

MILWAUKEE'S CULTURAL CONNECT: MEXICAN AMERICANS

Teacher Guide

This program includes (1) your input (which can be modified any way you wish), (2) a video (divided into three parts) that describes the Milwaukee Mexican experience presented by a Latino anthropologist, (3) talking points with images you can print out from this site, (4) a game of jeopardy to help students retain information, and (5) a pre-/post-test survey to evaluate the program.

Small prizes may be offered. Or you might print out the cultural FACEBALL CARDS on this site as prizes.

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

1. Explain that students will be learning about the practices and history of Mexican Americans
2. Show students where Mexico is located on a worldwide map
3. Explain the concept of “culture” to the students

Culture

Cultural traits are any kinds of behaviors or ideas or beliefs that are SHARED by a group—meaning that a high percentage of the people practice these behaviors or beliefs. The cultural traits develop because people are adapting or adjusting to something in their environment. For example, if the group lives in an area where people are at war all the time, they might become more of a warrior society themselves to protect their group, and they might then believe that the finest people are those who are good fighters. If a group is discriminated against, they might learn that their only way to survive is to really stick together as a group, as they can't rely on help from the outside.

4. Pass out Mexican timeline (if desired)
5. Conduct the pre-test survey (if desired)
6. Have students count off to divide into four groups (numbered one, two, three, four) and pick group leaders, for later discussions and game

PART TWO: EXPLAIN HOW THE VIDEO WILL WORK

1. Tell students that the cultural anthropologist is a Milwaukee Latino
2. Tell them they will also see excerpts from a documentary where local Mexican Americans discuss their culture in their own words
3. Tell them that parts of the video will be covered later in discussions and a game of Jeopardy—hence they might want to take notes
4. The video will be paused once so students can take part in discussions
5. Explain that you will write questions on the board for discussion later when the video is paused

PART THREE: VIDEO (FIRST SECTION)

While the video is on, write these questions (and any others you deem important) on the board:

1. Given what you are learning about Mexican American history, what kinds of cultural traits do you think the Mexican Americans would develop to help them survive and/or do well? What helped keep them together while they were on the move, and what helped them thrive?

2. What do the Mexican Americans have in common with other groups you know about? Explain the commonalities.

The video narrator will tell you when to pause the video

PART FOUR: STUDENTS RESPOND TO QUESTIONS

1. In their groups, students should come up with lists of cultural traits the Mexican Americans might have developed to help them survive and do well.
2. In their groups, students should come up with lists of other cultural groups that are similar to the Mexican Americans, and the commonalities.
3. Group leaders should report out, then hand in the lists with their group numbers on sheets of paper

PART FIVE: VIDEO (SECOND SECTION)

While this section is aired, you can tabulate the best responses on the lists, for later prizes, if applicable.

Here you might give out Facebook Cards (or some other prizes) to the students and may select some topic in the previous section of the video to discuss. Some might be the following:

PART SIX: TALKING POINTS

1. Do you remember the reference to the Day of the Dead?

You might first ask what the students already know about this.

. Day of the Dead (*Día de Muertos* or *Día de los Muertos*) (you can access images on this site)

Day of the Dead is celebrated most often in Mexico, but is also a public holiday in many other Latin countries and the Philippines. Asian, Irish, and African cultures have similar holidays. The Mexican holiday has ancient Aztec roots. It is a day to remember the dead joyfully and celebrate a new stage of life. People typically erect small altars to remember their dead, with photos, food, and other items.

1. One of Milwaukee's most important Latino spots is the United Community Center or UCC.

You might first ask what the students already know about this.

United Community Center (you can access images on this site)

The UCC is the largest and most complex Latino center outside of Los Angeles in the United States. It includes housing, a school, a restaurant, a gymnasium and fitness areas, a shrine, halls of photos, a Latino art gallery, and scores of services to the community. The external murals illustrate the history of Latinos in Milwaukee.

PART SEVEN: VIDEO (LAST SECTION)

PART EIGHT: GAME/EVALUATION

1. Engage the four groups in the game of Jeopardy, which can be accessed on this site (prizes or Facebook cards may be handed out, if desired).
2. Conduct the post-test survey (if desired), which can be accessed on this site.