



# **Our Stories, Our Families, Our Culture**

Goals 2000 - Partnerships for  
Educating Colorado Students

In Partnership with the **Denver Public Schools**  
and the **Metropolitan State College of Denver**

El Alma de la Raza Project



# **Our Stories, Our Families, Our Culture**

**By Joanna Vincenti**

**Grades 7-9**

**Implementation Time  
for Study Unit: 6 weeks**

**Goals 2000 - Partnerships for  
Educating Colorado Students  
El Alma de la Raza Curriculum  
and Teacher Training Project**

**Loyola A. Martinez, Project Director**

**El Alma de la Raza Series**

# Our Stories, Our Families, Our Culture

## Unit Concepts

- Our lives are influenced by our families and their stories.
- Folk tales relate to families and values.
- Mexican-American history in the Southwest: where did our families come from?
- Art influenced by families and their histories.

## Standards Addressed by This Unit

### Reading and Writing

Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW1)

Students write and speak using formal grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. (RW3)

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)

### History

Students understand the chronological organization of history and know how to organize events and people into major eras to identify and explain historical relationships. (H1)

Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time. (H3)

### Geography

Students know how to use and construct maps and other geographic tools to locate and derive information about people, places, and environments. (G1)

Students apply knowledge of people, places, and environments to understand the past and present and to plan for the future. (G6)

### Art

Students recognize and use the visual arts as a form of communication. (A1)

Students know and apply visual arts materials, tools, techniques, and processes. (A3)

Students relate the visual arts to various historical and cultural traditions. (A4)

## Introduction

The purpose of this unit is for the students to compare the lives and wisdom of elders with the lives and wisdom of the young. The students will be looking at their heritage and observing how the values of the past influence their lives and cultures today. Families and tradition in Mexican-American culture are very strong. Individual families are unique in the stories that are told and the values that are passed down through the generations. Each family is a thread that ties different stories together. Many stories are about parents and children and the values that are taught to children by the family. These stories also show the importance of family in a child's life. The use of art and the genealogy of individual families, depicted in family trees, illustrate the importance of these family ties.

## Implementation Guidelines

It is recommended that this unit be taught in seventh, eighth, or ninth grade language arts or social studies classes. Each lesson can be broken down into smaller parts, depending on the length of the class period. Each lesson is designed to last from one to two weeks depending on your use of materials provided. Prior to teaching this unit, the teacher should preview writing skills with students using concepts from the *Read/Write Connection* or other writing source. The teacher should have some familiarity with the tales, legends, and history of the Southwest related to Mexican-American culture.

## Instructional Materials and Resources

The following books and resources are required for implementing this unit.

*Hispanic, Female and Young: An Anthology*, edited by Phyllis Tashuk

*Listen, A Story Comes (Escucha, que viene un cuento)* by Teresa Pijoan

*Mexican Ghost Tales of the Southwest: Stories and Illustrations* by Alfred and Kat Avila

*Cuentos from My Childhood: Legends and Folktales of Northern New Mexico* by Paulette Atencio

*Watch Out for Clever Women!* by Joe Hayes

*Traditional Crafts from Mexico and Central America* by Florence Temko (or any book featuring the crafts listed in the lesson)

*The Latino Experience in United States History*

## Lesson Summary

- Lesson 1      **South to North: Movement of the People**  
The immigration of peoples from Mexico to the southwestern United States has had a vast influence on the culture and traditions of the Southwest. Begin researching family history and migration. Read folktales about families. Optional field trip—a guided tour of the La Gente exhibit at the Colorado History Museum in Denver.
- Lesson 2      **A Look at Our Lives**  
Our lives are influenced by the people who helped raise us. A look at a Hispanic Grandmother’s Trunk (also from the Colorado History Museum), interview with a parent or grandparent about their life and the stories they remember, and the beginnings of student’s own story. Read folktales about families. The students put together their own “trunk.”
- Lesson 3      **Cuentos of the Family**  
Readings of different *cuentos* that discuss families and their values as well as folktales and myths. Begin to research the art that has been passed down through the family. Students draw illustrations of their favorite story. Traditional craft projects from Mexico and Latin America.
- Lesson 4      **Our Own Story**  
Students finish writing/proofreading their own life story. Comparison of their lives and values with those of the person interviewed. Illustration of stories with drawings or photos if possible. Traditional craft projects from Mexico and Latin America.

# Lesson 1: From South to North

## What will the students be learning?

### STANDARD(S)

Students understand the chronological organization of history and know how to organize events and people into major eras to identify and explain historical relationships. (H1)

Students know how to use and construct maps and other geographic tools to locate and derive information about people, places, and environments. (G1)

Students understand how economic, political, cultural, and social processes interact to shape patterns of human populations, interdependence, cooperation, and conflict. (G4)

Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW1)

### BENCHMARK(S)

Students know the general chronological order of events and people in history.

Students use chronology to organize historical events and people.

Students use chronology to present historical events and people.

Students know how to use maps and other geographic tools to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.

Students know the characteristics, location, distribution, and migration of human populations.

Students use comprehension strategies.

Students adjust reading strategies for a variety of purposes.

### OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will be able to chart on a timeline the movement of Spanish-speaking peoples into the United States.

Students will trace their family's genealogy and migration.

Students will read and discuss folktales about family.

## What will be done to help students learn this?

### INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Teacher-directed questioning

Sequence of events/timeline

Direct student interaction

### ACTIVITIES

While viewing the blank timeline on the overhead, fill in those events showing in chronological order the movement of Spanish-speaking people from south to north. Teacher will present information as students fill in their own copies of the Movement of the People Timeline. A key is provided for teacher use. After finishing the timeline, fill in a map of Mexico, Central America, and South America; map the movement of people based on the events in the timeline.

Fill in the Family Tree worksheet, including dates and places of birth. Chart on the map the migration of your family.

## Lesson 1 (cont.)

Read as a class and discuss the following excerpts from *Hispanic, Female and Young*, edited by Phyllis Tashuk:

El Olvido	p. 19
Losing Your Culture	p. 29
Interviewing My Mom	p. 31
Getting to Know My Mom	p. 20
Inequalities	p. 139

This is a preview activity for the interview with a grandmother or other elder. Fill out a Literature Log for each story. Keep the logs in a notebook along with any other work for this unit. As you read each story, keep a two-column journal with quotes from the story on left and your thoughts about the quote on the right. These quotes can be any excerpts from the story. Create a portfolio to hold everything completed in this unit; the portfolio will be submitted for final grade.

### VOCABULARY

*cuentos*                      Stories, folktales

### RESOURCES/MATERIALS

*Hispanic, Female and Young*, edited by Phyllis Tashuk  
maps of Mexico, Central America, and South America  
notebook for journaling and papers  
Movement of the People Timeline and Key  
Family Tree  
Literature Log

### ASSESSMENT

Students will be able to show the movement of Hispanic peoples based on the information given. Discussion of stories as class; literature logs completed. Genealogy completed. Two-column journal completed.

## Movement of the People Timeline Key

A.D. 300–900	Maya society reaches peak
1095	Crusades begin in Europe
1300	Anasazi scatter to other parts of the Southwest
<b>1400s</b>	
1492	Columbus reaches Americas (San Salvador)
1496	Santo Domingo established on Hispaniola
<b>1500s</b>	
1504	Cortés lands in Hispaniola
1505	First Africans sent by Spain as slaves to Hispaniola
1508	Juan Ponce de León controls Puerto Rico
1513	Juan Ponce de León lands in Florida
1519	Cortés claims Yucatán Peninsula for Spain
1519–21	Cortés conquers Aztecs
1524	Pedro de Alvarado explores Yucatán Peninsula Franciscans arrive in Veracruz
1540–42	Francisco Coronado explores what is today the U.S. Southwest
1588	English defeat the Spanish Armada
1598	Sir Francis Drake attacks San Juan
<b>1600s</b>	
1609–10	Santa Fe, New Mexico established by Spain; second oldest Spanish town in present-day U.S.
1630s	Many Spaniards and mestizos lived and worked on ranchos; 25 missions built along Native American trails to pueblos; El Camino Real, 1,500-mile trade route to Mexico City
1680	Pope's revolt drives the Spanish from New Mexico
1693	Diego de Vargas retakes Santa Fe for Spain
<b>1700s</b>	
1718	Alamo established at San Antonio, Texas
1769	Gaspar de Portola has first mission in California built at San Diego
1776	Declaration of Independence signed; American Revolution begins Juan de Batista de Anza establishes mission at San Francisco
1779	Spain declares war on Great Britain
1783	Treaty of Paris signed

## Movement of the People Timeline Key (cont.)

1784	Spain regains control of east and west Florida
1789	Spain secretly returns Louisiana to the French
end of 1700s	Missions built all along the coast of California by this time
<b>1800s</b>	
1803	Louisiana Purchase
1810–21	Mexican Revolution
1819	Republic of Gran Colombia established (South America)
1821	Mexico wins independence
1825	Stephen Austin leads 300 families from U.S. to Texas through a land grant approved by Mexico
1829	Mexico abolishes slavery
1830–34	Mexico bans immigration of Anglos to Texas
1833	Austin petitions Mexican government for Texas statehood
1834	Santa Ana imposes strong central government on Mexico
1835	Texan army defeats Mexican army at Alamo
1836	Mexican army kills Texan defense of Alamo Texas declares independence Battle of San Jacinto ends war in Texas
1845	U.S. annexes Texas
1846	U.S.–Mexican War
1848	U.S. and Mexico sign the Treaty of Guadalupe Hildago; gold discovered in California nine days after signing
1850	California becomes a state
1851	Land Act of 1851
1853	Gadsen Purchase
1854	U.S. surveys land in New Mexico
1861–65	Civil War between the North and South
1898	Cuban–Spanish–American War U.S. troops land in Cuba
<b>1900s</b>	
1910–20	Thousands of Mexicans immigrate to U.S.
1910	Mexican Revolution begins
1914	World War I begins
1917	U.S. enters WWI; thousands of Latinos in U.S. Army Jones Act makes Puerto Ricans eligible for U.S. draft

## Movement of the People Timeline Key (cont.)

1918	Mexicans and Mexican-Americans make up largest group of agricultural workers in California's Imperial Valley World War I ends
1924	Immigration Act set quotas on immigration from outside the Western Hemisphere
1925	Los Angeles has the largest population of Mexicans outside of Mexico City Large barrios in El Paso and San Antonio, Texas
1929	The Great Depression
1933	New Deal starts
1939	World War II starts in Europe
1941	Japan bombs Pearl Harbor; U.S. enters World War II
1942	Mexico joins the Allies
1943	Zoot-Suit Riots in Los Angeles
1945	World War II ends
1940s–70s	A million Puerto Ricans relocate to the U.S. mainland
1948–76	Colombian immigration due to "La Violencia"
1959–73	Thousands of Cubans leave Cuba (10% of Cuba's 6 million people)
1961	Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba
1962	Cuban Missile Crisis
1965	The Camarioca boat lift allows Cubans to join family members in U.S.
1973	Political coups in Uruguay and Chile send immigrants to U.S.
1976–	Argentineans flee war
1980s	Huge numbers of immigrants from Mexico, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Colombia, and Asia
1980–90	Latino population rises 30%
1985	Immigration from South America jumps 40%
1986	Congress pushes Immigration Reform Act
1990	Mexican-Americans make up 47.6% of San Antonio's population 4.4 million Spanish-speaking people in Los Angeles U.S. builds steel fence west of El Paso, Texas, to stop immigration

## Movement of the People Timeline

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1504	
	First Africans sent by Spain as slaves to Hispaniola
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1519	Cortés claims Yucatán Peninsula for Spain
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1588	English defeat the Spanish Armada
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<b>1600s</b>	
	Santa Fe, New Mexico established by Spain; second oldest Spanish town in present-day U.S.
1630s	
1680	Pope's revolt drives the Spanish from New Mexico Diego de Vargas retakes Santa Fe for Spain
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1962	Cuban Missile Crisis The Camarioca boat lift allows Cubans to join family members in U.S.
1973	
1976–	Argentineans flee war Huge numbers of immigrants from Mexico, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Colombia, and Asia
1980–90	
1985	Immigration from South America jumps 40%
1986	
	Mexican-Americans make up 47.6% of San Antonio's population U.S. builds steel fence west of El Paso, Texas, to stop immigration

# Family Tree

<p>Great-grandfather</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">m.</p>	<p>Great-grandfather</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">m.</p>	<p>Great-grandfather</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">m.</p>	<p>Great-grandfather</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">m.</p>
<p>Great-grandmother</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>Great-grandmother</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>Great-grandmother</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>Great-grandmother</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>
<p>Grandfather</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	m.	<p>Grandmother</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>Grandfather</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>
<p>Father</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>Mother</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>		
<p>Sibling</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>Spouse _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Children</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>Myself</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>Spouse _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Children</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>Sibling</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>Spouse _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Children</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>Sibling</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>Spouse _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Children</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>Born at _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>

# Literature Log

Name:

Date:

Story:

After finishing the story:

A. Summarize story (write one paragraph on separate piece of paper in correct format).

B. Answer any five questions in one or more paragraphs.

1. Choose a character from the story and tell how you are like or not like that character and why (on separate piece of paper).
2. I was surprised \_\_\_\_\_ .
3. I know the feeling \_\_\_\_\_ .
4. I can't really understand \_\_\_\_\_ .
5. I realized \_\_\_\_\_ .
6. I wonder why \_\_\_\_\_ .
7. I think \_\_\_\_\_ .
8. I'm not sure \_\_\_\_\_ .
9. I understand \_\_\_\_\_ .
10. If I were \_\_\_\_\_ .
11. My grandmother would have \_\_\_\_\_ .
12. If I could change one thing about the story, it would be \_\_\_\_\_ .
13. Pick one scene from the story and describe it in your own words (on separate piece of paper).
14. I feel \_\_\_\_\_ .

## Lesson 2: A Look at Our Lives

### What will students be learning?

#### STANDARD(S)

Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW1)

Students write and speak using formal grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. (RW3)

Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience. (RW6)

Students apply knowledge of people, places, and environments to understand the past and present and to plan for the future. (G6)

#### BENCHMARK(S)

Students know how to apply geography to understand the past.

Students know how to apply geography to understand the present and plan for the future.

Students use comprehension strategies.

Students recognize, understand, and use formal grammar in speaking and writing.

Students apply formal usage to speaking and writing.

Students use correct sentence structure in writing.

Students demonstrate correct punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Students recognize and know when it is appropriate to use dialectical, idiomatic, and colloquial language, including awareness and appreciation of cultural and dialectic variance.

Students read literature to understand places, people, events, and vocabulary, both familiar and unfamiliar.

#### OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will discuss characteristics of a family and the kinds of values that are present in families.

Students will focus on the life of their grandmother or other elder, learning about that person's history.

Students will be aware that family plays an important role in the history of a people and look at some of the issues surrounding families.

Students will read and discuss folktales about family values and culture.

### What will be done to help students learn this?

#### INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Questioning

Teacher-directed discussion

Read alouds

Analysis

Compare/contrast

Retelling

Synthesizing

Direct interaction

Venn Diagram

## Lesson 2 (cont.)

### PRELIMINARY LESSON PREPARATION

Teacher should review What Is A Family?: Teacher Guidesheet.

### ACTIVITIES

With teacher, begin a discussion of our families and their values. As a class, view the Hispanic Grandmother's Trunk from the Colorado Museum of History and answer questions posed by teacher. Interview your grandmother (or other elder) using the Grandmother Interview format. Synthesize into essay form.

Begin to write the story of your life, using correct grammar and format.

Read folktales about the strength of women. Fill out a literature log for each of the following stories from the book *Watch Out for Clever Women!*: "That Will Teach You"; "The Day It Snowed Tortillas"; "Watch Out!" Participate in an oral discussion with the class on the strength of women. Continue to keep a two-column journal on all stories read.

Also read "The Daughter-in-Law," p. 57, from *Cuentos from My Childhood*; "The Magic Potion," p. 144, from *Listen, A Story Comes*; and "A Man So Special," p. 77, and "Elena," p. 69, from *Hispanic, Female and Young*. Using a Venn Diagram, compare the main characters in "The Daughter-in-Law" and "The Magic Potion." Are there any people in your family whom the characters in the two stories from *Hispanic, Female and Young* remind you of? If so, who and why? Record answers in your journal.

Make your own trunk. What items that are meaningful to you would you put in it?

Rewrite, using your own words, the first story you remember hearing (using correct grammar and sentence structure).

### VOCABULARY

<i>dicho</i>	Proverb
extended family	Family including aunts, uncles, etc.
nuclear family	Parents, children only
<i>cuento</i>	Folktale, story

### RESOURCES/MATERIALS

Hispanic Grandmother's Trunk; Colorado History Museum (\$5)

*Watch Out for Clever Women!* by Joe Hayes

*Cuentos from My Childhood: Legends and Folktales of Northern New Mexico* by Paulette Atencio

*Hispanic, Female and Young: An Anthology*, edited by Phyllis Tashuk

*Listen, A Story Comes (Escucha, que viene un cuento)* by Teresa Pijoan

Writing format from *Read/Write Connection* by Maureen Auman

Grandmother Interview

What is a Family?: Teacher Guide Sheet

## Lesson 2 (cont.)

### ASSESSMENT

Teacher-based evaluation of interview project

Employment of compare/contrast strategy as per teacher evaluation

Literature logs

Two-column journals

# Grandmother Interview

## Possible Questions: guidelines

### CHILDHOOD

- what was going on in the world?
- school experiences
- responsibilities
- typical day
- living conditions, place of birth
- family members, friends
- favorite teacher; why?
- hobbies
- favorite music, food, dance, art
- dreams

### TEENAGE YEARS

- first date
- most embarrassing moment
- friends
- what was the world like?
- typical day
- favorite school
- subjects
- interests
- first job
- social life
- responsibilities
- fears & dreams
- learning to drive
- values
- most important thing learned

### ADULTHOOD

- jobs
- marriage
- family
- hobbies
- favorite food, music, crafts
- responsibilities
- view of the world
- values
- favorite story (retold by grandchild)
- great joy & sorrow
- how has the world changed?
- good & bad

## Questions to ask yourself

Why do I admire this person?

What values does she have that I want to have?

What struggles did she have that made her what she is today?

## Extra credit

Put completed essay into a scrapbook. (This would be a wonderful gift for a grandchild).

## My Story

Using the same guidelines, ask yourself the same questions about your childhood and teenage years. This information will be used to write your story using correct grammar and writing format. When you have finished taking notes on your life, begin a rough draft of your story.

# What Is a Family?

## Teacher Guide Sheet

Discuss these questions in class. Students can record information in journal.

1. Brainstorm about the definition of a family.
2. What does a family provide?
3. Discuss changes in the families in the past 50 years
  - late '40s, early '50s: **extended family**
  - late '50s, early '60s: people began to move around the country in search of jobs, money or educational opportunities; **nuclear families**
  - '70s-'90s: single parent or blended families due to increased number of divorces and remarrying

Changes in Latino families:

- maintained respect for extended families
  - single parents often go back to parents for help in raising children
  - families that have moved away often go “home” for vacations every year to visit family
  - have godparents that help raise children
4. How many students live in extended families? Whom do they consist of?
  5. Define values and discuss:
    - *Dicho* (a Spanish proverb): *Los dichos de los viejitos son evagelios chiquitos.*  
Translation: The sayings of the elders are like gospels; much can be learned by listening to our elders. Discuss whether this is true or false. How do you follow this saying in your life?
    - What are some of the values that have been passed down in your families?
    - Do you believe in those values? Do you express them? Do you follow them? Do you want them to be passed on to your children?
  6. What do we have in common with our family members?  
*De tal palo, tal astilla.*  
Translation: a chip off the old block (this saying is popular in both Spanish and English)
    - How are we like our parents?
    - Do you think you would act like your parents when raising children?
    - Write down things you agree and disagree with your parents about. Keep this list to put in your own trunk.

## Lesson 3: Cuentos of the Family

### What will students be learning?

#### STANDARD(S)

Students recognize and use the visual arts as a form of communication. (A1)

Students know and apply visual arts materials, tools, techniques, and processes. (A3)

Students relate the visual arts to various historical and cultural traditions. (A4)

Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW1)

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)

#### BENCHMARK(S)

Students will use comprehension strategies.

Students will use information from their reading to increase vocabulary and language usage.

Students will make predictions, analyze, draw conclusions, and discriminate between fact and opinion in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

Students will identify the purpose, perspective, and historical and cultural influences of a speaker, author, or director.

Students will read literature that reflects the uniqueness, diversity, and integrity of the American experience.

Students will read literature to investigate common issues and interests in relation to self and others.

#### OBJECTIVE(S)

Students will read and compare various cuentos (stories).

Students will learn about and begin to make various forms of Hispanic folk art.

Students will illustrate a scene from their favorite story.

### What will be done to help students learn this?

#### INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Teacher-directed questioning

Compare/contrast

Paired reading

#### ACTIVITIES

Read the following cuentos having to do with values and discuss as a class:

“Don Samuels,” p. 69, “The Frog,” p. 62, and “The Beggar,” p. 60, from *Cuentos from My Childhood*; “Froth & Lace,” p. 42, from *Listen, A Story Comes*, and “The Pepper Tree,” p. 35, “La Llorona,” p. 11, “La Llorona of the Moon,” p. 161, “The Whirlwind,” p. 137, and “The Bad Boy,” p. 19, from *Mexican Ghost Tales of the Southwest*. Use the Cuento Comparison chart to compare these stories. What do all these stories have in common? What are the differences? What are the values presented in each story? Are any of these values emphasized in your family? Continue to use your two-column journal for any interesting quotes from the stories you read.

### Lesson 3 (cont.)

Begin making traditional crafts, such as Tree of Life or Otomi paper figures. Discuss origin, as a class, of all crafts presented.

Continue working on your story.

#### RESOURCES

*Cuentos from My Childhood: Legends and Folktales of Northern New Mexico* by Paulette Atencio

*Listen, A Story Comes (Escucha, que viene un cuento)* by Teresa Pijoan

*Mexican Ghost Tales of the Southwest: Stories and Illustrations* by Alfred and Kat Avila

Cuentos Comparison chart

*Traditional Crafts from Mexico and Central America* by Florence Temko

#### ASSESSMENT

Informal assessment: teacher evaluation of rough draft. Participation in craft project. Two-column journal. Cuento Comparison chart .

# Cuento Comparison

Story Title	Problem	Solution	Value

## Lesson 4: Our Own Story

### What will students be learning?

#### STANDARDS

Students write and speak using formal grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling. (RW3)

Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience. (RW6)

Students recognize and use the visual arts as a form of communication. (A1)

Students know and apply visual arts materials, tools, techniques, and processes. (A3)

Students relate the visual arts to various historical and cultural traditions. (A4)

Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time. (H3)

#### BENCHMARKS

Students recognize, understand, and use formal grammar in speaking and writing.

Students apply formal usage in speaking and writing.

Students use correct sentence structure in writing.

Students demonstrate correct punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Students read literature to investigate common issues and interests in relation to self and others.

Students know how various societies have been affected by contact and exchanges among diverse peoples.

#### OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to write their story using correct grammar and format.

Students will compare their life with that of their grandmother using compare/contrast format.

Students will research folk art and their own families.

#### ACTIVITIES

Finish writing/proofreading your story about your life, using correct grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, and format. Illustrate story with photos or drawings. Put into scrapbook format. Research art projects that are traditional in your family. Make traditional crafts, such tin ornaments, *papel picado*, etc. Compare your own story with that of your grandmother or whoever was interviewed. Use Venn Diagram for comparison.

Read “A Day in the Life of Me,” p. 107, from *Hispanic, Female and Young* for another perspective on biography. Does this method of writing help you with your biography?

Read “Christmas Was a Time of Plenty,” p. 82, and “In the Family,” p. 39, from *Hispanic, Female and Young*. These are stories concerning traditions. What traditions does your family follow?

Share family traditions and use a web to chart them.

Read “The Meadowlark Song,” p. 174, from *Listen, A Story Comes*. What is the message? Discuss in small groups.

Extra credit: read two entertaining, scary stories from *Listen, A Story Comes*: “Body Changing,” p. 20, and “Old Woman of the Swamp,” p. 60. Do a literature log for each story.

## Lesson 4 (cont.)

### RESOURCES

*Hispanic, Female and Young: An Anthology*, edited by Phyllis Tashuk

*Listen, A Story Comes (Escucha, que viene un cuento)* by Teresa Pijoan

*Traditional Crafts from Mexico and Central America* by Florence Temko

Information from *Read/Write Connection* or other source on correct format for writing

### ASSESSMENT

Final draft of story: writing rubric. Literature logs. Teacher-based evaluation of Venn Diagram; compare/contrast. Completion of art projects and research on family art traditions.

# Unit Assessment

## How will students demonstrate proficiency?

### PERFORMANCE TASK A

Students analyze (either orally or in writing) and compare their stories to their grandmothers' stories. Questions to be answered should include:

- How is my life like that of my grandmother (or person interviewed)?
- How is my life different?
- Do I feel that there are important lessons to be learned from my elders?
- What, if any, changes would I make in my life to better follow the lessons taught by my grandmother?
- What lessons do I feel are important enough to pass on to my children?

After individual students answer these questions, they will get together in groups of 4–5 students to compare, discuss, and score answers.

### SCORING RUBRIC

4. Complete understanding of values; able to discuss why or why not they are important and whether it is important to teach them to our children; able to discuss how this would be implemented in their home.
3. Most of the values understood, with the ability to discuss why they are important and whether it is important to teach them to our children.
2. Some understanding of the values and their importance; able to discuss the values but not necessarily discuss the importance of passing them on or not passing them on; some ability to compare.
1. Little or no understanding of the values; unable to discuss any aspect of the values or their importance; unable to understand the comparison.

### PERFORMANCE TASK B

Final Draft of *My Story*

### SCORING RUBRIC

4. Excellent use of proper paragraph and essay structure as well as correct capitalization and punctuation and adherence to grammatical rules.
3. Fairly consistent usage of thesis, transitional statements and concluding paragraph as well as capitalization, punctuation, and grammatical rules.
2. Inconsistent usage of thesis, transitional statements with weak or nonexistent concluding paragraph, as well as inconsistent usage of capitalization, punctuation, and grammatical rules.
1. Little or no usage of capitalization, punctuation and grammatical rules with no focus or sequence of thought in paragraphs.

## Bibliography

Atencio, Paulette. *Cuentos From My Childhood: Legends and Folktales of Northern New Mexico*. Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1991.

Grades 7–12. Cuentos (stories) from the childhood of the author, a noted storyteller.

Auman, Maureen. *Read/Write Connection*. 1994.

Grades K–12. Excellent writing program for any grade level. Easily adapted to all subject areas and curriculum.

Avila, Alfred and Kat. *Mexican Ghost Tales of the Southwest: Stories and Illustrations*. Houston: Pinata Books, 1994.

Grades 6–9. Various ghost stories from the southwest United States.

Hayes, Joe. *Watch Out for Clever Women!* El Paso: Cinco Puntos Press, 1994.

Grades 7–9. A collection of stories in English and Spanish celebrating the strength of women.

Pijoan, Teresa. *Listen, A Story Comes, or Escucha, que viene un cuento*. Santa Fe: Red Crane Books, 1996.

Grades 6–12. Various stories from different sources written in Spanish and English.

Tashuk, Phyllis, ed. *Hispanic, Female and Young: An Anthology*. Houston: Pinata Books, 1994.

Grades 6–12. A collection of stories that are meaningful to a group of 8th grade girls, Las Mujeres, from Spanish Harlem. Some of the stories are written by the girls themselves, some written by famous Hispanic authors.

Temko, Florence. *Traditional Crafts from Mexico and Central America*. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Company, 1996.

Grades 4–9. Instructions on how to make traditional crafts, including additional patterns, materials list, and glossary of Spanish terms.

*The Latino Experience in United States History*. New Jersey: Globe Fearon, 1994.

Grades 8–12. Textbook on Hispanic history.

West, John O. *Mexican-American Folklore*. Little Rock, Arkansas: August House, Inc., 1988.

Grades 9–adult. Reference book for legends, songs, festivals, proverbs, crafts, and more.

## About the Author

Joanna Vincenti was born in Pasadena, California and graduated from Colorado State University with a bachelors degree and teaching certification in K-12 physical education. She also received a minor in biology.

After completing her degree, Joanna joined the U.S. Peace Corps and served two years in Eldoret, Kenya as a girls high school physical education/biology teacher, cross-country/track/volleyball coach and athletic director. While she was there, her cross-country and track and field athletes took regional and national honors.

Upon returning from Kenya in 1986, Joanna began working on her M.A. degree in special education at the University of Northern Colorado.

In 1987, Joanna began teaching at the Florence Crittenton School for Teen Mothers as a special education teacher in the high school program. Her position gradually evolved into her current position as middle school teacher where she teaches math, science, English, social studies, and parenting. She also teaches high school physical education and is a sponsor for the Student Activities Committee.

During the ski season, Joanna volunteers for the National Sports Center for the Disabled in Winter Park, Colorado as a ski instructor for disabled skiers. She has just completed her tenth year and is certified in instruction for paraplegic/quadruplegic mono- and bi-skiers as well as blind, mentally disabled, and amputee skiers.