Tales from a Michoacán*. The poetic elements highlighted in this lesson are metaphor and imagery. Students will begin strategizing and developing preliminary writings for crafting their own poems in Lesson 4.

Lesson 4: Raices/Roots

Del Castillo’s poem “Flowers from the Same Garden” from *Tales from a Michoacán* brilliantly lends itself to a great illustration of the themes of acceptance and unity between Raza, putting aside national identity and language barriers. Metaphors and similes are the vehicles which bring the poem to the consciousness of the reader. Students will begin extracting key concepts and lines from their writings for their preliminary drafts of their poetry compositions.

Lesson 5: Ventanas de mi Corazon/Windows of my Heart

Students will craft poems that reflect some of the themes and poetic elements studied in previous lessons. The process will begin by students identifying and underlining meaningful words and phrases in worksheets and written work completed in earlier lessons. These phrases will then be organized, edited, added to, and used as “seed words” for the final poem.

Lesson 6: Voz/Voice

As they recite poetry, students will understand how “voice” is extremely revealing. Students will present their poems to the class as a culmination of their in-depth study of two Colorado poets and the inherent themes woven into the work of Del Castillo and Cervantes. Each student will provide valuable, constructive feedback to classmates reading their poems.



Lesson Framework

What Will the Students Learn?

Standards

- Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW1)
- Students read and write for a variety of purposes. (RW2)
- Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing. (RW4)
- Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience. (RW6)

Benchmarks

- Students will use comprehension strategies such as prior knowledge; previewing; predicting; inferring; comparing and contrasting; rereading and self-monitoring; summarizing; identifying the author's purpose; determining the main idea; and applying knowledge of foreshadowing, metaphor, simile, symbolism and other identified figures of speech.
- Students will write and speak for a variety of purposes, such as presenting analytical responses to literature and explaining concepts.
- Students will identify the purpose, perspective, and historical/cultural influence on an author.
- Students will read literature that reflects the uniqueness, diversity, and integrity of the American experience.

Objectives

- Students will become immersed in the genre of poetry with a specific focus on the works of Lorna Dee Cervantes.
- Students will begin the poetry study by participating in a charting activity that will gauge their perceptions of poetry.
- Students will explore the concepts of self-identity and the relationship between self and others by becoming acquainted with two poems by Lorna Dee Cervantes.
- Students will use various strategies to analyze poetry.
- Students will become aware of and identify generational, cultural and historical influences unique to the Chicana(o) experience.
- Students will identify the elements of metaphors and imagery as they delve into the two poetry selections.
- Students will complete a daily seven-minute free writing exercise that will eventually be used as a basis for their own poems.
- Students will complete a reflection exercise for each poem that will eventually be used as a basis for their own poems.

Specifics: Background on the Poet Lorna Dee Cervantes

Lorna Dee Cervantes was born in 1954. She is the author of *From the Cables of Genocide: Poems on Love and Hunger* and *Emplumada*, which won an American Book Award. She is also coeditor of *Red Dirt*, a cross-cultural poetry journal and her work has been included in many anthologies, including *Unsettling America: An Anthology of Contemporary Multicultural Poetry*; *No More Masks! An Anthology of Twentieth-Century Women Poets*; and *After Aztlán: Latino Poets of the Nineties*. In 1995 she received a Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Writers' Award. She lives in Boulder, Colorado.

Instructional Strategies



- Guided reading
- Shared readings
- Note-taking
- Class discussions
- Cooperative learning

Resources and Materials

For the Teacher

- *The Teachers & Writers Handbook of Poetic Forms*

For the Classroom

- Chart paper or butcher paper and markers for the large What Is Poetry? chart to be posted in the classroom

For the Students

Books

- *Writing Poetry*
- *Infinite Divisions: An Anthology of Chicana Literature*
- *The Practice of Poetry*

Other Materials

(You may find it helpful to ask the students to keep the following materials in a tabbed, three-ring binder or use another means of organizing the materials.)

- Reflections handouts (1 per poem)
- Reader Response worksheets (1 per poem)
- Vocabulary worksheets
- Individual What Is Poetry? charts
- Applications

Preteaching

Review the elements of metaphors in Unit 1, pages 1–8 and Imagery Unit 4, pages 50–55 in *Writing Poetry* with students. Guide students through the metaphors and imagery activities. Please make sure that they do not write in the book; responses will be written in the Applications section of the binder. Seek to deepen student's understanding of poetic elements and how conceptualizing these elements will facilitate the development of their own poetic creativity. Foster skills in analyzing, inferring, and drawing conclusions throughout the lessons.

You may wish to model the recitation of poetry for the students. Hearing poetry effectively read aloud helps listeners to understand the work. A conversation or discussion about how poetry can be read will be helpful in preparing students for the final lesson in which they will be reading their poems before the class. Voice inflection, expression, pausing, speaking clearly, paced reading and looking at the audience as well as other elements of oral reading should be addressed throughout the lessons.



Activities

Determine an organizational strategy for students to use to keep track of notes, worksheets, handouts, and student writing. One good method would be to have students keep their materials in a three-ring binder with tabs to separate the sections. Whatever system you choose, it is important to remember that all the materials will be needed throughout all seven lessons. Each lesson builds upon the last, the poetry-writing assignment requires looking back at the daily seven-minute writings, and the final assessment will cover all seven lessons. Materials to be organized and kept are

- Class Notes
- Daily even-Minute Free Writings
- Reflections (See the Reflections handout for topics.)
- Reader Response Worksheets
- Vocabulary Lessons

Begin this unit of study by generating a class discussion on the genre of poetry. Have students write down their perceptions about and growing understanding of poetry on their “What is Poetry?” worksheets. After a few minutes of jotting down these ideas, discuss what the students have written. This may be done in pairs, small groups, or as a class. As the discussion unfolds, write the students’ ideas on the large classroom “What Is Poetry” chart.

Distribute the Vocabulary Worksheet. It includes some elements of poetry, as well as words used in the poems themselves. Discuss the definitions. Administer the vocabulary quiz to students before proceeding to the poetry reading assignments.

As you progress through the lessons in this unit, look for “aha!” moments to remind and encourage students to add to their What Is Poetry? worksheets, at least two or three times per week. Periodically ask them to add their best ideas from the worksheets to the classroom What Is Poetry? chart. This chart will remain posted throughout the study.

Directions to Students

When you look at words on a page or hear someone reading aloud, how can you tell when it's a poem? What subject matter and emotions do you associate with poetry? How should poetry be read aloud? Think about these questions and other ideas you have about the nature of poetry and record your thoughts on the What Is Poetry? worksheet. As you learn more about poetry in this unit, add to the list. To get you started, look at the What Is Poetry? sample sheet.

You may choose to read the article about self and identity and pre-readings from pages 75-80 in *Infinite Divisions: An Anthology of Chicana Literature* or have the students read the pages. Discuss the concepts of identity, alienation, and culture, as well as factors that are unique to the Chicana(o) identity as described in the chapter.

Ask students to read the poem “Refugee Ship” on page 293 of *Infinite Divisions: An Anthology of Chicana Literature*. Encourage students to write down words or lines that may be of particular interest to them in the Notes section of their binder. You may wish to first read the poem aloud to students.



Directions to Students

*Read the poems “Refugee Ship” on page 293 in *Infinite Divisions: An Anthology of Chicana Literature*. Reflect on the cultural contexts of self identity. Your understanding of the concept of identity is important. Begin identifying two elements of poetry—metaphor and imagery—in the poems. As you read, record specific words or lines that may be of interest to you in the Notes section of your binder.*

Distribute the Reflections handout. Ask students to write responses to at least three items in the Reflections section of their binders. Allot time for them to share their responses with the class. This should be optional; some responses may be intensely personal.

Directions to Students

After reading “Refugee Ship,” select at least three topics from your Reflections handout to write about in the Reflections section of your binder.

Distribute the Reader Response worksheet and the scoring rubric. Discuss the answers in class and collect the worksheets for evaluation.

Directions to Students

Complete the Reader Response worksheet. The scoring rubric shows how you will be evaluated.

When you determine that it’s time to move on to the next poem, repeat the above steps with “Beneath the Shadow of the Freeway” on page 116 of *Infinite Divisions: An Anthology of Chicana Literature*. “First Words” on page 3 and “Not-So-Automatic” on page 5 in *The Practice of Poetry* will be used as the basis for daily seven-minute free writings. Lines, words, and ideas extracted from these writings may find their way into the poems students will write in Lesson 7. After a discussion of the sections from *The Practice of Poetry*, do the first seven-minute writing. You may wish to model free writing as the students work on the exercise.

Directions to Students

*Read “First Words” on page 3 and “Not-So-Automatic” on page 5 in *The Practice of Poetry*. Begin an ongoing writing activity as described on page 5 of this textbook. These daily writings will be an excellent resource for taking lines or passages for your poems, so it is important that you participate in this exercise each day. This exercise can be done at home as well. You will write for a minimum of seven minutes each day.*

Assessment

A guide to assessing the students work is provided at the end of the lesson. It includes rubrics, sample responses, and a summary table.



Vocabulary Handout

In order to understand the meaning of the poetry in this lesson, you will need to know the meanings of the words below. You will be quizzed on the Words from the Poems section.

Words about Poetry (Refer to the glossary in *Writing Poetry*, pages 139–141)

metaphor

imagery

Words from the Poems

Taffeta. crisp, smooth fabric with a slight sheen

Staunch. strong or substantial in constitution; true

Tiara. a crown-like ornamental semicircle worn on the head

Scribe. a public clerk or secretary

Stipulations. conditions of an agreement

Indecisive. reluctant or unable to make up one's mind

Borracho. a person who is intoxicated

Disheveled. disarray of hair and clothing

Inquiry. the seeking of information by asking a question

Refugee Ship. a sea vessel that transports those fleeing from war

Captive. one who is forcibly confined, subjugated or enslaved

Snapdragons. any of several plants having two-lipped, variously colored flowers

Warrior. one who is engaged in or experienced in battle



What is Poetry?

List your thoughts about what poetry is on this page. Add to the list each day as you become more focused on the themes of the poetry you are studying.



What is Poetry?

List your thoughts about what poetry is on this page. Add to the list each day as you become more focused on the themes of the poetry you are studying.

SAMPLE THOUGHTS

Poems can be funny
or very serious.

Poems are
expressions of
emotions, events,
memories, etc.

Poems are short pieces of
writing that contain one or
more poetic elements.

Poems sometimes rhyme.

POEMS MAY HAVE ONE OR MORE WORDS IN A LINE.



Poetry Reflection Topics

“Refugee Ship” and “Beneath the Shadow of the Freeway” by Lorna Dee Cervantes

Respond to at least three of the following questions in the Reflections section of your binder.

1. What personal links (feelings, images, memories) did the poem evoke?
2. What personal experiences can I share that are common to the subject matter or themes represented in this poem?
3. What are the universal themes of this poem often found in other literature?
4. What elements of this poem make it unique to the Chicana(o) experience?
5. How did this poem change your thinking about an issue, or present a perspective that you may not have considered before?
6. What historical influence is evident in this poem?
7. How does the author use poetic elements (metaphor, imagery, etc.) to convey meaning more effectively in this poem?



Vocabulary Quiz

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

In the chart below, identify the meaning that corresponds to each of the words listed.

Word or Phrase	Meaning
1. Taffeta	<input type="checkbox"/> smooth fabric having dense pile and smooth underside <input type="checkbox"/> crisp smooth fabric with a slight sheen <input type="checkbox"/> a fiber produced by certain insects
2. Staunch	<input type="checkbox"/> strong or substantial in constitution; true <input type="checkbox"/> steadfast or faithful in allegiance <input type="checkbox"/> low rank <input type="checkbox"/> easily understood
3. Tiaras	<input type="checkbox"/> a woman's slip or under skirt <input type="checkbox"/> a fitted covering for the hand <input type="checkbox"/> a sleeveless garment, often having buttons <input type="checkbox"/> a crown-like ornamental semicircle worn on the head
4. Scribe	<input type="checkbox"/> an ancient monk <input type="checkbox"/> a person who protects others <input type="checkbox"/> a public clerk or secretary <input type="checkbox"/> one who interprets hieroglyphs
5. Stipulations	<input type="checkbox"/> to lay down a condition of an agreement <input type="checkbox"/> to restrict or limit <input type="checkbox"/> a statement of policy or procedure



6. Indecisive stingy or unwilling to share
 unclear; mixed messages
 reluctance or inability to make up ones mind
7. Borracho a person who has not had any sleep
 a revolutionary
 a person who is intoxicated
8. Disheveled neat and clean in appearance
 sickly and prone to illness
 disarray of hair and clothing
9. Inquiry to seek information by asking a question
 to provide information
 provoking gradual doubt
10. Refugee Ship ground transportation
 a sea vessel that transports those fleeing from war
 a company of travelers journeying together in the desert
11. Captive one that is forcibly confined, subjugated or enslaved
 one who is indigenous to a country
 a supporter of capitalism
12. Snapdragons a thorny, red form of poison ivy
 any of several plants having two-lipped, variously colored flowers
 a plant that eats insects
13. Warrior engaged or experienced in battle
 in charge of mapping the routes in war
 a first year cadet



For the Teacher: Vocabulary Quiz Key

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

In the chart below, identify the meaning that corresponds to each of the words listed.

Word or Phrase	Meaning
1. Taffeta	<input type="checkbox"/> smooth fabric having dense pile and smooth underside <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> crisp smooth fabric with a slight sheen <input type="checkbox"/> a fiber produced by certain insects
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5. Stipulations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a condition of an agreement <input type="checkbox"/> a restrict or limit <input type="checkbox"/> a statement of policy or procedure



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 in charge of mapping the routes in war
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For the Teacher: Reader Response Worksheet Sample Responses

NOTE: Answers will vary.

“Beneath the Shadow of the Freeway”

1. How does this poem exemplify the granddaughter’s search for self-identity in relation to the experiences of her grandmother and mother?

The granddaughter doesn’t know who she is in the beginning of the poem. She is like neither her grandmother nor her mother and takes on her own identity as the scribe of the family, filling a need for the role as the translator and bill payer. As she grows and learns from the experiences of her grandmother and mother and their relationships with men and attitudes towards life, she starts to form her own sense of identity in combining her beliefs with what she learns from the experiences of her grandmother and mother. She is idealistic, but learns that in time she can only depend on herself. She learns this from both her grandmother, who only trusts what she builds with her own hands, and her mother, who tells her, “Baby, don’t count on nobody.” She would like to believe that for her, life with a man would be different and the cycles of alcoholic and domestic abuse would not be repeated in her own life. She understands in time that life is not always as people wish it would be. Her mother, a fierce warrior who would rather be a princess “even now dreams of taffeta and foot-high tiaras.” The granddaughter wants to be more like her grandmother, who is still innocent, and believes in myths and birds. She wants to be less like her mother, who has become cynical about life. Although she herself has also grown more cynical on the outside, she identifies more with the softness and acceptance that her grandmother has exemplified for her and this has helped her shape her sense of identity.

2. Describe why you think Cervantes uses the metaphors of innocent queen and swift knight to describe her mother and grandmother.

The experiences of each woman reflect how she sees herself and her attitude towards life. The grandmother, although she was in an abusive relationship, found strength and independence in herself. She built her own house where she has been the queen and has not become cynical about life, therefore maintaining a sense of innocence or idealism towards life. The mother, on the other hand, seems to have been let down by life, wanting more. As a swift knight, she has been a warrior fighting and struggling against circumstances and the abusive relationships she has had with men, a cycle that has been repeated in her life even though she criticizes the grandmother for being too soft and getting screwed by a man for so long. Her mother’s wisdom is not to trust anybody, because she has learned from experience not to. Like a swift knight she has grown hard and is protective of her daughter, not wanting her to be hurt.



3. Identify the lines where imagery is used and why you think it is effective in helping us increase our understanding of the feelings and attitudes of the granddaughter.

Mockingbirds: She remembers her grandmother saying that mockingbirds are singing for their nesting wives, "They don't leave their families borrachando." The grandma stitched a quilt from his suits, the patchwork singing of mockingbirds, could imply that the pieces of his suit remind the grandmother of happier times. In the end of the poem, she sleeps with a gentle man to the hymn of the mockingbirds. The mockingbirds are a symbol of a healthy loving relationship, trust and security. She feels secure with the man she is with at the end of the poem.

Loose braids and geraniums are symbolic of her grandmother's quiet strength and sense of an independent self.

"Refugee Ship"

1. How does the metaphor of being an orphan seem to influence the concept of self-identity?

Being orphaned by her Spanish name, she seems to imply that she has no sense of cultural identity, because her mother raised her without teaching her Spanish. She feels left behind, neglected and missing something. She looks in the mirror and sees the characteristics of people from her heritage, but she feels disconnected from this heritage and her grandmother. She has no sense of belonging, and she feels incomplete or lesser than what or who she feels she should be.

2. Describe why you think Cervantes' reference to a refugee ship is effective. What meaning can be derived and how does this image relate to the concept of self-identity?

Refugees are people who are forced to flee for political reasons from their homeland. By saying that she feels that she is held captive on a refugee ship she implies that it was not by her choice that she is a product of the politics of assimilation and cultural denial that probably influenced her mother's decision not to teach her Spanish. This image relates to her concept of self in that she has felt lost, not being able to relate to the culture of her heritage, because she doesn't speak Spanish, and not fully being a part of the white culture she was raised in because of her bronzed skin. She is on the ship that will never dock, a metaphor that helps the reader understand her sense of not fully belonging and feeling as though she never will.



Evaluation Rubrics

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

What Is Poetry? Worksheet and Wall Chart	
4	The student has recorded at least four What Is Poetry? entries per week and has contributed at least three items to the classroom wall chart.
3	The student has recorded at least three What Is Poetry? entries per week and has contributed at least two items to the classroom wall chart.
2	The student has recorded at least two What Is Poetry? entries per week and has contributed at least one item to the classroom wall chart.
1	The student has recorded one What Is Poetry? entry per week and has contributed at least one items to the classroom wall chart.

Vocabulary Worksheet		Seven-Minute Writings	
4	13 correct answers	4	Student writes continuously; has five entries per week
3	12 correct answers	3	Student writes nearly continuously; has five entries per week
2	11 correct answers	2	Student stops writing frequently; has four entries per week
1	10 or fewer correct answers	1	Student writes only sporadically; has three or fewer entries per week

Class Discussion	
4	Participates daily
3	Participates frequently
2	Participates infrequently
1	Participates rarely or never



Evaluation Rubrics

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Reflections and Reader Response Worksheets	
4	The student has answered each question and has shown an insightful understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. All answers are supported by specific examples from the poetry. Responses reflect a thorough understanding of the elements of poetry. Answers are well written and free from mechanical errors.
3	The student has answered each question and has shown a good understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. Most answers are supported by specific examples from the poetry. Responses reflect a good understanding of the elements of poetry. Answers are well written, with few mechanical errors.
2	The student has attempted to answer each question but has shown only a vague understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. Some answers are supported by specific examples from the poetry. Responses reflect a fair understanding of the elements of poetry. Answers are somewhat unclear, with several mechanical errors.
1	The student has not attempted to answer each question and/or has shown very little understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. Few, if any, answers are supported by specific examples from the poetry. Responses reflect little or no understanding of the elements of poetry. Answers are unclear, with many mechanical errors.



Evaluation Summary

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

To help you assess your students, a four-point rubric is provided for each assignment in this lesson. The rubric scores are weighted so that some activities count for more than others on the final grade. Complete the table below to calculate a final score.

Category	4-Point Rubric Score	Multiply by...	Weighted Scores
What Is Poetry? worksheet, wall chart		1	
Vocabulary quiz		1	
Seven-Minute Daily Writing		2	
Reflections on "Refugee Ship"		2	
Reflections on "Beneath the Shadow of the Freeway"		2	
Reader Response worksheet on "Refugee Ship"		3	
Reader Response worksheet on "Beneath the Shadow of the Freeway"		3	
Participation in class discussion		1	
TOTAL SCORE			



Lesson Framework

What Will the Students Learn?

Standards

- Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW1)
- Students read and write for a variety of purposes. (RW2)
- Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing. (RW4)
- Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience. (RW6)

Benchmarks

- Students will use comprehension strategies, such as prior knowledge; previewing; predicting; inferring; comparing and contrasting; rereading and self-monitoring; summarizing; identifying the author's purpose; determining the main idea; and applying knowledge of foreshadowing, metaphor and other identified figures of speech.
- Students will write and speak for a variety of purposes, such as presenting analytical responses to literature and explaining concepts.
- Students will identify the purpose, perspective, and historical and cultural influence an author.
- Students will read literature that reflects the uniqueness, diversity, and integrity of the American experience.

Objectives

- Students will explore several central themes such as cultural pride, dignity and identity through the poetry of Colorado poet, Ramon Del Castillo, specifically "Bato Loco."
- Students will be introduced to the concept of tone in poetry.
- Students will increase their awareness of and identify social (alienation and oppression) and historical (colonization and oppression) influences and themes in the "Bato Loco" identity and traditional stereotypes of Chicanos and Mexican-Americans.
- Students will explore the origin of stereotypes and the impact of such stereotypes for Chicano and Mexican Americans.
- Students will link and record scenes and images from their personal experiences as the central themes of the poems become evident.
- Students will engage in a seven minute daily writing exercise.

Specifics: Background on the Poet Ramon Del Castillo

Dr. Ramon Del Castillo is a leader in the Latino community and has been an advocate for human and civil rights of Latinos during the past forty years. In 1996 he was awarded the Richard T. Castro Memorial Community Service Award for multicultural mental health program innovation. In 1998, he was awarded the prestigious Martin Luther King Jr. Humanitarian Award from the Colorado State Division of Civil Rights.

A past columnist for the *Rocky Mountain News* and a current columnist for *El Semanario*, Dr. Ramon Del Castillo is known for his thought provoking and insightful essays regarding the plight of persons of color as well as public policy concerns and issues. In 2002, he was the winner of *El Semanario's* Journalist Award for Writing and Literary Mentorship.

He has won several poetry competitions, including the Mestizo Award for Poetry. His publications include four books of poetry and numerous publications in literary magazines and books. His work was featured in the 1999 Chicano Literary Encyclopedia. Part of this dissertation is included in the



book, *La Gente: Hispano History and Life in Colorado*. His newest book, *Tales from a Michoacano*, went on the market in 2002. For a complete biography on Dr. Ramon Del Castillo, see the Biographies Section at the end of the unit.

Instructional Strategies

- Guided reading
- Shared reading
- Independent reading
- Note-taking
- Class discussions

Preliminary Lesson Planning

One of the Del Castillo's basic motivations for composing "Bato Loco" was to express the emotions that one feels in our inner and outer world. Visualization and understanding of what is and what could be also creates a strong impetus for poetry writing. Students should be aware of the emotions that some of the lines in the poems evoke and assure them that it is acceptable to feel anger or other strong emotions. Discussion as to what might the poet be feeling when he wrote these lines will help students reflect on their own feelings and the fact that many poems are about emotions and how we choose to express those feelings. Poetry also is a means of expression for our cares, concerns and political issues. Students are encouraged to express their concerns and how they relate to the lines in the poem and identify the lines in the poems that evoke the greatest response or reaction from them.

Preview "Bato Loco" (*From the Corazon of a Bato Loco*, page 12) and begin labeling the central themes evident in the poem as well as other messages that may emerge. Themes such as: cultural alienation; high prevalence of violence and drug use among Chicano youth; psychological and institutionalized imprisonment; lack of cultural representation in traditional educational canons; and the traditional perpetuation of negative stereotypes within society should be explored.

Be prepared to lead the discussion on the viewpoint that traditionally the history of Mexican Americans (Chicanos, Hispanics, Latinos), has often been treated as secondary if not completely omitted in most annals of American education. The rich history of Mexican Americans has not been adequately presented, taught or included in American literature canons. Not having had the opportunity to learn the true cultural and historical contributions, many Mexican Americans grow up without a sense of cultural identity, which as most agree, is a universal value amongst people of all cultures.

People must know their past to know who they are in the present. This idea lends itself to the concept that if people see themselves represented only negatively, stereotypically, or not at all, the implied message is that their culture and self are not valued. After decades of misrepresentation and under-representation, identity took on a different meaning for Mexican Americans, which is one of, if not the most important, factor that was the impetus for cultural awareness that the Chicano movement paved the way for. This would be an excellent lead for discussions and possible research into current issues surrounding cultural identity in education, the high drop-out rates among Mexican American youth, and ultimately the foundation and birth of the Chicano movement.



Resources and Materials

For the Teacher

You may wish to preview the following resources to expand *your* knowledge base or to provide additional information to the students.

- *L.A.R.A.S.A. Report*, “La Rasa – Identify Yourself,” newsletter by LARAZA, June 1993 issue.
- *Writing Poetry*
- *From the Corazon of a Bato Loco*
- *The Mexican American Heritage*
- *500 Years of Chicano History in Pictures*
- *The Teachers and Writers Handbook of Poetic Forms*
- *The Practice of Poetry*
- Biographical Sketch: Ramon Del Castillo (See the Biography section at the end of the unit.)

For the Classroom

- Chart paper or butcher paper and markers for the large What Is Poetry? chart to be posted in the classroom throughout the unit

For the Students

Books

- *Writing Poetry*
- *From the Corazon of a Bato Loco*
- *The Practice of Poetry*

Other Materials

(You may find it helpful to ask the students to keep the following materials in a tabbed, three-ring binder or use another means of organizing the materials.)

- Individual What Is Poetry? charts
- Pre-reading Worksheet
- Reader Response worksheets
- Vocabulary worksheets

Preteaching

There are several themes that will become evident in the poems by Del Castillo. A brief discussion on cultural pride, dignity and identity is recommended to strengthen students’ understanding of the poems.

Students are being introduced to various elements of poetry. It may be necessary for students to delve more deeply into these elements if they have not had a strong foundation in the specific elements presented in this lesson.



Activities

Begin each day with a 7-minute writing. Continue to ask students to add to their *What Is Poetry?* charts and record selected responses on the classroom chart.

Conduct a brief review on the elements of metaphor and imagery learned in the first lesson. Introduce or review tone and mood in Unit 12 from *Writing Poetry*. Have students do the tone activities in the “Applications” section of their binders. Discuss and check for conceptual understanding of tone. Ask students to read the Inquiry section pages 83–88 of Unit 9. Familiarize students with the Prereading Worksheet, questions.

Directions to Students

Begin by adding to the What is Poetry? chart. Review the poetic elements of metaphor and imagery learned in the previous lesson. You will be introduced to additional elements of poetry mainly tone and mood.

Provide the vocabulary list to each student and have students learn the words. Encourage students not to get frustrated upon the first readings of poems, especially students who do not know Spanish or who are not familiar with Mexican history or mythology. This subject matter benefits *all* students and the purpose of the study is to learn about Chicano history and the impact of writing in two languages. Ask students how the essence of the Mexican American identity is portrayed and how living in two worlds of understanding (assimilated English speaking, and native (yet colonized) Spanish) is key for developing sensitivity and tolerance for cultural diversity. For increased understanding of the terms such as Mexican American, Chicano, Hispanic and Latino, refer to the newsletter *L.A.R.A.S.A. Report*, “La Raza – Identify Yourself,” June 1993 issue.

Administer the vocabulary quiz to students before proceeding to the poetry reading assignments.

Provide students with a frame of reference on the events and history of Hispanos by reading *Focus on Education*, pages 206-210, and *The Zoot Suit Years*, pages 149-172 from *The Mexican American Heritage* by Carlos M. Jiménez. Call attention to the pictures and go over the readings from *500 years of Chicano History* by Elizabeth Martinez, pages 106-107. Have students take two-column notes in the *Note-taking* section of their journals for later discussion of the readings and pictures. After the reading is completed, have students answer the pre-reading questions and discuss their answers before they begin reading the poem.

Directions to Students

You will be asked to discuss the tone and mood of the poem, “Bato Loco.” In order that you might have a better foundation of the events and faces that highly impacted the history of Hispanos, you are required to refer to the following resources: Focus on Education, pages 206-210 & The Zoot Suit Years pages 149-172 from The Mexican American Heritage by Carlos M. Jimenez, page 206, and the pictures and readings from 500 years of Chicano History by Elizabeth Martinez, pages 106-107. Take two-column notes in the note-taking sections of your journals on anything that jumps out or creates a significant link to that particular era. You will be required to produce quality notes for all required readings.

Questions students should keep in mind when reading, “Bato Loco” are listed in the Prereading Worksheet.



LESSON 2: YO SE QUIEN SOY/I KNOW WHO I AM

CHICANO IDENTITY IN THE POETRY OF LORNA DEE CERVANTES AND RAMON DEL CASTILLO

Directions to Students

Do the Prereading Worksheet and discuss your answers in class. Use vocabulary lists throughout your readings as needed.

Students will then read “Bato Loco” (From the *Corazon of a Bato Loco*, page 12) and answer questions on the Reader Response Worksheet. Sample answers to the questions on the Reader Response Worksheet are provided for you as a guide. The poem can be read together and students are encouraged to share responses, thoughts, and links the poem evokes. Extend this activity as needed to meet the objectives of the study and to ensure that students have sufficient time to finish all work, including the Reflection Writing of each poem, and engage in meaningful class discussion.

Ask students to record any lines from the poem in their journals that provide personal links for them. They may begin collecting specific poems of their choice as models for crafting their own poems in Lesson 5.

Directions to Students

*Read the poem “Bato Loco” (From the *Corazon of a Bato Loco*, page 12) and answer questions on the Reader Response Sheet using the notes from your readings, and/or background information on the themes of each poem. You may wish to read the poem orally as practice in preparation for when you read your own poems to the class in Lesson 6. As you read “Bato Loco,” pay special attention to the following lines:*

*Can you hear as you sit
idly
in classrooms where
the silence of indoctrination
subtly
grabs you and makes
a believer of false notions of inferiority
and passes judgment
about your ancestors’ feathers*

In the Reflections section of your binder, write a reflection paper on the poem. Discuss answers, reflections, thoughts and viewpoints in class. You are welcome to begin your reflection essay with “I remember...” paying close attention to observations and details.

Assessment

A guide to assessing the students work is provided at the end of the lesson. It includes rubrics, sample responses, and a summary table.



Vocabulary Handout

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Words about Poetry (Refer to the glossary in *Writing Poetry*, pages 139–141)

tone
metaphor
imagery

Words from the Poem

barrio. a Spanish speaking district or neighborhood
inferior. low in order, degree or rank
predetermined. to determine, decide or establish in advance
tone. manner of expression in speech and writing
symbol. a written or printed sign used to represent an operation, element, a quantity, a quality, or a relation, as in music
emotion. the part of the consciousness that involves feeling
ancestors. a person or persons from whom one is descended
gruesome. causing horror and repugnance
indoctrination. to imbue with a partisan or ideological point of view
inquiry. a question, a search for information
dignity. the quality or state of deserving esteem or respect
pride. a sense of one's own dignity or value
commodity. something useful that can be turned to commercial or another advantage
indoctrination. to teach to accept a system of thought uncritically
subtly. slight and difficult to detect or analyze, not immediately obvious
predetermined. to determine, decide, or establish in advance
solemn. deep earnestness, serious in nature
conscience. recognizing right from wrong in regard to one's own sense of conduct
idolatrous. pertaining to idolatry which is the worship of idols or blind devotion
commodity. a product that can be turned into a commercial advantage
anachronism. Something existing or happening out of its proper or historical time



Vocabulary Handout, Page 2

Translation Key

bato loco. crazy dude, fellow, guy, person

cabeza. head

llena de mota. full of marijuana

sus propios barrios. your own neighborhoods

la sangre. the blood

miseria. misery

sus carnales. your brothers as in brotherhood, type of feeling and/or allegiance towards relatives and friends

estaban cantando. were singing

las rucas. slang for pachuca or the girlfriends of los batos

inferno. hell

alma. soul

Translation Key (continued)

la avena. oatmeal

una sociedad. a society

pan dulce. sweet bread

levantate. get up, as in to rise



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List your thoughts about what poetry is on this page. Add to the list each day as you become more focused on the themes of the poetry you are studying.



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SAMPLE THOUGHTS

Poems can be funny
or very serious.

Poems are
expressions of
emotions, events,
memories, etc.

Poems are short pieces of
writing that contain one or
more poetic elements.

Poems sometimes rhyme.

POEMS MAY HAVE ONE OR MORE WORDS IN A LINE.



Prereading Worksheet

The following questions can be used for preliminary discussion prior to reading the poem as well as discussion after the poem, “Bato Loco.”

1. How has society traditionally viewed batos?
2. How do batos view themselves?
3. How do negative stereotypes perpetuate cycles of racism in society?
4. How do negative stereotypes impact perception of self and self esteem?
5. How does poverty and lack of education contribute to one’s sense of place in society?
6. What does it mean to be alienated?



Vocabulary Quiz for "Bato Loco"

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

1. barrio a Spanish speaking district or neighborhood
 a saloon or drinking pub
 a private club

2. inferior a high quality state, degree or rank
 hard to please
 low in order, degree or rank

3. predetermined opposite of determined
 hard to convince
 to determine, decide or establish in advance

4. tone a round painting or relief
 a musical note
 manner of expression in speech and writing

5. symbol to refine or polish
 a written or printed sign used to represent an operation, element, a quantity, a quality, or a relation, as in music
 a small cup made of metal used to protect the finger when sewing

5. emotion the part of the consciousness that involves feeling
 a medicated liquid used for external application
 a strong reaction or response

6. ancestors a person or persons from whom one is descended
 persons who collectively own property

7. gruesome causing horror and repugnance
 lacking respect



8. inquiry a question, a search for information
 to restore confidence
 a fall or slide
9. dignity kinglike, from nobility
 The quality or state of deserving esteem or respect
 relating to family or household
10. pride boring, lacking in excitement
 a sense of one's own dignity or value
 a choice or preference
11. commodity something useful that can be turned to commercial or another advantage.
 a term used for referring to commonalities
 an Andean evergreen shrub
12. indoctrination to teach to accept a system of thought uncritically
 to keep secret or hidden
 to discharge from military service
13. subtly state of being loud and obnoxious
 slight and difficult to detect or analyze, not immediately obvious
 to expect or demand
14. predetermined to determine, decide, or establish in advance
 the end of existence
15. solemn deep earnestness, serious in nature
 no longer in fashion
 to put out
16. conscience a branch of science
 recognizing right from wrong in regard to one's own sense of conduct
 disconnected from feelings



LESSON 2: YO SE QUIEN SOY/I KNOW WHO I AM

CHICANO IDENTITY IN THE POETRY OF LORNA DEE CERVANTES AND RAMON DEL CASTILLO

17. idolatrous
- pertaining to the worship of idols or blind devotion
 - having water rich in minerals
 - being in service of a deity
18. anachronism
- unpatriotic
 - formed by melting or liquefying
 - something existing or happening out of its proper or historical time



**For the Teacher: Vocabulary Quiz Key
for “Bato Loco”**

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

1. barrio a Spanish speaking district or neighborhood
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5. symbol to refine or polish
 a written or printed sign used to represent an operation, element, a quantity, a quality, or a relation, as in music
 a small cup made of metal used to protect the finger when sewing

5. emotion the part of the consciousness that involves feeling
 a medicated liquid used for external application
 a strong reaction or response

6. ancestors a person or persons from whom one is descended
 persons who collectively own property

7. gruesome causing horror and repugnance
 lacking respect



LESSON 2: YO SE QUIEN SOY/I KNOW WHO I AM

CHICANO IDENTITY IN THE POETRY OF LORNA DEE CERVANTES AND RAMON DEL CASTILLO

8. inquiry a question, a search for information
 to restore confidence
 a fall or slide
9. dignity kinglike, from nobility
 The quality or state of deserving esteem or respect
 relating to family or household
10. pride boring, lacking in excitement
 a sense of one's own dignity or value
 a choice or preference
11. commodity something useful that can be turned to commercial or another advantage.
 a term used for referring to commonalities
 an Andean evergreen shrub
12. indoctrination to teach to accept a system of thought uncritically
 to keep secret or hidden
 to discharge from military service
13. subtly state of being loud and obnoxious
 slight and difficult to detect or analyze, not immediately obvious
 to expect or demand
14. predetermined determined, decided, or established in advance
 the end of existence
15. solemn deep earnestness, serious in nature
 no longer in fashion
 to put out
16. conscience a branch of science
 recognizing right from wrong in regard to one's own sense of conduct
 disconnected from feelings



17. idolatrous
- pertaining to idolatry which is the worship of idols or blind devotion
 - having water rich in minerals
 - being in service of a deity
18. anachronism
- unpatriotic
 - formed by melting or liquefying
 - something existing or happening out of its proper or historical time



For the Teacher: Reader Response Worksheet Sample Responses
“Bato Loco” by Ramon Del Castillo

1. After reviewing the vocabulary, summarize each stanza in your own.

(Initiate discussion. Responses will vary).

2. The tone or mood of a poem shows a feeling or an attitude that a poet wants to convey. (refer to Tone in *Writing Poetry* by Shelly Tucker) What is the overall tone of this poem?

There are several ways tone might be interpreted in this poem: Empathetic: The speaker of the poem is empathetic to the harsh realities and conditions of the bato loco. Encouraging: The speaker encourages the bato loco to be aware of and acknowledge the influence of the injustices of an oppressive past on the human spirit, but to not let it perpetuate the cycles of self-destruction. Hopeful: It is hopeful, because the message is clear, that the bato loco has the power within himself to change his life and seek comfort and strength from his own culture. Commanding: The speaker of the poem commands the bato loco to stop using the past as an excuse to continue self-destructiveness and self-imposed victimization. He urges the bato loco to take control of his own destiny.

3. Based on the message of this poem, how has society’s perception shaped the identity of the bato loco?

In schools, the persona of the bato loco has been viewed as inferior to those of mainstream culture therefore, greatly influencing how the bato loco views himself. This is evident in the lines:

Can you hear as you sit
idly
in classrooms where
the silence of indoctrination
subtly
grabs you and makes
a believer of false notions of inferiority
and passes judgment
about your ancestors’ feathers.

His culture and history has been devalued in what has been taught to him in schools. “Your path/ they tell you/has been predetermined” implies that the message society teaches young Chicanos is that they will end up in jail, homeless and/or on drugs. This is what is expected and the only solemn images the bato loco is reflected in. This may have shaped his identity and therefore his reality because there have been no positive role models that he can identify with. What he has seen is what he has become.

4. What do you think the message “wake up” means in this poem?

Because of psychological issues related to the harsh realities of self-destructive behavior and living in oppressive conditions, he has met society’s low expectations of him. The bato loco has allowed the influence of an oppressive and exploitative society define who he is, and therefore influence his image of himself, leading to low self-esteem, and therefore a disregard for his over-all health and well-being. The overall message of the poem therefore, is to get control by ending the cycles of self-destruction and see the world around [him] so he may sculpt his own destiny.



Evaluation Rubrics

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

What Is Poetry? Worksheet and Wall Chart	
4	The student has recorded at least four What Is Poetry? entries per week and has contributed at least three items to the classroom wall chart.
3	The student has recorded at least three What Is Poetry? entries per week and has contributed at least two items to the classroom wall chart.
2	The student has recorded at least two What Is Poetry? entries per week and has contributed at least one item to the classroom wall chart.
1	The student has recorded one What Is Poetry? entry per week and has contributed at least one items to the classroom wall chart.

Vocabulary Quiz		Seven-Minute Writings	
4	18 correct answers	4	Student writes continuously; has five entries per week
3	16–17 correct answers	3	Student writes nearly continuously; has five entries per week
2	14–15 correct answers	2	Student stops writing frequently; has four entries per week
1	13 or fewer correct answers	1	Student writes only sporadically; has three or fewer entries per week

Class Discussion	
4	Participates daily
3	Participates frequently
2	Participates infrequently
1	Participates rarely or never



Evaluation Rubrics

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Prereading Worksheet, Reflection Paper	
4	The student has answered each question and has shown an insightful understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. Answers are well written and free from mechanical errors.
3	The student has answered each question and has shown a good understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. Answers are well written, with few mechanical errors.
2	The student has attempted to answer each question but has shown only a vague understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. Answers are somewhat unclear, with several mechanical errors.
1	The student has not attempted to answer each question and/or has shown very little understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. Answers are unclear, with many mechanical errors.

Reader Response Worksheets	
4	The student has answered each question and has shown an insightful understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. All answers are supported by specific examples from the poetry. Responses reflect a thorough understanding of the elements of poetry. Answers are well written and free from mechanical errors.
3	The student has answered each question and has shown a good understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. Most answers are supported by specific examples from the poetry. Responses reflect a good understanding of the elements of poetry. Answers are well written, with few mechanical errors.
2	The student has attempted to answer each question but has shown only a vague understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. Some answers are supported by specific examples from the poetry. Responses reflect a fair understanding of the elements of poetry. Answers are somewhat unclear, with several mechanical errors.
1	The student has not attempted to answer each question and/or has shown very little understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. Few, if any, answers are supported by specific examples from the poetry. Responses reflect little or no understanding of the elements of poetry. Answers are unclear, with many mechanical errors.



LESSON 2: YO SE QUIEN SOY/I KNOW WHO I AM

CHICANO IDENTITY IN THE POETRY OF LORNA DEE CERVANTES AND RAMON DEL CASTILLO

To help you assess your students, a four-point rubric is provided for each assignment in this lesson. The rubric scores are weighted so that some activities count for more than others on the final grade. Complete the table below to calculate a final score.

Category	4-Point Rubric Score	Multiply by...	Weighted Scores
What Is Poetry? worksheet, wall chart		1	
Vocabulary quiz		1	
Seven-Minute Daily Writings		2	
Participation in class discussion		1	
Prereading Worksheet		3	
Reflection Paper		3	
Reader Response worksheet on "Bato Loco"		3	
TOTAL SCORE			



Lesson Framework

What Will the Students Learn?

Standards

- Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW1)
- Students read and write for a variety of purposes. (RW2)
- Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing. (RW4)
- Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience. (RW6)
- Students know how to use and construct maps and other geographic tools to locate and derive information about people, places, and environments. (G1)

Benchmarks

- Students will use comprehension strategies, such as prior knowledge; previewing; predicting; inferring; comparing and contrasting; rereading and self-monitoring; summarizing; identifying the author's purpose; determining the main idea and applying knowledge of foreshadowing, metaphor, other identified figures of speech.
- Students will write and speak for a variety of purposes, such as presenting analytical responses to literature and explaining concepts.
- Students will identify the purpose, perspective, and historical and cultural influence an author.
- Students will read literature that reflects the uniqueness, diversity, and integrity of the American experience.
- Students will develop knowledge of Earth to locate people, places and environments

Objectives

- Students will explore several central themes such as historical roots, cultural pride, dignity and identity in the poem, "*Take Me Back To Aztlán*" by Colorado poet, Ramon Del Castillo.
- Students will continue to identify social, cultural and historical influences and themes as they relate to the Mestizo identity.
- Students will be introduced to new poetic elements evident in the poem.
- Students will engage in a seven minute daily writing exercise that will be used for crafting their own poems in Lesson 5.
- Students will explore the symbolism and historical significance of Aztlán.
- Students will compare and contrast major themes using thematic maps (e.g. land use, population, climate) illustrating the homeland of the Aztecs and other ancient Pre-Columbian cities.

Specifics: Background on Aztlán

Aztlán is the Aztecs mythical homeland that was located north of Tenochtitlan. Often it is referred to the part of the United States that once belonged to Mexico. Tenochtitlan was the great Aztec capital city, (current day Mexico City) believed to have been one of the greatest cities in the ancient world.

Instructional Strategies

- Guided reading
- Shared readings
- Independent reading



- Note-taking
- Discussions
- Drawing conclusions
- Reflection writing

Preliminary Lesson Preparation

Preview the poem “Take Me Back to Aztlán” from *Tales from a Michoácano*. Refer to the “Mexican Archetypes and Terms” in this chapter. Familiarize yourself with the poem and its historical reference to the mythical homeland of Aztlán and what Aztlán symbolizes to Chicanos. Don’t assume all Hispanic students know and understand the historical significance of Aztlán. You may need to assess where students are in their foundation of Mexican history before moving forward with the lesson. Introducing the geography of Mexico and the cities in Pre-Columbian times and the corresponding modern day cities would greatly help students establish a timeline and geographical reference point.

“Take Me Back to Aztlán” begins in a wistful tone with the voice of the poem longing for the sense of place and identity of an ancient Mexican homeland. It tells of the history of the beginning of colonization and the birth of a new race of people, the mestizo, referring to the archetype of Quetzalcoatl, and the arrival of Cortez, and the dichotomy of being the oppressed and the oppressor. The theme surrounding the issue of language and identity is also important to explore in this poem, especially in comparison with the same theme found in Lorna Dee Cervantes’ “*Refugee Ship*.” Note the line: *Never once did our ancestors shout “Nahuatl only.”* A comparison can be made to the current issues surrounding national language issues and the push for English only” in states all over the United States. The English only issue is a very controversial issue that has brought about questions regarding intolerance of national and cultural identity.

The second half of the poem poses several questions to the reader in a series of metaphors that symbolize the quest for the Chicano’s search for identity, spirituality and a sense of peace of the inner-conflicts that are the result of colonization and imperialism. Be prepared to compare and contrast these metaphors to the Chicano experience.

Have the What Is Poetry? chart posted so that students can continue to record their evolving understanding of what poetry is and the reasons that poetry is a great vehicle for recording events and personal crusades and other messages. You have been provided with maps that will enable students to see the location and area that was inhabited by Pre-Columbian people specifically the location of Teotihuacan and Technotitlan. You may wish to post the maps as reference points for students or duplicate a smaller version of each map for each student.

The poem: “I am Joaquin: An Epic Poem” by Rudolfo Gonzales can be read as a historical platform for helping students grasp the climate of the times when cultural identity became a major impetus for the civil rights era.



Resources and Materials

For the Teacher

- *I am Joaquin: An Epic Poem*

For the Students

Books

- *Writing Poetry*
- *From the Corazon of a Bato Loco*
- *The Practice of Poetry*
- Vocabulary Handout
- *The Mexican American Heritage*
- *500 Years of Mexican History*

Other Materials

(You may find it helpful to ask the students to keep the following materials in a tabbed, three-ring binder or use another means of organizing the materials.)

- Individual What Is Poetry? charts
- Reader Response worksheets
- Vocabulary worksheets
- Maps of Mexico

Preteaching

Conduct a brief review on the central themes that students identified in Lesson 2 for the poem “*Bato Loco*.” Ask students to synthesize the characteristic of the poetic elements of sound, rhythm, lineation, tone and mood presented in Lesson 2.

Review or teach “Personification,” Unit 3, pages 32-40 and “Imagery,” Unit 4 page 50-60 in *Writing Poetry* by Shelly Tucker. Encourage students to continue to record key concepts and other relevant notes in their Application section of their binders. Allow class time for this.

You may want to talk briefly about the poet(s) and help students put themselves in the poets’ shoes. Lead discussion around the style and focus of the poet and set the tone for the new poem students will read in this lesson.



Activities

Begin each day with a 7-minute writing. Continue to ask students to add to their *What Is Poetry?* charts and record selected responses on the classroom chart..

Distribute the Vocabulary Worksheet. It includes some elements of poetry, as well as words used in the poems themselves. Discuss the definitions. Administer the vocabulary quiz to students before proceeding to the poetry reading assignments.

Have students read *Quetzalcoatl—Man and God* pages 30-32 and *The Loss of Aztlán* pages 63-87 from *The Mexican American Heritage*. This reading will be highly instrumental in laying a foundation for this lesson: Show students the pictures and readings from *500 Years of Mexican History* page 16. Students are encouraged to take two-column notes in the *Notes* section of their journals.

Instructions to Students

Read Quetzalcoatl—Man and God (pages 30-32) and The Loss of Aztlán (pages 63-87) in The Mexican American Heritage. This book also explores the various meanings and interpretations of Aztlán and its significance to the Chicano identity. Look at the pictures and readings from 500 Years of Mexican History (page 16). Take notes in the in Notes sections of your binder.

Students are to read the poem “*Take Me Back to Aztlán*,” pages 6-9 from *Tales of a Michoacáno* and answer questions from the Reader Response Worksheet. Provide the vocabulary lists and the “Mexican Archetypes and Terms” page to students. After students answer the Reader Response questions, discuss their answers in class.

Students are encouraged to locate the cities of Technotitlan and Teotihuacan on the maps provided in class to establish the extent to which these cities had advanced and well developed infra-systems.

Instructions to Students

Read the poem “Take Me Back to Aztlán” (Tales of a Michoacáno, pages 6-9) and answer questions from the Reader Response Worksheet.

Locate the cities of Technotitlan and Teotihuacan on the maps provided to you in class to establish the extent to which these cities had advanced and well developed infra-systems.

In the Reflections section of your binder, write a reflection paper on the poem. Discuss answers, reflections, thoughts and viewpoints in class. You are welcome to begin your reflection essay with “I remember...” paying close attention to observations and details.

Assessment

A guide to assessing the students work is provided at the end of the lesson. It includes rubrics, sample responses, and a summary table.



Vocabulary Handout

In order to understand the meaning of the poetry in this lesson, you will need to know the meanings of the words below. You will be quizzed on the Words from the Poem section.

Words about Poetry (Refer to the glossary in *Writing Poetry*, pages 139–141)

symbolism

Vocabulary

Sojourn. to reside temporarily

Anecdotes. a short account of an interesting or humorous incident

Idiom. a specialized vocabulary used by a group; jargon

Parlance. a particular manner of speaking; idiom

Imperialism. the policy of extending a nation's authority by territorial acquisition or by establishing economic and political hegemony over other nations.

Vulture. a large bird of prey feeding on carrion; A person of a rapacious, predatory, or profiteering nature

Communion. the act or an instance of sharing, as of thoughts

Termination. the end of something

Rituals. the prescribed form of ceremonies or rites used in a place of worship

Mythical. imaginary, fictitious

Quest. a search

Homage. special honor or respect shown or expressed publicly

Effervescent. to escape from a liquid as bubbles; to show high spirits or excitement

Imposter. one who engages in deception under an assumed name or identity

Umbilical. relating to or resembling a navel or an umbilical cord

Habitat. the environment in which an organism normally lives or occurs.

Translation Key

los trabajadores. the workers

las mujeres. the women

esclavo(a). slave(s)

picoso. spicy

mas hermoso. more beautiful

maiz. corn

jardin. garden



LESSON 3: RAICES HISTORICAS/HISTORICAL ROOTS

CHICANO IDENTITY IN THE POETRY OF LORNA DEE CERVANTES AND RAMON DEL CASTILLO

flores de todos colores. flowers of all colors

el cielo. the sky or the heavens

tortilla. a flat, usually round bread

salsa. a spicy or mild sauce

mestizo. person with mixed Indian, Spanish and Mexican ancestry

noche triste. June 30, 1520, “the sad night” when Cortez lost half of his men to the Aztecs in the battle for Tenochtitlan

mocajetes. a stone used to grind corn into flour

el sol. the sun

pulque. a strong alcoholic drink made in Mexico from the agave cactus

tlachtli (tlatli). an ancient Aztec ball game

Nahuatl. the native language of the Aztecs

Castillian Spanish. 16th century Spanish language that the conquistadores used; the Spanish dialect of Castille, Spain

Quetzalcoatl. the feathered serpent and the ruling god of Teotihuacan. He is also known as the Toltec prince who was forced into exile vowing to return someday.

Tonantzin. the Aztec goddess of the earth

Tarascan. the indigenous people of Michoacan

Mestizo. a race or ethnic group born of the mixture of the Spanish and indigenous people of the Americas.

For more information, refer to *The Mexican American Heritage* by Carlos M. Jimenez



What is Poetry?

List your thoughts about what poetry is on this page. Add to the list each day as you become more focused on the themes of the poetry you are studying.



What is Poetry?

List your thoughts about what poetry is on this page. Add to the list each day as you become more focused on the themes of the poetry you are studying.

SAMPLE THOUGHTS

Poems can be funny
or very serious.

Poems are
expressions of
emotions, events,
memories, etc.

Poems are short pieces of
writing that contain one or
more poetic elements.

Poems sometimes rhyme.

POEMS MAY HAVE ONE OR MORE WORDS IN A LINE.



Vocabulary Quiz

Name _____ Class _____ Period _____

Write the definition of each word below.

1. Sojourn. _____

2. Anecdotes. _____

3. Idiom. _____

4. Parlance. _____

5. Imperialism. _____

6. Vulture. _____

7. Communion. _____

8. Termination. _____

9. Rituals. _____

10. Quest. _____

11. Homage. _____

12. Effervescent. _____

13. Imposter. _____

14. Umbilical. _____

15. Habitat. _____



For the Teacher: Reader Response Worksheet Sample Answers “Take Me Back to Aztlán” by Ramon Del Castillo

Using the Mexican archetypes and the Terms and Vocabulary page, read “Take Me Back to Aztlán” and answer the following questions:

1. Explain how the author of the poem describes the Conquest and the birth of the Mestizo.

NOTE: Answers will vary. Check to see that students understand the point of view and the overall historical events that influenced the content of the poem.

The author of the poem describes the conquest as though he were a spirit witnessing the mergence between two cultures. From one point of view he saw the arrival of the Spanish with their ancient football helmets in a quest for gold. From another point of view his spirit watched the Aztecs in their traditional ways prior to the arrival of the Spanish, singing tunes in an ancient language, Nahuatl. Once the cultures merged he describes the birth of a new language, a combination of Nahuatl and Castillian Spanish. His indigenous ancestors were tolerant of this new mergence of cultures and languages, never shouting, “Nahuatl Only.” Then he goes further to describe this mergence from the perspective of his spirit in a very sorrowful and bitter tone as he describes the sense of being deceived (which ties to the metaphor of “a cup full of anecdotes mixed with pulque” in the beginning of the poem), when he uses the word “imposter” to name Cortez, who according to legend was thought to be Quetzalcoatl returning like he said he would. (See “Quetzalcoatl-Man and God,” pages 30-32 from The Mexican American Heritage by Carlos M. Jimenez.) The use of the word “rape” to describe the actions of Cortez and “la virgen” to describe Tonatzin implies the loss of innocence by the unnatural and forced conception and creation of the Mestizo race. After this loss of innocence and purity the cultural identity of the Mestizo is born, “now illiterate in two languages,” implying the unfortunate lack of culture and knowledge that seemingly characterizes this new race of people, who’s umbilical cord has been cut from its indigenous traditions and ancient wisdom. This new race of people is seemingly lost; not having found the “thermos bottle full of justice” the spirits of indigenous ancestors roam the countryside in search for.

2. Choose two of the metaphors from pages 8-9 and describe how the poet uses personification and imagery to show the conflicts within the Mestizo identity.

NOTE: Answers will vary. Note that each metaphor is about the unnatural mergence of two substances, one being inflicted upon by the other, or out of its element. It is either destroyed or turned into something better than it was before. The idea is to show that those who identify with the Mestizo identity have a choice in how they view themselves.

Sample response:

The metaphor “salsa left in rain” describes the experience of the Mestizo identity in two different ways: The Mestizo identity can be viewed as either “diluted causing us internal pain,” or “more picoso/mixed with foreign substances/making it mas hermoso.” In other words, the Mestizo has the choice to either mourn the loss of culture and assume the role of a victim, or consider that coming from two cultures as more to gain, being proud, of both cultures and accepting that the past cannot be changed.



LESSON 3: RAICES HISTORICAS/HISTORICAL ROOTS

CHICANO IDENTITY IN THE POETRY OF LORNA DEE CERVANTES AND RAMON DEL CASTILLO

The poet uses personification when he attributes feelings of internal pain to the diluted salsa, and imagery when he shows through this metaphor the contrast between salsa mixed with rain as either being viewed as diluted, or watered down, or richer with what the rain has to add to the salsa, versus what it takes away.

3. What is this poem's central message?

This poem reminds Chicanos and/or those who identify with the Mestizo identity that even after the history of oppression, deceit and injustice the dignity of the human spirit and ancient wisdom of what was lost still remains and lives on inside of us. The journey to Aztlán, the womb of the Aztec culture, is a metaphor for the internal journey a Mestizo who feels "left without a culture" must take. To go back to the beginnings "rekindling the burning fire that refuses to die," which may be interpreted as the spiritual quest for inner peace and acceptance through rebirth. The Mestizo must become reborn by terminating the long and tiring outdated role of being the victim of cultural imperialism and oppression. To suffer or to grow is a choice.



Evaluation Rubrics

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

What Is Poetry? Worksheet and Wall Chart	
4	The student has recorded at least four What Is Poetry? entries per week and has contributed at least three items to the classroom wall chart.
3	The student has recorded at least three What Is Poetry? entries per week and has contributed at least two items to the classroom wall chart.
2	The student has recorded at least two What Is Poetry? entries per week and has contributed at least one item to the classroom wall chart.
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Vocabulary Quiz		Seven-Minute Writings	
4	15 correct answers	4	Student writes continuously; has five entries per week
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2	11–12 correct answers	2	Student stops writing frequently; has four entries per week
1	10 or fewer correct answers	1	Student writes only sporadically; has three or fewer entries per week

Class Discussion	
4	Participates daily
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Evaluation Rubrics

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Reader Response Worksheets	
4	The student has answered each question and has shown an insightful understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. All answers are supported by specific examples from the poetry. Responses reflect a thorough understanding of the elements of poetry. Answers are well written and free from mechanical errors.
3	The student has answered each question and has shown a good understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. Most answers are supported by specific examples from the poetry. Responses reflect a good understanding of the elements of poetry. Answers are well written, with few mechanical errors.
2	The student has attempted to answer each question but has shown only a vague understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. Some answers are supported by specific examples from the poetry. Responses reflect a fair understanding of the elements of poetry. Answers are somewhat unclear, with several mechanical errors.
1	The student has not attempted to answer each question and/or has shown very little understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. Few, if any, answers are supported by specific examples from the poetry. Responses reflect little or no understanding of the elements of poetry. Answers are unclear, with many mechanical errors.

To help you assess your students, a four-point rubric is provided for each assignment in this lesson. The rubric scores are weighted so that some activities count for more than others on the final grade. Complete the table below to calculate a final score.

Category	4-Point Rubric Score	Multiply by...	Weighted Scores
What Is Poetry? worksheet, wall chart		1	
Vocabulary quiz		1	
Seven-Minute Daily Writings		2	
Participation in class discussion		1	
Reflection Paper		3	
Reader Response worksheet on "Bato Loco"		3	
TOTAL SCORE			



Lesson Framework

What Will the Students Learn?

Standards

- Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW1)
- Students read and write for a variety of purposes. (RW2)
- Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing. (RW4)
- Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience. (RW6)

Benchmarks

- Students will use comprehension strategies; previewing; predicting; inferring; comparing and contrasting; rereading and self-monitoring; summarizing; identifying the author's purpose; determining the main idea; and applying knowledge of metaphor and other identified figures of speech.
- Students will write and speak for a variety of purposes, such as presenting analytical responses to literature and explaining concepts.
- Students will identify the purpose, perspective and historical and cultural influence an author.
- Students will read literature that reflects the uniqueness, diversity and integrity of the American experience.

Objectives

- Students will identify recurring and emerging themes in two poems, by Colorado poet, Ramon Del Castillo "*Flowers from the Same Garden*" and "*Bato Loco*."
- Students will explore various elements of identity social (alienation, racism, cultural intolerance) and historical (the loss of Aztlán) influences as they relate to the self identification of Chicanos and the immigrant Mexican American and the issues faced by both groups.
- Students will engage in daily writing exercises that will later be contextualized within a framework of poetic material that is connected to the central or other related themes posed by poet Del Castillo.
- Students will review selected reading from *The Mexican American Heritage* by Carlos M. Jimenez and view the video *Chicano! The Fight for Landing* and the *Mi Familia* video as a foundational point of reference of key events and people who played key roles in the Chicano movement.
- Students will learn about the ancient cities of Teotihuacan and Technotitlan using geographic tools and resources.
- Students will record their responses to three questions on their Reader Response Worksheet as they analyze "*Flowers from the Same Garden*."

Specifics: Setting the Stage for Poetry Writing

The poem "*Flowers from the Same Garden*" is an excellent poem that depicts some of the viewpoints that are prevalent about Mexicanos and Chicanos. The history and roots that bind these two groups may help students in your class understand the history that binds the two groups cannot be disputed.

Composing poetry requires practice. Talent may be essential but passion, curiosity, determination and willingness are certainly prerequisites as well. Knowing the elements of writing is an important prerequisite but so are the complexities of form, style, image and sound. The elements of apprenticeship from learning how to read poetry to how to write poetry are as varied as the poets who share their favorite writing and reading tips. Every writer experiences various emotions when writing and students should be



prepared to experience frustration, excitement, writers block and many other challenges. When students begin to craft their own poems, they will apply what they have learned in the previous lessons specifically in reference to the central themes introduced by poet, Ramon Del Castillo. Composing their own poems will force students to think. Struggling with the first poem is to be expected, however, high expectations and guided support will pave the way for further creativity. Remember, some students may be breaking new ground and the process of writing poetry may be intimidating.

Instructional Strategies

- Guided reading
- Shared readings
- Independent reading
- Discussions
- Reflection writing

Preliminary Lesson Preparation

This is an excellent poem to explore the use of extended metaphor. Be familiar with the poem and Del Castillo's use of metaphors, similes and imagery as well as Spanish terms used. This poem refers to "our indigenous mother earth" and "living on occupied land." Be aware of issues surrounding land rights and the loss of Aztlán relative to the Chicano's identity and experience. This would be a good opportunity to research the significance of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the role that advocates for people of color such as Reies Lopez Tijerina and others who took great risks bringing land grant and equity issues to the forefront.

Review poetic elements introduced in previous lessons as well as extended metaphors which will be covered in this lesson.

Provide all resources that are needed for background information for students who wish to increase their understanding of the events and people that has led to the historical account of issues that depict the Chicano movement beginning in the 1960s spanning to present day.

Have the What Is Poetry? chart posted for charting responses from students as their understanding of poetry increases. The What Is Poetry? chart is an excellent tool for documenting student's understanding of the subject matter.

You may wish to provide students with the vocabulary key for this lesson and make reference to it as you move through the lesson.

Should issues of language, national identity and current history of immigrant students versus students who are native to Colorado emerge during class discussion, you may wish to proceed cautiously as there are very deep opposing philosophical viewpoints from both groups. A respect for both viewpoints must be demonstrated and the discussion kept as a scholarly level. Your sensitivity and assessment of the key points as they relate to the lesson must be kept in check to avoid fueling an already volatile relationship between the two groups.

Optional: Students who wish to read *The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo* and the significance of this treaty as well as the role that Reies Lopez Tijerina and others who advocated for the inclusion and rights of *Chicanos* can be counted for extra-credit or to bring up a grade.

You may wish to have students view *Chicano! The Fight for Land* and/or the movie "Mi Familia."



This movie includes a good example of the 1930 Repatriation Movement, when U.S. immigration took Mexican immigrants and Mexican Americans to Mexico whether they were born here or not. These videos are excellent for help students further their understanding of the obstacles that Chicanos/Mexicanos have faced.

Encourage students to extract anything that is interesting, heart felt, strange, intimate and/or important from their daily seven minute writing exercises. These single words or phrases will later be revised, polished or linked into the poems that students will craft. The poems will become a very personal sharing of their innermost thoughts of how they see themselves. This exercise is one that leads to self discovery and practice for writing poetry.

Students who wish to know more about the ancient cities of Teotihuacan and Technotitlan may refer to two information sheets at the end of this lesson.

Resources and Materials

For the Teacher

- *The Teachers & Writers Handbook of Poetic Forms*
- *The Mexican American Heritage*

For the Classroom

- Chart paper or butcher paper and markers for the large What Is Poetry? chart to be posted in the classroom throughout the unit

For the Students

Books

Tales from a Michoacán

- *Writing Poetry*
- *Infinite Divisions: An Anthology of Chicana Literature*
- *The Practice of Poetry*

Other Materials

(You may find it helpful to ask the students to keep the following materials in a tabbed, three-ring binder or use another means of organizing the materials.)

- Reader Response worksheets (1 per poem)
- Vocabulary worksheets
- Individual What Is Poetry? charts
- Translation Key

Preteaching

Review the “Extended Metaphor,” Unit 1, pages 9–20 in *Writing Poetry* by Shelly Tucker. Have students do the activity on pages 13-14 in the *Application* section of their journals. Check for understanding and have students share their responses.

Provide a road map for students in the development of their own poems using *The Practice of Poetry*.



Activities

Begin each day with a 7-minute writing. Continue to ask students to add to their *What Is Poetry?* charts and record selected responses on the classroom chart.

Distribute the Vocabulary Worksheet. It includes some elements of poetry, as well as words used in the poems themselves. Discuss the definitions. Administer the vocabulary quiz to students before proceeding to the poetry reading assignments.

You may wish to set the tone for this lesson by assigning background reading for extra credit for the following readings:

- “The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo,” page 81
- “Why Aztlán was Lost,” page 83
- “Phase One: Viva La Raza and Chicano Power” page 194 from *The Mexican American Heritage* by Carlos M. Jimenez.
- *500 Years of Mexican History*, pages 110-111, by Elizabeth Martinez.

Directions to Students

Your teacher may assign background reading. Take two-column notes in the *Notetaking* section of their journals for discussion.

After students read “Flowers from the Same Garden,” pages 31-32 from *Tales of a Michoacán*, they will answer the questions on the Reader Response Worksheet. Give the students the vocabulary lists, translation key, and Mexican Archetypes and Terms page to refer to while reading the poem. After students answer the Reader Response questions and become acquainted with the translation key, discuss student responses in class. You may wish to reserve one entire class period for a class discussion.

Read the poem “Flowers from the Same Garden,” pages 31-32 from Tales of a Michoacán. The vocabulary, Mexican Archetypes and Terms and translation key will help you understand words in the poem that are unfamiliar to you. Answer the questions on the Reader Response Worksheet and discuss your responses in class or in a group.

Ask students to reflect on what they have learned to date and record any personal thoughts or ideas in their journals during their seven minute writing exercise. These daily entries will be valuable when students begin to craft their poems.

During your seven minute writing activity, record any ideas, thoughts and/or memories in your journals which you can use for the crafting of your poem.

In the Reflections section of your binder, write a reflection paper on the poem. Discuss answers, reflections, thoughts and viewpoints in class. You are welcome to begin your reflection essay with “I remember...” paying close attention to observations and details.

Assessment

A guide to assessing the students work is provided at the end of the lesson. It includes rubrics, sample responses, and a summary table.



Vocabulary Handout

Vocabulary

Pedagogical. the art or profession of teaching; training or instruction

Imperialism. the policy of extending a nation's authority by territorial acquisition or by establishing economic and political hegemony over other nations.

Indignities. humiliating, degrading, or abusive treatment

Contemporary. current, modern

Withering. tending to overwhelm or destroy, Devastating

Mold. to form into a particular shape

Indigenous. originating and growing of living in an area or environment

Umbilical. relating to the umbilical cord; a means of transport for nourishment

Translation Key

Raices. roots

Brujos. witches

La Otra. the other

Pocho, bien mocho. Pocho is a term used to identify An American born Hispanic, bien mocho rhymes with Pocho. Literally translated bien mocho means very severed.

Mojado, bein maltrato. mistreated wetback

Con raices mismas. the same roots

Barrio callés. neighborhood streets

Los remedios. the remedies

Curandera . indigenous healer (Indian or Mexican)

Las pesares de la vida. the weights in life meaning the emotional burdens we carry such as pain and hurts.



What is Poetry?

List your thoughts about what poetry is on this page. Add to the list each day as you become more focused on the themes of the poetry you are studying.



What is Poetry?

List your thoughts about what poetry is on this page. Add to the list each day as you become more focused on the themes of the poetry you are studying.

SAMPLE THOUGHTS

Poems can be funny
or very serious.

Poems are
expressions of
emotions, events,
memories, etc.

Poems are short pieces of
writing that contain one or
more poetic elements.

Poems sometimes rhyme.

POEMS MAY HAVE ONE OR MORE WORDS IN A LINE.



Teacher and Student Resource Handout

Teotihuacan

Teotihuacan is situated some 50 km northeast of Mexico City. Built between the 1st and 7th centuries A.D., it is characterized by the vast size of its monuments including the Citadel complex, the Temple of Quetzalcoatl and the Pyramids of the Sun and the Moon, laid out on geometric and symbolic principles aligned along a major north-south axis known as the Avenue of the Dead. As one of the most powerful cultural centers in Mesoamerica, Teotihuacan extended its cultural and artistic influence throughout the region, and even beyond.

Teotihuacan arose as a new religious center in the Central Mexican Highlands, around the time of Christ. Although its origins are poorly understood, archaeological data show that Teotihuacan quickly became the largest and most populous urban center in Mesoamerica. By this time, the city already appears to have expanded to approximately 20 square km, with about 60,000 to 80,000 inhabitants. The development of the city seems to have involved population movements, exploitation of natural resources, an increase in agricultural production, technological inventions, establishment of trading systems and other kinds of socio-political organizations, and attractive belief systems. By the fourth century, unmistakable influences of Teotihuacan were felt throughout most parts of Mesoamerica. Teotihuacan was the sixth largest city in the world during its period of greatest prosperity with an estimated population of 125,000. The city seems to have functioned for centuries as a well-developed urban center until its rather sudden collapse, possibly in the seventh century. Nahuatl speakers called the place Teotihuacan (loosely translated as “City of the Gods”) several centuries after the city’s fall. However, its original name, the language or languages spoken there, and the ethnic groups who build the city are still unknown.

Many surveys, excavations, and studies of materials have been made for more than a century, employing different kinds of approaches and techniques. Since Manuel Gamio carried out the first scientific interdisciplinary investigation in 1917-22, several explorations have revealed specific cultural traits and helped situate Teotihuacan prehistory within the Mesoamerican chronological framework.



Teacher and Student Resource Handout: Teotihuacan

According to legend, the Mexica (also known as Aztecs) were the “chosen people” of Huitzilopochtli, god of war and the sun, who promised to fulfill their destiny as a great nation in exchange for unwavering belief and devotion. They left Aztlán, the Mexica mythical homeland, in search of an eagle eating a snake perched on a cactus growing from a rock or cave surrounded by water. This would be the location where they were to build their city, Tenochtitlan, and honor him.

Upon reaching the valley of Mexico around 1190, the Mexica were not well received by the various communities established there. Though their reputation as fierce warriors made them desirable as mercenary troops, nevertheless their sponsors often expelled them repeatedly until they finally reached an undesirable island surrounded by marshes in Lake Texcoco. It was here that the Mexica encountered the image described in their prophecy and in 1325, the city of Tenochtitlan was founded.

Tenochtitlan grew rapidly and eventually reached an estimated population 200,000. The city grew to a point where there was no more room for expansion on the island and they were forced to move out into the lake areas. The agricultural portion of this expansion was successful because of the invention of the chinampas or “floating gardens.”

The Mexica also connected the island to the mainland by three causeways that ran next to dikes that were built to keep the fresh water of Lake Texcoco separate from other salty lakes of the area. The dikes also protected the agricultural chinampas. Canals ran between the chinampoas and were used to convey traffic through the city, including to and from the market of Tlateloloco.

By 1519, the Mexica dominated most of Mesoamerica and received tribute from hundreds of towns and city-states. They were a powerful and wealthy people who excelled in art, architecture and poetry. Tenochtitlan was a dazzling white city with beautiful murals and gardens.

Tenochtitlan flourished until Spanish adventurers along with their native allies invaded and destroyed the city. The Mexica, suffering from smallpox and other diseases, which devastated the population, formally surrendered on August 13, 1521. After their defeat, the new conquerors began construction on Mexico City on top of the ruins of Tenochtitlan, using many of its original building material in the new construction.

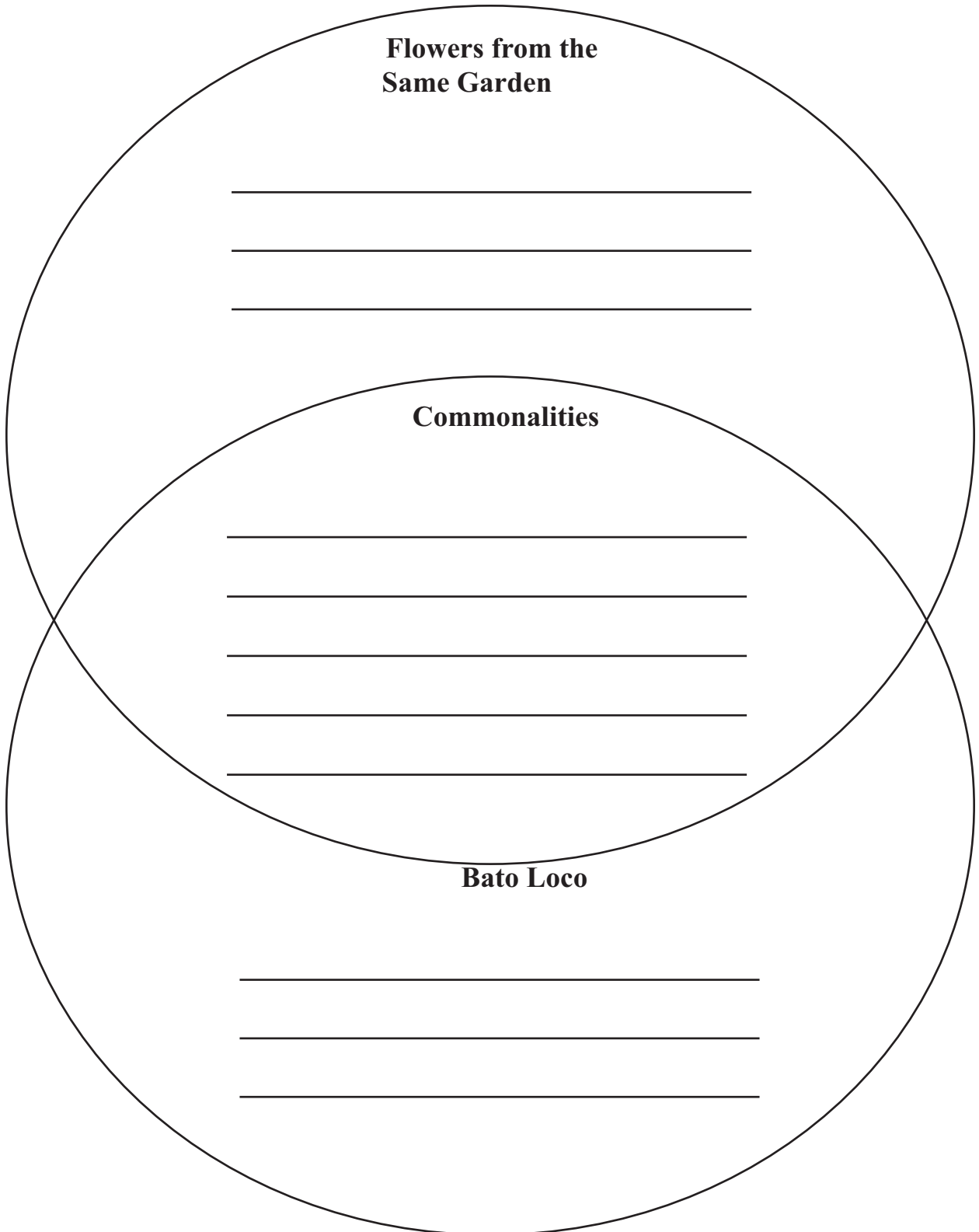
Most of the great city remained buried until the year 1790, when excavation for water pipes uncovered two sculptures, the Sun Stone (known also as the Aztec Calendar) and the Statue of Coatlicue, or the mother goddess. These artifacts were uncovered only a few blocks from the area where the Great Temple stood. These were great finds, though the statue of Coatlicue was re-buried by Dominican priests who feared the possible effects it could have on the people of the area. In 1803, it was recovered at the request of Alexander von Humboldt, a German explorer, who had a great interest in pre-hispanic culture.

On February 21, 1978 employees of the Electric Light Company discovered the Coyolzahque Stone. The stone is three and one quarter meters in diameter and is the carved relief of a dismembered female. It is believed that the dismembered female is the goddess Coyolzahqui. The stone was formerly located at the base of the stairway at Great Temple. This discovery spurred the excavation of Templo Mayor.

The site of the Great Temple is very near the main square of the city called the Zocalo. It was the central religious center for the city of Tenochtitlan. Unfortunately, after nearly five hundred years, little has been found of the ancient capital city of the Mexica. However, research and excavations continue in hopes that more will be uncovered and provide more information on the Mexica and Tenochtitlan.



3. Venn Diagram: Compare and Contrast this poem to Castillo's "Bato Loco" poem. (at least two differences and three similarities)





Vocabulary Quiz

Name _____ Class _____ Period _____

Write the definition of each word below.

1. Pedagogical. _____

2. Imperialism. _____

3. Indignities. _____

4. Contemporary. _____

5. Withering. _____

6. Mold _____

7. Indigenous. _____

8. Umbilical. _____



For the Teacher: Reader Response Worksheet Sample Answers

“Flowers from the Same Garden” by Ramon Del Castillo

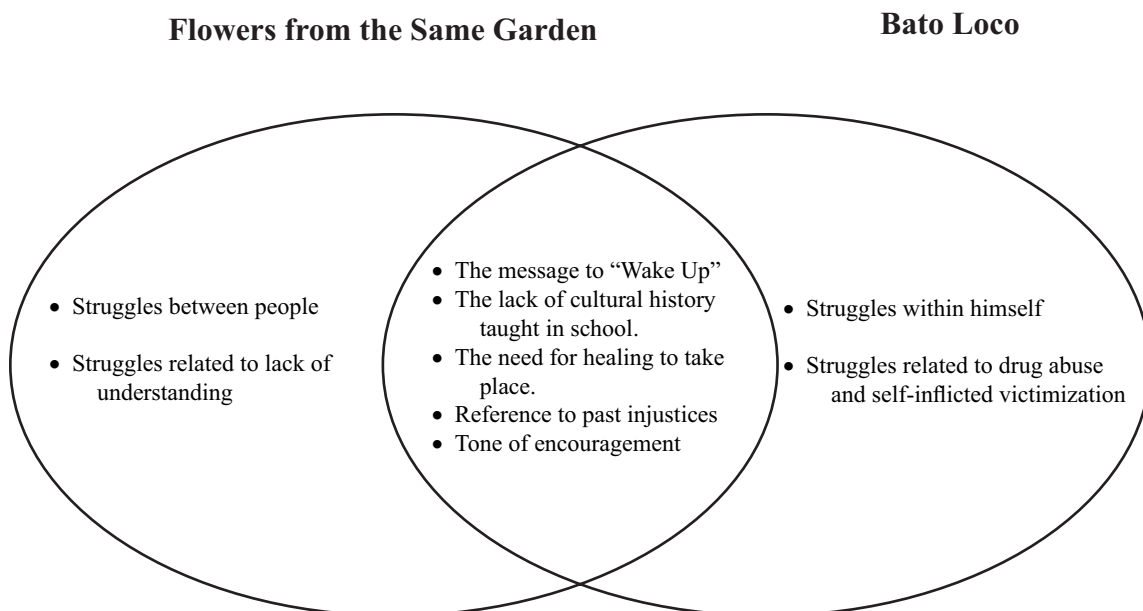
1. How does the speaker of the poem use history in the extended metaphor of *“Flowers from the Same Garden”* to point out the commonalities between Chicanos and Mexican immigrants?

Answers will vary.

2. According to this poem, what are the key points of conflict between Chicanos and Mexican immigrants and what can be done to alleviate this conflict?

Answers will vary.

3. Venn Diagram: Compare and Contrast this poem to Castillo’s *“Bato Loco”* poem. (at least two differences and three similarities)





Evaluation Rubrics

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

What Is Poetry? Worksheet and Wall Chart	
4	The student has recorded at least four What Is Poetry? entries per week and has contributed at least three items to the classroom wall chart.
3	The student has recorded at least three What Is Poetry? entries per week and has contributed at least two items to the classroom wall chart.
2	The student has recorded at least two What Is Poetry? entries per week and has contributed at least one item to the classroom wall chart.
1	The student has recorded one What Is Poetry? entry per week and has contributed at least one items to the classroom wall chart.

Vocabulary Quiz		Seven-Minute Writings	
4	8 correct answers	4	Student writes continuously; has five entries per week
3	7 correct answers	3	Student writes nearly continuously; has five entries per week
2	6 correct answers	2	Student stops writing frequently; has four entries per week
1	5 or fewer correct answers	1	Student writes only sporadically; has three or fewer entries per week

Class Discussion	
4	Participates daily
3	Participates frequently
2	Participates infrequently
1	Participates rarely or never



Evaluation Rubrics

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Reader Response Worksheets	
4	The student has answered each question and has shown an insightful understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. All answers are supported by specific examples from the poetry. Responses reflect a thorough understanding of the elements of poetry. Answers are well written and free from mechanical errors.
3	The student has answered each question and has shown a good understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. Most answers are supported by specific examples from the poetry. Responses reflect a good understanding of the elements of poetry. Answers are well written, with few mechanical errors.
2	The student has attempted to answer each question but has shown only a vague understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. Some answers are supported by specific examples from the poetry. Responses reflect a fair understanding of the elements of poetry. Answers are somewhat unclear, with several mechanical errors.
1	The student has not attempted to answer each question and/or has shown very little understanding of the concepts addressed in the question. Few, if any, answers are supported by specific examples from the poetry. Responses reflect little or no understanding of the elements of poetry. Answers are unclear, with many mechanical errors.

To help you assess your students, a four-point rubric is provided for each assignment in this lesson. The rubric scores are weighted so that some activities count for more than others on the final grade. Complete the table below to calculate a final score.

Category	4-Point Rubric Score	Multiply by...	Weighted Scores
What Is Poetry? worksheet, wall chart		1	
Vocabulary quiz		1	
Seven-Minute Daily Writings		2	
Participation in class discussion		1	
Reflection Paper		3	
Reader Response worksheet on “Bato Loco”		3	
TOTAL SCORE			



Lesson Framework

What Will the Students Learn?

Standards

- Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW1)
- Students read and write for a variety of purposes. (RW2)
- Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing. (RW4)
- Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience. (RW6)
- Students know how to use and construct maps and other geographic tools to locate and derive information about people, places and environments. (G1)

Benchmarks

- Students will use comprehension strategies, such as prior knowledge; previewing; predicting; inferring; comparing and contrasting; rereading and self-monitoring; summarizing; identifying the author's purpose; determining the main idea and applying knowledge of foreshadowing, metaphor, other identified figures of speech.
- Students will write and speak for a variety of purposes, such as presenting analytical responses to literature and explaining concepts.
- Students will identify the purpose, perspective, and historical and cultural influence an author.
- Students will read literature that reflects the uniqueness, diversity, and integrity of the American experience.
- Students will develop knowledge of Earth to locate people, places and environments

Objectives

- Students will begin crafting their own poems incorporating various elements of poetry and integrating the central themes evident in the poems by Cervantes and Del Castillo.
- Students will review the entries from their 7-minute writing exercise and extract seed ideas for crafting their own poems.
- Students will expand vocabulary through the application of various elements of poetry introduced in previous lessons, particularly elements evident in the poems by Del Castillo and Cervantes.

Specifics: Extracting Words and Phrases for Poetry Writing

A common strategy for crafting poems is to have students extract words or sentences from their journals or from their 7-minute daily writing exercise that express a single concept, such as some of the central themes conveyed in the poems by Del Castillo and Cervantes. This activity will force students to focus on building or constructing small units of language. Lines do not have to be written in order or logically sequenced. Poetic thinking can move in various directions as once during the crafting of their poems.

Crafting Strategies

- Line breaks
- White space
- Imagery
- Comparisons
- Rhythm
- Repetition of Words
- Repetition of Phrases
- Repetition of Lines
- Analyzing



- Discussions
- Drawing conclusions
- Vocabulary building

Preliminary Lesson Preparation

Students will benefit from having you model how they can begin to use their 7-minute daily writing exercises, reflections from their journals and documentation on the *What Is Poetry?* chart in crafting their poems. There is a sample draft entry at the end of this lesson that illustrates the process students are to follow in isolating final lines and thoughts from their entries and begin the development of their poems.

Take time to introduce the vocabulary for this lesson and review the vocabulary and poetic elements introduced in previous lessons. Allow time for questions and discussion on the information compiled on the poetry chart over the four previous lessons as well as the journal entries in the student notebooks.

A thorough review at this point will be helpful for students to begin organizing their material for their first drafts of their poems.

Resources and Materials

For the Teacher

- *The Teachers & Writers Handbook of Poetic Forms*

For the Classroom

- Chart paper or butcher paper and markers for the large *What Is Poetry?* chart to be posted in the classroom

For the Students

Books

- *Writing Poetry*
- *Tales from a Michoacáno*
- *Infinite Divisions*
- *From the Corazon of a Bato Loco*

Other Materials

- The Reflections and 7-Minute Writing sections of the binder
- Vocabulary worksheets
- Individual *What Is Poetry?* charts
- A deck of blank cards for each student

Preteaching

Writing Poetry contains lessons and exercises on many aspects of writing poetry. Depending upon the needs of your students and their knowledge of and experience with these elements of poetry, teach, reteach or review lessons you wish to emphasize as students craft their poems.

Review and/or discuss central themes that emerged from the poems studied in class and ensure that students are able to synthesize the characteristics of the poetic elements introduced in previous lessons.



Activities

Begin each day with a 7-minute writing. Continue to ask students to add to their What Is Poetry? charts and record selected responses on the classroom chart.

Provide time for students to review their cumulative entries from their 7-minute writing exercises and “seed or lines” and reflections ideas for crafting their poems. Encourage students to read and reread entries shifting through the order of their entries until they find material that they may wish to use. Have students use a deck of blank cards on which they can list words or lines which can be later be used as associational “sparks” and then sorted into categories which will become permanent composition of their poems. Words and/or lines recorded on the cards are taken from their 7-minute entries or from any of the poems read in class or other entries from their journals. Modeling the drafting process from entries in their journals will greatly facilitate the identification of seed ideas and narrowing down the central focus material that will become evident in their poems.

Directions to Students

Time will be allotted to you for to review your cumulative entries from your daily 7-minute writing exercises for identifying “seed” ideas or lines that you may want to use that as you begin crafting your poems. Read and reread your entries shifting through each entry until you find material that you may wish to use. Construct a deck of cards listing words or lines that you think can be used as associational “sparks” to get you started and then sort the words and lines you think you will use into categories which can easily be accessed to use in your poems. Words and/or lines recorded on the cards are taken from your 7-minute writing entries or from any of the poems read in class. Your teacher will model how to identify words and/or lines from your entries and begin developing the first draft of your poem.

In *The Practice of Poetry*, have students read “Afterimages—The History of a Reflection” (page 99); “Subject and Sound—The Black Sheep” (page 101); and “Personal Universe Deck” (page 111). This will facilitate the narrowing of subject matter. The cards can then be assembled into a skeleton poem, rearranged, deleted or changed as the writer begins to construct his literary masterpiece.

Directions to Students

In The Practice of Poetry, read “Afterimages—The History of a Reflection” (page 99); “Subject and Sound—The Black Sheep” (page 101); and “Personal Universe Deck” (page 111). Facilitate the narrowing of subject matter. The cards can then be assembled into a skeleton poem, rearranged, deleted or changed as you begin to construct your literary masterpiece.

Review the elements of poetry studied in previous lessons (i.e. imagery, metaphors, personification) and ask students to incorporate these elements into their poems. Students may work with partners as they begin to label the experiences, thoughts, events that are especially vivid and will be instrumental in shaping their lines and establishing the cadence of their poems with all the associated images they wish to convey to their readers.

Directions to Students

Review the elements of poetry studied in previous lessons (i.e. imagery, metaphors, and personification) and decide which elements you will use in your poems. You may work with a partner as you begin to isolate the experiences, thoughts and events that are especially vivid and will be instrumental in shaping your lines and establishing the cadence of your poems with all the associated images you wish to convey to your readers.



Assign selected readings on sound, rhythm and line from *The Practice of Poetry* beginning on pages 173-212 to introduce the students to the process of hearing related sounds in their poems. The reading assignment will be helpful as students construct specific words and lines in their poems. The readings address vowel sounds, rhyme scheme, poetic elements, word patterning, syntax, free verse and line length.

You may wish to take your poems home and begin finalizing them. Read pages 173-212 from The Practice of Poetry textbook. The reading assignment will be helpful as you construct the specific words and lines in your poems. The readings address vowel sounds, rhyme scheme, poetic elements, word patterning, syntax, free verse and line length.

Assessment

A guide to assessing the students work is provided at the end of the lesson.



Crafting Poems from Seed Ideas Handout

Using entries in your reflection writings, worksheets, charts, and 7-minute writing exercise, begin the selection process of seed words, phrases and/or ideas that you will incorporate into your poem.

Read and reread your entries and think aloud as you develop your draft. Remember, the time spent in the reviewing of your entries will facilitate the final drafts as you get closer to the final product. Crafting or developing your poem may take more than one attempt.

The following is an example of the 'extraction' or 'lifting' process that you can follow as you begin crafting your poem. Notice how the writer has underlined potential seed words.

El Rio Cresido/The Swollen River

As a child in Los Ojos, New Mexico, I used to walk along the river looking for pretty rocks. maybe one day, I would stumble upon a rare find.

In early primavera/spring, with raging muddy water caressing the dark brown banks of El Rio, Los Brazos, my brother and I scoured the banks of the swollen river. Grounding ourselves in nuestra tierra nativa/our native soil, we thought surely today would be the day we would find gold or other valuable, ancient treasures among the ancient barancos/river banks of northern New Mexico.

He didn't want to come with me, but I bribed him and he succumbed to my persuasiveness.

As the sun set, we found ourselves miles from home. We carried in our pockets, rocks of all sizes and shapes. The excitement was unbearable as we found our way back through the chamisos/sage brush and fallen trees, certain that what we had in our pockets were treasures in the form of dull and ugly river rocks.

Unbeknownst to us, a search party of concerned neighbors and friends, along with my parents who feared the worst, was convened. Surely, we had fallen into the river and had been swept down river only to surface miles south of Los Ojos where the river would spit us out.

As we approached the wooden gates of our corral, we were sighted and the word went out that we were safe. I saw the silhouette of my father as he stepped out of the darkness whip in hand asking for no explanations.

As the rocks few and tumbled down the hill in a futile effort to shield our behinds from the whip, our treasures were swallowed by the blanket of water cress that grew thick and beautiful covering the ajito/ creek, spring below the hill.

Treasures never to be.



Following is a final poem based on the extraction process on the previous page.

El Rio Los Brazos/The River Los Brazos

*Raging muddy water in the primavera/spring
in Los Ojos, New Mexico.*

*Raging, muddy currents contained by the chocolate barancos/banks.
mi hermano/my brother and I scoured nuestra tierra nativa/our native land
On the hunt for gold or ancient treasures.*

*He didn't want to come
But I bribed him and he followed.
miles from home
The sun set and darkness fell.
We carried our treasures out of the chamisos/sage brush and fallen trees.*

*Fearing the worst, neighbors and friends searched and searched
Thinking that we would surface miles down the river
Spit out by the unforgiving river.
Never to be seen alive again
The fear was palatable.*

*We neared the old wooden gate of el corral/the corral.
Out of the darkness, he stepped out, whip in hand.
He asked for no explanations.*

*The rocks flew and tumbled down the hill
In the futile effort to shield our behinds
Our treasures were swallowed by the thick blanket of watercress
Covering the ojito/spring/creek below.*

Treasures never to be.

Quick Tips for Drafting a Poem from a Source Entry

- Review entries and underline word (s), lines that invoke a memory, image, emotion or five senses.
- Transfer the underlined components of your entry to your poem draft.
- Add to, delete, edit or rearrange lines as needed.
- Reread silently or aloud to yourself or a partner.
- Celebrate your writing. Pat yourself on the back!



Organizing Seed Ideas Worksheet

Using the Crafting Poems from Seed Ideas handout as a model, underline key words and phrases from the reflections, notes, and seven-minute writings in your binder.

Then, organize the lines or key words that will help you craft your poem. Put related ideas or images together.

Spark Ideas/Concepts

List ideas and/or concepts that you identified in your daily 7-minute writings.

Favorite Lines

List ideas and/or concepts that you identified in your reflections.

Key words

List ideas and/or concepts that you identified in your notes, worksheets, or other sources.



Evaluation Rubrics

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

What Is Poetry? Worksheet and Wall Chart	
4	The student has recorded at least four What Is Poetry? entries per week and has contributed at least three items to the classroom wall chart.
3	The student has recorded at least three What Is Poetry? entries per week and has contributed at least two items to the classroom wall chart.
2	The student has recorded at least two What Is Poetry? entries per week and has contributed at least one item to the classroom wall chart.
1	The student has recorded one What Is Poetry? entry per week and has contributed at least one items to the classroom wall chart.

Class Discussion		Seven-Minute Writings	
4	Participates daily	4	Student writes continuously; has five entries per week
3	Participates frequently	3	Student writes nearly continuously; has five entries per week
2	Participates infrequently	2	Student stops writing frequently; has four entries per week
1	Participates rarely or never	1	Student writes only sporadically; has three or fewer entries per week

Organizing Seed Ideas Worksheet	
4	Underlined words and phrases in previous writing are numerous, well chosen, and well organized on the worksheet.
3	Underlined words and phrases in previous writing are somewhat numerous, well chosen, and well organized on the worksheet.
2	Underlined words and phrases in previous writing are minimal, with little thought given to selection. Worksheet organization is lacking.
1	Underlined words and phrases in previous writing are few, with little or no thought given to selection. Worksheet organization is lacking.



Evaluation Rubrics

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Student Poetry Writing	
4	The student's poem is complete and well developed. The central themes reveal genuine insight into the poems studied in class. Excellent use of reflection writings, the What Is Poetry? chart, and the 7-minute writing class activity is evident. Poetic elements (e.g., imagery, metaphor, symbolism, personification) are used effectively and naturally.
3	The student's poem is complete and well developed. The central themes reveal some insight into the poems studied in class. Good use of reflection writings, the What Is Poetry? chart, and the 7-minute writing class activity is evident. Poetic elements (e.g., imagery, metaphor, symbolism, personification) are used reasonably effectively and naturally.
2	The student's poem is complete but somewhat underdeveloped. The central themes reveal some understanding of the poems studied in class. Some use of reflection writings, the What Is Poetry? chart, and the 7-minute writing class activity is evident. Poetic elements (e.g., imagery, metaphor, symbolism, personification) are used awkwardly or incorrectly.
1	The student's poem is incomplete and underdeveloped. The central themes reveal little, if any, understanding of the poems studied in class. Little or no use of reflection writings, the What Is Poetry? chart, and the 7-minute writing class activity is evident. Poetic elements (e.g., imagery, metaphor, symbolism, personification), if present, are used awkwardly or incorrectly.

To help you assess your students, a four-point rubric is provided for each assignment in this lesson. The rubric scores are weighted so that some activities count for more than others on the final grade. Complete the table below to calculate a final score.

Category	4-Point Rubric Score	Multiply by...	Weighted Scores
What Is Poetry? worksheet, wall chart		1	
Organizing Seed Ideas worksheet		1	
Seven-minute daily writings		2	
Participation in class discussion		1	
Final Poem		4	
TOTAL SCORE			



Lesson Framework

What Will the Students Learn?

Standards

- Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW1)
- Students read and write for a variety of purposes. (RW2)
- Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing. (RW4)
- Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience. (RW6)
- Students know how to use and construct maps and other geographic tools to locate and derive information about people, places, and environments. (G1)

Benchmarks

- Students will use comprehension strategies, such as prior knowledge; previewing; predicting; inferring; comparing and contrasting; rereading and self-monitoring; summarizing; identifying the author's purpose; determining the main idea and applying knowledge of foreshadowing, metaphor, other identified figures of speech.
- Students will write and speak for a variety of purposes, such as presenting analytical responses to literature and explaining concepts.
- Students will identify the purpose, perspective and historical and cultural influence an author.
- Students will read literature that reflects the uniqueness, diversity and integrity of the American experience.
- Students will develop knowledge of Earth to locate people, places and environments

Objectives

- Students will recite their poems before the class.
- Students will provide feedback to their peers on the oral readings using the Poetry Feedback form.

Preteaching

Use the Reading Poetry Guide found at the end of this lesson for preparing and rehearsing the oral reading with each student. Model reading poems to students demonstrating the elements listed below. Ask students to pay particular attention to voice inflection, facial expression, voice articulation, and pauses. Read the poem so that students only hear the poem for the first time before beginning a second reading for meaning and interpretation. Initiate a discussion as to how students can prepare for the final reading of their poems. Introduce the following aspects of voice to students emphasizing the guidelines.

- Voice inflection
- Facial Expression
- Articulation
- Eye contact



Activities

Have students rehearse the reading of their poems aloud a day before the final reading. Students may read in small groups or before the entire class. The audience will complete a feedback form for the reader and that will enable him/her to adjust, clarify and/or strengthen the presentation in preparation for the final reading. The goal in this exercise is to instill confidence in students when reading their poems.

Ask students to introduce themselves before reading their poems, labeling the strengths of the process that they found especially helpful (7-minute daily exercise, listening to the poetry readings, dissecting the poems of Castillo and Cervantes, reviewing the What Is Poetry? chart or how they were just pleasantly surprised with what emerged. Ask students to share what they are especially pleased with in their poem as well as their favorite line(s) in their poem and/or any comments they might like to make.

Assessment

A guide to assessing the students work is provided at the end of the lesson.



Guide for Reading Poetry

Review this guide in preparation for your final reading.

Everything about you conveys a message when you read your poetry. Your reading rate, expression, volume, posture, gestures, and facial expression should echo the meaning and tone of the words on the poem.

- Read the entire poem to yourself or a friend.
- Practice reading your poem the way you will read it in front of an audience
- Make eye contact with your audience
- Read loudly enough to be heard by your audience.
- Pause appropriately at the end of complete thoughts.
- Read at a pace that is not too slow or too fast.
- Read with expression



Peer Suggestion Sheet for Poetry Reading

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

A key indicator for being a good audience is to give the presenter your undivided attention and provide objective feedback on the following criteria on his/her first oral reading of their poem. Your feedback will be extremely valuable to the reader in their final reading.

1. Introduction

(Presenter introduced himself/herself and shared his/her writing process with audience.)

2. Eye Contact

(Presenter made eye contact with audience throughout the presentation.)

3. Use of voice

(Presenter was easily heard; varied volume and inflection appropriately; and spoke clearly.)

4. Appropriate pace

(Presenter used a speaking rate appropriate to the poem and varied pace appropriately.)

6. Expression

(Presenter's reading reflected the tone of the poem.)

8. Other helpful comments...



Evaluation Rubrics

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Peer Suggestion Sheet	
4	Criticism was constructive and specific. Weaknesses in reading the poetry were pointed out in a postivie manner with suggestions for improvement.
3	Criticism was constructive but somewhat general. Weaknesses in reading the poetry were pointed out in a postivie manner with some suggestions for improvement.
2	Criticism was somewhat negative and/or general. Weaknesses in reading the poetry were pointed out in a somewhat negative manner with few suggestions for improvement.
1	Criticism was negative. Weaknesses in reading the poetry were pointed out in a negative manner with few or no suggestions for improvement.
Oral Reading	
4	The student maintained excellent eye contact throughout the presentation. Vocal inflection, feeling, posture, reading rate, posture, gestures, and general expression effectively interpreted the meaning of the poem.
3	The student maintained good eye contact throughout the presentation. Vocal inflection, feeling, posture, reading rate, posture, gestures, and general expression fairly effectively interpreted the meaning of the poem.
2	The student maintained some eye contact throughout the presentation. Vocal inflection, feeling, posture, reading rate, posture, gestures, and general expression did not always effectively interpret the meaning of the poem.
1	The student maintained little or no eye contact throughout the presentation. Vocal inflection, feeling, posture, reading rate, posture, gestures, and general expression did not effectively the meaning of the poem.

To help you assess your students, a four-point rubric is provided for each assignment in this lesson. The rubric scores are weighted so that some activities count for more than others on the final grade. Complete the table below to calculate a final score.

Category	4-Point Rubric Score	Multiply by...	Weighted Scores
Peer Suggestion Sheet		2	
Oral Reading		4	
TOTAL SCORE			



Unit Assessment Final Essay

In a well-written essay, please reflect on the poetry you have studied in *Chicano Identity in the Poetry of Lorna Dee Cervantes and Ramon Del Castillo*. When considering the topics for this essay, also consider if poetry is therapeutic for the writer/reader, self reflective or inspirational. You may select other poems by Lorna De Cervantes in *Infinite Divisions: An Anthology of Chicana Literature* and Ramon Del Castillo in *From the Corazon of a Bato Loco* or *Tales from a Michoacáno* in addition to or in place of the poetry studied in class.

Below are suggested topics for your final essay you may wish to consider when selecting your topic.

- Language Barriers
- Immigration
- La Chicana
- Recurring Imagery in Chicano Poetry
- Aztlán (land and identity)
- Mestizo (identity)
- Metaphor in Chicano Poetry

Final Essay Rubric	
4	The essay is an in-depth reflection on the poetry of Cervantes and Del Castillo, revealing excellent insight into the poetry and what it has to say about the topic. The student has extrapolated themes in the poems to show how they connect to personal or societal themes. The essay is well written and free from mechanical errors.
3	The essay is a fairly in-depth reflection on the poetry of Cervantes and Del Castillo, revealing good insight into the poetry and what it has to say about the topic. The student has attempted to extrapolate themes in the poems to show how they connect to personal or societal themes. The essay is well written and contains few mechanical errors.
2	The essay is a somewhat superficial reflection on the poetry of Cervantes and Del Castillo, revealing some understanding of the poetry and what it has to say about the topic. The student has not successfully extrapolated themes in the poems to show how they connect to personal or societal themes. The essay is fairly well written, but mechanical errors significantly weaken its quality.
1	The essay is a superficial reflection on the poetry of Cervantes and Del Castillo, revealing little or no understanding of or insight into the poetry and what it has to say about the topic. The student has not successfully extrapolated themes in the poems to show how they connect to personal or societal themes. The essay is not well written, but mechanical errors significantly weaken its quality.



Lisa Simms, Author of *Chicano Identity in the Poetry of Lorna Dee Cervantes and Ramon Del Casillo*

Lisa was born in Pueblo, Colorado and currently lives in Denver. She graduated with her bachelor's degree and teaching certification from Colorado State University and has been teaching for six years. Prior to working for Denver Public Schools Lisa worked at Escuela Tlatelolco Centro de Estudios, an experience that enriched her commitment to incorporating culture and learning into her teaching. Lisa is also a musician and singer and believes that integrating the arts into education is a crucial factor in engaging students in their learning. She has been teaching in the ELA (English Language Acquisition) program for two years, and she is particularly interested in finding ways to meet the unique needs of ESL students. Lisa plans to travel extensively throughout Latin America and attend school in Mexico to enhance her own fluency in Spanish, believing that being bilingual is an asset not only for her students and their families, but for her own growth as a lifelong learner and a community advocate. She is currently developing her own publishing company called *Luna Llana Publications*, publishing poetry by local poets as well as various community and cultural publications. For more information please contact: simmslis@yahoo.com

Author's commentary: "I chose the poem, "Flowers from the Same Garden" from Castillo's *Tales from a Michoacano* for this unit because it is of particular significance to me as a teacher of Mexican immigrant children who are in the English Language Acquisition (ELA) program in the Denver Public Schools. As I've walked the halls with my students in the middle school where I teach, I have sensed and been witness to the nuances of intolerance between ELA students and mainstream students, the arrows of racist remarks cast in both directions. In a school where the percentage of Spanish surnamed students is approximately 90% it is understandable why there is a need for alarm."



Ramon Del Castillo, Poet

A Colorado native, Ramon Del Castillo is a recognized leader in Denver's Latino community in the fields of writing; mental health; education; and community and economic development. Long a champion of civil rights issues locally and throughout the United States, Dr. Castillo currently writes a column about the plight of persons of color and public policies for *El Semanario*

Dr. Del Castillo holds a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Northern Colorado and master's and doctorate degrees from the University of Colorado at Denver. He chairs the master's program in nonprofit management at Regis University and is an adjunct professor in the Chicana and Chicano Studies Department at Metropolitan State College in Denver.

A significant amount of Dr. Del Castillo's professional experience is centered both on a local and national level in the Colorado Department of Substance Abuse Services, the State Mental Health Department, and the Department of Justice. He is a popular speaker on diversity issues.

Dr. Castillo has received many awards for his work, including the Martin Luther King Humanitarian Award, *El Semanario's* Journalist Award for Writing and Literary Mentorship, and the Richard T. Castro Memorial Community Service Award.



Lorna Dee Cervantes, Poet

Lorna Dee Cervantes was born in 1954 in San Francisco's Mission district, of Native American and Mexican ancestry. Lorna Dee Cervantes first discovered Shakespeare and the English Romantic poets in the houses that her mother cleaned. She began writing poetry when she was eight. By the time she was twenty, her poems were published in Mexican and American newspapers and literary reviews. For the past twenty-five years, she has endeavored to put into language the once wordless histories of Mexican-Americans and especially Chicanas. In 1974, she taught herself printing and founded a literary journal and a press - both called Mango - to publish Chicano and Chicana writers. Four years later, at age twenty-four, she received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Her first book *Emplumada* (1981, combining the Spanish words for "feathered" and "pen flourish") won the 1982 American Book Award. In it, she chronicles her emergence from a young girl constrained by gender, class, and a complex relationship to her heritage into a confident Chicana poet embracing her own voice and reality. Her second book, *From The Cables of Genocide: Poems on Love and Hunger* (1991), a complex meditation on the nature of love, oppression, and resistance, won both the Paterson Poetry Prize and the Latino Literature Prize. In 1995 she received the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund Writers Award, she lives in Boulder, Colorado, where she is Associate Professor at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

She is also co-editor of *Red Dirt*, a cross-cultural poetry journal and her work has been included in many anthologies including *Unsettling America: An Anthology of Contemporary Multicultural Poetry* (eds. Maria Mazziotti Gillan and Jennifer Gillan, 1994), *No More Masks! An Anthology of Twentieth-Century Women Poets* (ed. Florence Howe, 1993) and *After Aztlán: Latino Poets of the Nineties* (ed. Ray Gonzalez, 1992).



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