

Making Connections: Latino-Caribbean Literature

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Overview and Rationale: Making Connections

The concept of making connections is important in both teaching and learning. Much of teaching consists of helping students find connections and learning involves making connections among the various aspects of content areas. Cultural connections and literary themes have independent connections for teachers and for students.

Among many possibilities, the concept of identity appears as a literary and as a cultural theme. Identity is often of special importance for students, as well, particularly during the middle school years. In addition, among numerous possible strands, there is a paradoxical and interdependent aspect of culture and literature. Literature is part of the cultural history which forms it. To understand literature, historical background is necessary. Without an understanding of the historical connections, the short stories, which are a major segment of Latin American Literature, are clouded windows through which the reader merely glimpses vague images of cultural identity.

Connections are important to teachers and to students; we are members of a community of learners. Exploring historical connections between a culture and literature can only lead to increased understanding. Greater understanding provides for a clear, if brief, image of identity as seen through the windows of literature. Finally, an enlarged view of some short stories, poems, and authors which includes the historical connections can only reveal a major truth: when it comes to the search for identity, we are all connected.

Within my current curriculum, an anthology entitled [Latino-Caribbean Literature](#), edited by Virginia Seeley is included. The text emphasizes definitions of narrative writing, expository writing and poetry and the anthology is organized in the following way: four expository selections, four narrative selections, a poetry section and an edited play. This curriculum unit, intended for use with eighth grade students, will incorporate information about the setting (historical time frame and place), the authors, and the theme of identity relative to the selections

in the text. The curriculum unit supports the Pittsburgh Public Schools Communications Standards and the focus will be on the reading (standard 2) and the writing (standard 4) standards; Citizenship Standards and Arts and Humanities Standards are also involved in the unit. Technology and internet resources are used to enhance the depth and range of available information. The anthology will be the starting point for numerous connections within the area of study.

Narrative

According to Rebecca Padilla, "History is who we are and where we came from (1)." For Latino-Caribbean authors, history is the starting point. Although many Latin American countries share numerous aspects of culture and language, the literature of the Caribbean has roots in common ancestry. Each island has a history of divergence to offset a common beginning which included indigenous people, African peoples from various areas and Spanish colonists. The history of three islands, Cuba, Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, along with background pertinent to each story and information on specific authors begins and reveals the connection to the theme of identity.

The Caribbean

"There is a chain of islands whose shape has always reminded me of Michelangelo's arm of God on the Sistine Chapel (2)." The upper part of the arm formed from the islands of Cuba, Hispaniola (Haiti/Dominican Republic,) and Puerto Rico, clearly belongs to the Caribbean Sea. The history of these islands includes destruction of indigenous societies, struggles against slavery, incorporation and reinvention of African traditions and courage in forging a Caribbean identity. Cultures intermingled to produce variations among the islands which comprise this part of the Caribbean.

Cuba

Cuba, the largest Caribbean island, is located only ninety miles south of Florida. Beginning in around 500 BCE, it was populated by a people known as Tainos who were also the principal ethnic group in areas now called Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. Tainos were a branch of the Arawaks who had come from the Orinoco River basin (Venezuela, Peru.) These indigenous people had a well-developed culture.

Although Christopher Columbus visited Cuba during his voyages of rediscovery, the island was really rediscovered by Diego Velazquez who eventually defeated the existing population through indiscriminate slaughter. Since the Spanish did not find the gold they wanted, they turned to agriculture and "repartimiento" which involved parceling out the surviving population as slaves. Later, repartimiento gave way to "encomienda" and tracts of land with Taino inhabitants were given to Spanish settlers. Disease and work killed the indigenous population; their crops were trampled by another Spanish import: cattle.

Cuba was the springboard for the Spanish conquest of other Latin American countries and the main harbor (Havana) made Cuba a trading center. With the destruction of the indigenous population, Spanish settlers turned to Africa for slave-laborers. European slave trade began early in the sixteenth century and quickly became widespread with the rise of plantation agriculture in

Cuba. The island prospered during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in spite of raids by pirates and the naval units of enemy powers.

By 1827, enslaved Africans accounted for about 40% of the 700,000 people in Cuba (3.) Although not all Africans were slaves, harsh conditions caused many slaves to run away to their own communities called "palenques." Spanish rule had become increasingly repressive.

Most of Spain's Latin American colonies began fighting for independence in the early nineteenth century, and by the 1820s most countries were independent. Cuban republicans led by "criollos" or Latin American descendants of the Spanish settlers were involved, but indigenous people and those of African descent did not participate in newly formed government. In Cuba, independence was opposed by slave-owning planters. Slave rebellions in the early years created fear. Some Cubans of African descent and criollo farmers believed that Cuba could become a productive member of international trade if wage earners replaced slaves. Finally, in 1868, a group of rebels declared that Cuba was an independent nation. When an uprising in Puerto Rico was repressed, many of those islanders came to Cuba to fight against Spain, but, after ten years, neither side could claim victory. Spanish concessions allowed home rule for Cuba, amnesty for the revolutionaries and the abolition of slavery. During this "Ten Years War" many Cubans moved to the United States and became a support system for the Cuban independence movement and by 1895, Jose Marti had founded the Cuban Independence Party. Atrocities committed by a Spanish general in Cuba, Valeriano Weyler, inspired involvement by the United States. The battleship, Maine, was sent to Havana Harbor by President McKinley in 1898, and when the ship was blown up in February, causing 206 soldiers to lose their lives, "Remember the Maine" became a rallying cry for independence (4). Of course, motivations for U.S. involvement in Cuba were complex: trade, investments, and U.S. expansion added to the reasons behind intervention. At the end of the resulting Spanish-American War, Spain gave up all claims to Cuba, but U.S. troops remained there until 1902, resulting in more Cuban cries for independence.

The Cuban desire for independence was hindered continually over the next several decades. U.S. troops returned to settle a political conflict (1906-1909.) In 1912, U.S. Marines quelled an uprising by Afro-Cuban sugar workers; armed uprisings of various kinds continued through the 1920s and 1930s. Cuba became a charter member of the United Nations in 1945, and joined the Organization of American States in 1948. Although a variety of political factions emerged, the economy remained unstable; living costs continued to rise and political violence was the eventual result. The Cuban economy was actually under foreign control, and, over the course of about twenty years, Fulgencio Batista became increasingly powerful. By 1954, he had become the U.S. supported dictator; he protected the interests of the United States and became rich while most Cubans were poverty stricken. In 1956, a new group of "insurrectos" led by Fidel Castro, a lawyer, began a war using a revolution engaged popular support in Cuba and by 1959, a new Cuban government was in place.

In the United States, the Eisenhower administration refused to support or aid the new government. An agrarian reform law (1959) quickly broke up large plantations and redistributed the land. Around 7000,000 middle class Cubans fled from the Castro regime between the years of 1959 through 1962, following the end of Batista's government. This nationalization was also unacceptable to the U.S. and Eisenhower authorized the Pluto Plan which involved the U.S.

Central Intelligence Agency in destabilizing the new government. Agrarian reform also turned many wealthy Cuban landowners against the new government, and thousands of wealthy, professional people came to the United States. In 1960, the CIA began to train an exile army in Guatemala and when John Kennedy became president in 1961, he agreed to let the proposed invasion go forward. In April of 1961, forces landed in the Bay of Pigs, but the Cuban government learned of the invasion and it was repulsed.

Hostilities continued. In 1961, an economic embargo was put into effect and the CIA continued efforts to destabilize the government through the 1960s. The Cuban Revolution had been supported by many Cubans for a variety of reasons, and U.S. opposition sent Cuba to the Soviet Union as an ally. Later in 1961, Cuba declared itself a Socialist state and in 1962, the acceptance of a Soviet offer of missile installation led to a confrontation with the United States (the Cuban Missile Crisis.) A naval blockade led to withdrawal of the missiles and President Kennedy's promise not to invade the island. Between 1965 and 1973, many Cuban nationals came to the United States; in 1973 permission for emigration was terminated. The current U.S. presence in Cuba consists of the naval base at Guantanamo Bay, leased from Cuba in 1903.

Cuba was seen as a country completely under Communist influence, but, for Cubans, it seemed as though they were the center of a controversy but they were not part of the negotiations. Throughout the 1960s, Cuba distanced itself from other Communist nations and concentrated on volunteer work and mass mobilization as means to economic building, but, by the end of the decade, guerilla movements were being defeated in other Latin American countries, and the Cuban economy was in trouble. Cuba began to emulate the political and economic features of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic, and, for the next two decades, the Cuban government ensured the economic, social and cultural rights of the people while curtailing the political and civil rights. In 1980, the Cuban Refugee Crisis resulted in more than 7,000 Cubans seeking asylum in the Peruvian embassy in Havana, and before it was over, 120,000 Cubans had come to the United States to refugee centers in Florida, Arizona, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

By the late 1980s, with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the break up of the Soviet Union, economic support for Cuba came to an end. The U.S. government continued a commitment to the trade embargo by passing the Cuban Democracy Act. The 1990s were a time when Cubans began to think about their origins and what could happen in the future. In 1996, the Holms-Burton Act extended the Cuban embargo to include other countries dealing with Cuba. Currently, Cuban economy probably requires restructuring and the repressive aspects of government copied from the USSR stand in the way of progress. Cubans still feel that the United States is attempting involvement in Cuban government; the political dilemma is that Cuba does not want to become part of U.S. policy. The recent return of Elian Gonzales, may signal more recognition of Cuba as a nation, and the controversy concerning the boy also typifies continuing problems between Cuba and the United States in terms of political involvement.

From early civilization to the present, Cuba has seen rediscovery, invasion, colonization and revolution. These elements of upheaval form a society. The society forms, and is formed by those authors who write about the human experience; a Cuban identity echoes in literature. The connection of Cuban history to authors of Cuban ancestry can be found in the study of the theme of identity.

The Dominican Republic

After landing on a small island in the Bahamas, which he called San Salvador, Columbus stopped on the northern coast of Cuba where he learned about the man-eating Caribs from the Tainos; he decided to sail east. He came to another large island which seemed to resemble Spain, and he called it Hispaniola (5.) The evident kingship of a native chief led Columbus to believe he was closer to civilization, and when one of the ships, the Santa Maria, ran on to a coral reef, Columbus founded the first Spanish colony: Navidad. Leaving twenty-one volunteers behind, he returned to Spain via the Azores and Lisbon, Portugal.

Pope Alexander VI, a Spanish Borgia, legitimized the explorative enterprises of Ferdinand and Isabella; conflict with Portugal was avoided by drawing a line of demarcation in the region. Even before this diplomatic compromise had been reached, Columbus was on his way back to the Spanish colony. On Hispaniola, he found that Navidad had been destroyed and the Spanish settlers had been killed, probably due to revenge for rapacious behavior. Columbus decided to continue east to set up a trading post somewhere else. The new colony, called "Isabella" after the Queen, didn't thrive. Columbus was the leader of some adventurers who were looking for wealth and status, and they often used captured indigenous people in the search, as did Diego Velazquez in Cuba. The "repartimiento" and "encomiando" ideas were used as well. A shipload of indigenous people sent to Spain died on the trip or shortly after arrival and both the Spanish and the returning colonists from Hispaniola were upset by this loss.

Columbus had to return to Spain to quell rumors about his endeavor. The returning colonists had said that there was no gold and the island was obviously not China or Japan. Queen Isabella was unhappy about the enslavement and the deaths of the native people. In the eighteen months that were required to put together another expedition, the confidence of the Spanish rulers returned; the royal treasury was under the control of Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca and he supported and sponsored the expedition. Columbus sailed again in 1498, exploring other islands and the coast of Venezuela before he returned to Hispaniola, where he found the Spanish in a state of civil war. Santo Domingo, a town established by his brother, Bartholomew, was just as impossible to control as the Isabella settlement. Although Columbus tried to achieve a compromise, he was unsuccessful. A royal official, Francisco de Bobadilla, arrived in 1500, arrested Columbus and his brother and sent them back to Spain in chains; the family monopoly on the Spanish colony was broken.

In 1502, the Spanish Monarchs sent an administrator, Nicholas de Ovando, to the "Spanish Indies." Columbus petitioned the Crown for restoration of privileges and crossed the Atlantic Ocean again in 1502. He was still trying to find a passage to Asia, tracing the coast of Central America in the process and when he returned to Spain, he convinced the Monarchs to name his son, Diego, governor of Hispaniola. Columbus died in 1506, still convinced that he had found a western sea route to the orient.

The problems in Hispaniola, as on other islands, arose from the cultural clash of Spanish people, who viewed gold as money, and who had a society where status over a submissive labor force was common, and indigenous people who saw gold as decoration and who had a society where the idea of labor did not exist. Work was done collectively and when necessary. The Spanish

were seeking both goods and services that the native people could not provide; they really didn't understand each other. The resulting conflict was unequal. The Spanish had superior technology and biology also entered into the conflict. Spanish people were susceptible to tropical diseases, but indigenous people quickly succumbed to smallpox and measles. The frantic demand for workers to mine gold led to exploitation and slave trade. The need for a labor force led the Spanish to other islands: Puerto Rico in 1508, Jamaica in 1509 and Cuba in 1511.

The lack of willing labor had defeated Columbus, but once Nicholas de Ovando established the "encomiando" idea, native workers belonged to the land. The idea humanized forced labor, since indigenous people wouldn't work for wages, and it carried elements of responsibility to the workers, but Queen Isabella still didn't like it. Although encomiando was somewhat successful in Cuba, it was undermined on Hispaniola by a quick loss in native population. Slavery became the next answer, and, by the time Diego Colon' became governor in 1509, the Spanish government was trying to impose law and order. In 1511, the first court (audiencia) was established. Outcries, mostly from the Dominican friars, against the treatment of natives resulted in laws in 1512 which set down a fair rate of pay. These laws were largely unenforceable; rules for "slave hunting" met a similar fate. In 1516, King Ferdinand died, and a further attempt was made to bring "Christian Justice" to the region (6.) The government of Hispaniola was turned over to three friars who permitted the importation of African slaves to replace the rapidly dwindling native population. The formation of a royal government was a slow process and the area was divided into vicroyalties with courts and judges. Various attempts were made to reconcile the economic necessities of the Spanish with Christian principals and this continued through the period of Spanish colonization. In addition, as time went on, trade became more important. At one point, a monopoly existed between Hispaniola and Spain. Sugar cane grown on the island was part of an agrarian focus in the sixteenth century. The focus on sugar brought more African slaves, and as on other Caribbean islands, slavery added to the mix of people who lived on the island.

The Monroe Doctrine (U.S., 1823) pledged resistance to foreign occupation "in the Americas" but, in the Caribbean, the history was of one sort of foreign influence or another. In the 1860s there was a brief reoccupation of Santo Domingo by Spain but the island continued to evolve. The pattern of revolution was present in Hispaniola, as well, and freedom was sought from Spain, and from France, as well, since the French had come to control the western side of the island. Through the strange progress of history, the island of Hispaniola has become two countries: Haiti, which traces origins to African roots and Dominican Republic, which emphasizes Spanish ancestry.

The Spanish had launched westward expansion From Santo Domingo but after Francis Drake sacked it in 1586, the French gained control over the next century. By the early 1800s followers of Toussaint L'Overture and Dessalines plundered the island. Sovereignty was in dispute until 1822, when Haiti regained control and kept it for the next two decades. In 1844, the Dominican Republic declared independence, and years of instability followed, which led to the brief Spanish re-annexation. Independence was regained in the War of Restoration but factions continued to fight and the economy remained unstable for years. Ulises Heureaux maintained a dictatorship intermittently from 1882 to 1889 but other governments rose and fell quickly; a Roman Catholic archbishop was even president from 1880 to 1882.

Intervention of the United States occurred directly in 1916, although the U.S. government had been managing the country since 1905. By the time U.S. forces left in 1924, the Dominican Republic had a fully organized army, whose commander, Rafael Trujillo Molina, became president in 1930. Trujillo embarked on an expansion of industry, public works and debt eradication, but his government denied any form of representation and included tactics of murder, torture, blackmail and various types of corruption. During his dictatorship, Haitian immigrants were slaughtered, prolonging the division which had begun in the early nineteenth century. An assassin's bullet ended the Trujillo dictatorship in 1961.

The new President, Joaquin Balaguer, began to eradicate Trujillo's influences, but he was defeated in an election in 1962 by Dr. Juan Bosch and the Partido Revolucionario Dominicano (PRD) (7.) Colonel Elias Wessin y Wessin led a military overthrow after about 7 months and the PRD tried to win back control in 1965; they were prevented from doing this by the army, backed by the U.S. and the Organization of American States. In 1966, a new election was won by Balaguer, who was now head of a reform party (Partido Reformista Social Cristiano) and who remained in office until 1978, facing many coup attempts, terrorism and guerilla incursions. The history of the Dominican Republic seems confusing, from the political standpoint.

In 1978, Antonio Guzman, a PRD candidate won the election; he committed suicide a month before leaving office in 1982 allegedly due to political corruption involving members of his family. Another PRD President, Dr. Salvador Jorge Blanco, presided over severe economic times and a split in the party, which brought Joaquin Balaguer back into power in 1986. By 1990, Balaguer, at age 83, had Juan Bosch, at age 80 as his opponent; Balaguer won and fraud was alleged, so a verification process was engaged. The same thing happened in 1994, when Balaguer's opponent was Jose' Francisco Pena Gomez. The election was so close, and so encumbered with irregularities that Balaguer signed a pact with Pena Gomez to allow for new elections in 1995. The Central Electoral Junta and Congress changed the election date, and the PRD organized a boycott of Balaguer's inauguration. In 1996, after a campaign replete with scandals and demonstrations, shifts in support and in party loyalties, Leonel Fernandez became president after Balaguer gave his support to him. This was an effort to keep Pena Gomez from the presidency, partly because of his Haitian ancestry. Leonel Fernandez was sworn in on August 16, 1996. The new leader pledged to fight poverty, to modernize the economy and to fight government corruption. He was quickly criticized for increasing his own salary and those of other top officials. Investigations into land purchase scandals involving the previous administration and the various political parties occurred and there were problems involving drugs, unsolved murders and mysterious disappearances. With the PRSC party in trouble, the PRD won the 1998 election.

At the beginning of 1999, tensions in the Dominican Republic were eased among the three main political parties; talks were held involving the supervision elections and local finances. The government was seen as having achieved economic growth while retaining problems of corruption. In 2000, the candidates for president were Balaguer, at 93 of the PSRC, Danilo Medina for the ruling PLD and Hipolito Mejia for the PRD. Mejia narrowly missed the 50% required for a win, but Balaguer and Medina pulled out of the race, leaving Mejia the winner, so, the PRD now controls the presidency, the legislature and the majority of the municipalities in the Dominican Republic.

From early times to the present, the history of the Dominican Republic is a history of upheaval, change and revolution. The political implications and the effects of action and reaction among the people create an atmosphere of uncertainty concerning identity (8.) The theme is found in samples from Dominican writers in both prose and poetry.

Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico is located near Cuba. Like Cuba, the original inhabitants were the indigenous Tainos, who named the island Boriquin. The island was claimed by Columbus in 1493, on his second voyage; he named it San Juan Bautista. Later the name became Puerto Rico or "rich port," as it had been called by Juan Ponce de Leon. Over the next 60 years, Tainos, led by caciques(chiefs) rebelled against the Spanish invaders but the native population was destroyed by war, slavery, hard work in goldmines and on plantations and disease. Little remains of the Taino culture, although some English words, borrowed from Spanish, have Taino origin (hurricane, hammock.) Some Tainos escaped by moving to other Caribbean islands; once the Tainos were gone, the Spanish followed the familiar pattern of enslaving Africans and slavery was not abolished until 1873.

There is evidence of an African population in the Caribbean, beginning in 1450 BCE and there was trade between the Caribbean and Africa from 1310 CE to 1491 CE. Spanish history was also influenced by the Moorish occupation of Spain which lasted about 800 years. Through the 365 years of slavery in Puerto Rico, some Africans remained free. These people, called "libertos" had traveled to Puerto Rico with the Spanish conquistadors, but enslaved Africans were sold to the Spanish by the Portuguese. Some historians have said that the Caribbean has a common, central west African heritage (9.) By 1514, the remaining enslaved Tainos and the enslaved Africans had begun to revolt against conditions. By 1848, more than twenty revolutions had occurred. Cimarrones (fugitive slaves) had escaped to remote regions and to other Latin American areas where they formed free communities. Slaves could also buy their freedom. Most free Puerto Ricans (Africans and mixed race peoples) worked in a variety of occupations but became freedom fighters.

Although Puerto Ricans reflect a variety of cultural heritages, as do the people of the other Caribbean islands, by the nineteenth century, they thought of themselves as a distinct people, ready to establish a nation separate from Spain. A democratic republic was declared in 1868, but the uprising was not successful. Concessions, however, were won, and one concession was a process for gaining independence. By 1898, an independent government was officially installed and, a week later, U.S. forces officially invaded. So, after 400 years of Spanish rule, Puerto Rico was ruled by the United States.

Aside from invasion and rediscovery, religion played a part in the history of Puerto Rico, with effects in politics and social development. Forcible conversion to Catholic Christianity by the Spanish conquerors was also the justification for the original slavery of the Tainos and Africans. With the passage of time, however, religion became an important method of cultural expression.

By the time of the Spanish-American War (1898) the indigenous, Spanish and African roots of the Puerto Rican people had produced a political, social, religious and cultural life unique to the

island. Art, literature and music came to be recognized as Puerto Rican rather than as "Caribbean." After the Spanish-American War, Puerto Rico was ruled as a possession of the United States. From 1898 to 1952, "English only" laws were maintained in spite of bitter opposition of the Puerto Rican people. At the time of the Spanish-American War, 85% of the people were illiterate (10) and some people in the U.S. government thought that English would somehow foster literacy. By 1952, although English was still required in government and the court system, Spanish became the official language of Puerto Rico.

The Jones Act was signed in 1907 by U.S. President Woodrow Wilson, and this made Puerto Ricans citizens of the United States. Some rejected citizenship and some left the island. Since World War I was going on at the time, military service became necessary for the new Puerto Rican citizens. This began a trend of military service. Puerto Rico was also established as a commonwealth in 1950, and a constitution was adopted in July of 1952. Puerto Rico is still a U.S. possession, subject to the U.S. judicial system and not fully independent. Oddly, people in Puerto Rico can't vote for the U.S. president, but those living on the mainland can vote. Puerto Rico has no federal taxes, but a local system of taxes tends to make up for that. Puerto Rico is represented in the House of Representatives by a non-voting commissioner. So, Puerto Rico is "almost-a-state."

Puerto Rico also continues to be highly militarized due to the geographic location and the military has affected the island in many ways. From 1898 to 1947, the U.S. government ran both military and civil politics; in 1948 Puerto Ricans elected the first governor, Luis Munoz Marin, who served until 1956. He led the Popular Democratic Party and was originally in favor of an independent Puerto Rico; later, he wanted statehood for the island. A nationalist movement led by Pedro A. Campos began demanding independence for Puerto Rico in the 1950s, although they had been active since 1938. After 1946, the Independence Party slowly became the Movement for Independence (MPI) and then, in 1971, the Puerto Rican Socialist Party.

A national uprising occurred in 1950. Shortly after this, two nationalists got Harry Truman's attention when they attacked Blair House in Washington, D. C. while the U.S. president was in residence. In the 1950s, an attempt was made to transform Puerto Rico into an industrial rather than an agricultural nation. The result of this "operation bootstrap" is that 85% of the food is now imported and many people left the island during the decade (11.) In 1954, several nationalists opened fire on the U.S. House of Representatives, resulting in the wounding of five U.S. congressmen and 56 years in jail for the nationalists. In 1979, President James Carter pardoned the nationalists and they returned to Puerto Rico after touring Puerto Rican population centers in the United States. Through the 1960s and 1970s, a Puerto Rican organization called the Young Lobos was active in the United States and in 1978, a major protest occurred when the U.S. took over the small fishing capital of Vieques for military purposes. Currently, the U.S. is delaying further use of the island.

In the late 1980s, it was revealed that U.S. law enforcement agencies had been working with Puerto Rican agencies since the 1930s to maintain information on activists, union groups, womens' groups and other cultural groups. A major scandal and increased support for the idea of an independent Puerto Rico was the result. Through the 1980s and 1990s armed actions in favor of independence continued and at least 15 activists remain in jail in the United States as a result.

There are three options for Puerto Rico at this time: remain a commonwealth, as it is now, become a state, or become an independent nation. A referendum held in 1967 resulted in a majority vote for continuing the commonwealth. In 1993, another referendum plebiscite was held and 46% of the population voted for statehood, with 4% voting to continue as a commonwealth, and 4% voting for independence. In 1994, a continuing dialogue concerning the political future of Puerto Rico began. Although Puerto Rico seems to be more certain concerning the theme of identity, the history of the country, beginning with the indigenous Tainos, contains elements of struggle and continuity similar to Cuba and the Dominican Republic. Authors with all of this history behind them search for and reveal a cultural as well as a personal identity within emerging literature.

Latino-Caribbean Literature

Some theories concerning Latino-Caribbean literature are based in the idea that migration may affect the author. The author attempts to replicate the homeland, to describe a tradition or to review immigration. These ideas are also carried on by descendants of immigrants who may view the place of origin in a romantic or nostalgic light. Some authors, like authors everywhere, may reject or disassociate from their culture, or they may embrace it fervently (12.) Biographical information about the author can be a starting point for understanding any selection, but authors reveal who they are as they write; the revelation can be on a personal or a cultural level. When readers respond to that revelation, they also consider the theme of identity. The search for identity connects us all: author and reader, teacher and learner.

Lesson Plans

Lesson Plan 1 (2-4 days) Communications Standards: 1, 2, and 4; Science and Technology Standard: 9.

Objective: The student will recognize the focus of the area of study as measured by successful completion of individual research.

Introduction: A Power Point presentation will occur in the computer lab. The presentation is organized as follows in a series of 14 slides.

Latino Caribbean Literature: An Introduction (Background: "Zesty")

What?

- a body of writing produced by Latin American writers from the Caribbean region
- an anthology of short stories and poetry
- writing concerning the Caribbean region

- a way to answer the BIG QUESTION: What is identity and from where does it come Why?
- the short story is an important literary form in Latin America
- short stories are like snap shots of real life
- understanding the culture and the author's beginnings can put the stories and poems into perspective as we examine the search for identity
- examining and analyzing narrative and expository writing provides experience in the literary area.
- examining poetry provides experience in understanding self-expression or the author's purpose and identity
- thinking about identity is important, because, as you look at what others say about it, you can formulate your own ideas
- Communications Standards 2(reading) and 4(writing) are inherent in literary studies

How?

- compose a "what do you know ?" list
- use the internet to find information on Cuba, The Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico
- use the internet to find information on Latino-Caribbean authors
- use other sources and resources in the library
- interview Spanish teachers and ESL students to find information on the cultures and the people
- think about the personal and cultural identities of the authors
- read the selections in the text and analyze each one
- complete your selected assessment

Some guiding questions:

What is identity?

How do you know about your own identity?

From where does identity come?

How does your environment (family, friends, ethnicity, place, religion) affect your identity?

What cultural, environmental and historical influences were felt in Cuba?

The Dominican Republic? Puerto Rico?

What does the story or poem tell you about the author and identity?
What kind of a person is the author?
What were some of the affects of culture on the author?
Why did the author write a narrative, expository or poetic selection?
What are some connections among your cultural influences and what you write?

Outcomes and Connections: homework from the homework menu, additional research, writing assignments, graphic organizers, group discussions, accountable talk and presentations, and an assessment(student choice.)

Students will be provided with information on possible inter net sites (see bibliography and references for specific sites and web addresses) related to each country and author. Approximately two days will be spent in the computer lab; students will research and develop a time line concerning historical events in each country. Students will take notes on facts concerning selected authors and will collaborate with partners or work in small cooperative groups. All of the information gathered will be assembled on charts in the classroom; if possible, students will also interview teachers and ESL students. Selected students will visit the library for any additional information. Assessment choices will be presented at the conclusion of the research segment. (See the appendix for choices and rubrics.)

Lesson Plan 2 (8-12 days) Communication Standards: 2 and 4; Arts and Humanities Standards: 1 and 3.

Objective: The student will examine culturally connected literature and the theme of identity and will review literary characteristics of narrative (or expository, or poetic) selections as measured by the completion of graphic organizers, discussions of guide questions and a variety of responses to literature.

Each selection will be read and discussed using the Inquiring School Model (13) (questioning strategies.) Assignments will be selected by the students from the list of follow-up activities for each selection, or from a general homework menu. (See the Appendix for specific choices and rubrics.)

Lesson Plan 3 (2-4 days) Communications Standards: 2 and 4; Citizenship Standards: 1 and 9.

Objective: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the literature, the cultural and historical influences and the theme of identity in the text as demonstrated by the successful completion of an assessment.

Each student will select a method of assessment and complete it before the suggested deadline. (See the appendix for specific assessments and rubrics.)

Equipment and Materials: LCD projector ("smart board"), computer lab with 28 computers and a lab assistant, poster board, large paper or chart paper, markers, pens and pencils, chalkboard, eraser and chalk, regular classroom with tables to facilitate discussion

Practical Application of the Curriculum Unit: the real and the ideal

The curriculum unit is designed for mainstream eighth grade students. Middle school students are often concerned with the idea of identity, and exploring connections among culture, history and writing is an important focus. Actually using the unit revealed some negative and some positive conditions related to instruction. Some negative aspects of using the unit were tied to the time of year (May-June.) For example, although I was able to schedule library time for research purposes, I was not able to schedule two consecutive days in the computer lab. Since the lab times were a few days apart, some of the "research momentum" was lost. In fact, we could have benefited from a third day in the lab. In addition, although the students were interested in the unit, they were also distracted by standardized testing, field trips, portfolio assembly, and plans for promotion. Students wanted to hurry through some stories and were reluctant to tackle longer selections. Most students chose the traditional test over a more complex, or interesting, assessment due to the numerous involvements at this time of year.

On the positive side, most students expressed an interest in the stories and poetry. A few stories worked particularly well for cooperative group discussions. Students were willing to use the essay choices on the homework menu. In one class, a Puerto Rican student was seen as an expert, and this was a positive role for her. Students were successful in completing the poetry analysis, since the elements of poetry have been a focus in reading and Language Arts classes this year, and many students chose to write "identity" poems. Students were also able to talk about similarities in "the immigrant experience" for Caribbean and other cultures. Some students wrote about how historical events can affect writers and a few were able to write about connections between culture and writing on a personal level. As the unit came to a close, students were able to verbalize the idea that the search for identity is revealed in writing, and the, regardless of culture, we all share in the search.

Notes

1. This quotation is from the end-notes of Mami Amor's Little Stories by Rebecca Padilla, Long Beach (New York): Encouraging Cultural Literacy, 2000.
2. This great quotation is from A Continent of Islands: Searching for Caribbean Destiny by Mark Kurlansky, p. 10.
3. Most of the information concerning numbers, as is this example, is found in Resistance in Paradise, edited by Deborah Wei and Rachel Kamel. In this case, the percentages were on page 31.
4. This information was found in the above text on page 33.
5. Although information on the historical sequence of events can be found in numerous places, this information is most easily located in The Penguin History of Latin America by Edwin Williamson on pages 3 through 16.
6. See above.
7. The History of the Dominican Republic at www.caribbeansupersite.com/domrep/history.htm provided historical events and an explanation of the political parties.
8. This information was found in Americas, by Peter Winn, on page 285 and in A Brief History of the Caribbean by J. Rogozinski on pp. 255-256.
9. The theory concerning West Central African heritage was found on p. 3 of the Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia, "Caribbean Literature" by Carol B. Davis.
10. Resistance in Paradise, p. 69, provided the figures.
11. See above, p. 71. The figures were confirmed in other texts, as well.

12. Latino Literature by Mark Zimmerman, pages 6 through 8, provided a clear summary of ideas which have influenced Caribbean Literature.
13. The Inquiring School by Robert Calfee has provided an organized way of examining Literature of all kinds.

Bibliography and References for Students and Teachers

Annotated Bibliography

Algarin, Miguel and Miguel Pinero. Nuyorican Poetry. New York: William Morrow Co., 1975.

The editors discuss the meaning of "law" and "freedom" in terms of poverty and the time during which the poetry was collected. Language differences are also delineated. The poetry is grouped as "outlaw poetry," "evolutionary poetry," and "dusmic poetry."

The last form of poetry is said to transform aggression directed to someone into a strength. There are some photographs. Some poetry is translated from Spanish, and some is as it was written, in English or in a mixture of Spanish and English. The text is a good general poetry text for background and for finding examples of poetry.

Alvarez, Julia. Something to Declare. New York: Plume(Penguin) Books, 1999.

The table of contents lists the title as "Something to declare to my readers" and that is the focus of this 300-page collection of essays. The book is divided into sections: Customs and Declarations. Basically, it provides information on the author's antecedents, literally and in literature, and it contains the author's ideas concerning story themes, identity and the origins of ideas.

Alicea, Gil, with Carmine DeSera. The Air Down Here: True Tales from a South Bronx Boyhood. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1995.

The book is a chronicle of a boy moving into early manhood, through school, identity questions, troubles, the death of his mother and dating. It contains a series of photographs by the young author. The writing process involved essays produced from tape-recorded conversations. The book gives a clear picture of the boy's life and many students would relate to his concerns.

Burgos-Delbray, Elisabeth (ed.). I, Rigoberta Menchu. New York: Verso Press, 1984.

This selection is the story of the Guatemalan woman named in the title, in her own words. It is in the tradition of self-reported history and is interesting background on what life was like for an ordinary indigenous person.

Calfee, Robert. The Inquiring School. Stanford: University of California Press, 1985.

The book, which first appeared as a loose-leaf binder, provides information on how people learn and remember. It also gives a lesson plan format designed to appeal to all modalities. Although it can be used in many content areas, I have found that the focus on questioning (inquiry) makes it ideal for the study of literature.

Davis, Carol B. Caribbean Literature. Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia, 2001.

This general article, which defines written and oral literature, describes the development of hybrid languages in the Caribbean. Poetry and autobiographical writings were listed as samples of early writings. Twentieth century writing was divided into "early" and "end of Colonial rule." The most detailed section was called writing "after independence." This was a good introductory article.

Ehrlich, Amy (ed.). When I Was Your Age, Volume 1. Cambridge: Candlewick Press, 2001.

This short anthology (159 pages) contains expository stories by authors with whom students would be familiar. "Taking a Dare," pp. 94-105, is by Nicholasa Mohr. The story concerns an incident from the author's youth related to her religious identity. It would be a good supplementary story for the curriculum unit.

Fiffer, Sharon, and Steve Fiffer. (eds.) Home: American Writers Remember Rooms of Their Own. New York: Vintage Books, 1995.

Various authors described rooms which were significant to them. "The Closet" by Esmeralda Santiago, pp. 116-129, shows us the Latina writer's hiding place. The closet was significant as it, and the author, went through several transformations, including a time when, in typical "magical reality" fashion, the closet was inhabited by a demon. The story is appealing both as background and as a story for young adults.

Foster, D.W. Latin American Literature. Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia, 2001.

This is a good general article. It covers the Fifteenth Century to the present and is divided into several areas: Native American, Colonial, Independence, Modern, The Latin American Vanguard, The Twentieth Century, and Contemporary. It would give students an idea about the scope of literature and it is a good reference for teachers, as well.

Fuentes, Carlos and Julio Ortega. The Vintage Book of Latin American Stories. New York: Vintage Books, 2000.

The introduction provides a frame of reference for the short story as it is seen in Latin American literature. In addition, it explains the fantastic dimension. The range of stories is wide, and all of the stories seem to illustrate the magical quality cited by the editors. Stories by Cuban, Dominican and Puerto Rican authors are also found in the book. Some stories would not be suitable for students, but they are good examples of the genre.

Gilbert, Thomas. Hispanics of Achievement: Roberto Clemente(series.) New York: Chelsea House Publishing, 1991.

The series reveals ways in which individuals of Hispanic heritage have affected American culture, rather than presenting Hispanic influences in statistical terms. Areas of influence include: exploration, figures from Spanish history, Spanish literature, art, music, theater and sports. Contributions include those made world wide, not just in the U.S. This particular book is a short (100 pages), well-written biography of Roberto Clemente. It includes photographs and would be of interest to students, as would other books in the series.

Guillermoprieto, Alma. The Heart That Bleeds: Latin America Now. New York: Vintage Books, 1995.

The author wrote the thirteen essays over four years as an assignment for the New Yorker magazine. Each story is named for a city and a date. The stories provide a snapshot of the life and the politics of the time. The author explains events as she sees them, including the good and the "shameful." For example, "Bogota, 1989" begins with Bogota's windowpane fitters and describes the effects of bombing by drug traffickers on the city. "Lima, 1990" is an interesting description of the "horrible" city, the widely differing people and their problems, including Fujimoro's election, and it ends with laughing protesters. In "Mexico City, 1992" the author discusses a cultural take-over which has been going on since 1847; the garbage pickers of the city, now necessary for the survival of the city, and the music business are the focus and the metaphors for change. This is a good background reference book for teachers concerning the realities of Latin America.

Irish, J.A.G. Caribbean Heritage Resource Guide. New York: Caribbean Diaspora Press, Inc., 1994.

This is an extensive listing meant for teachers of Caribbean students in the United States. It is divided into grade levels and by age group. It lists texts, fiction, non-fiction and videos. One of the best features of the book is that it also provides names and addresses of publishers. Although it has a specific intent, it is also a good resource for Caribbean literature for all teachers.

Kurlansky, Mark. A Continent of Islands: Searching for Caribbean Identity. Cambridge: Perseus Books, 1992.

"When you tell a story, you get other stories back." That is the basis of the author's collection. Factual articles, or chapters, are separated by "interludes" which are first person editorials. The arts, history, politics and day-to-day life are all topics in the text. Some interesting titles are: "Old Gods and Satellite Dishes," "Prophets and Profits," "Death by Pepper Sauce," and "The Cookie Theory of Underdevelopment." Additional information is provided by photographs and statistical tables. The book would be suitable for teachers; it is interesting and informative.

Levi, Johathan. A Guide for the Perplexed. New York: Random House/Turtle Bay Books, 1992.

The novel is about the search for identity as placed in a historical context. A British woman, Holland, is attempting to film a documentary about a reclusive violin virtuoso and Hanni, from Miami Beach, is searching for a missing family document of great historical importance. The only apparent connection between the two is that they share the same travel agent, Ben, and the story is told in letters to Ben. Slowly, connections are revealed, and the characters discover personal, racial and historical identity. The novel also contains a creative explanation of ancient philosophy and of the "discovery" of the West Indies. I was able to recognize instances of "magical reality" and the novel was interesting and enjoyable as a variant on the Columbus story.

Linse, Barbara and Dick Judd. Fiesta! Hollywood: Paramount/Fearon, 1993.

The book provides suggestions for classroom fiestas, designated as holidays or as "other." The authors maintain that there are dozens of ways to celebrate the same holiday and suggestions revolve around common elements: parades, parties, arts and crafts, food and music. Cultural connections are made through questioning activities designed to compare Latin American cultural expressions with other cultures. This would be a good resource book for project ideas or for language classrooms.

Lopez, T. A. Growing Up Chicana/o: An Anthology. New York: William Morrow Co., 1993.

The twenty stories are from various viewpoints and reveal different ideas and perspectives on the same topics: life in the United States, heritage, Spanish culture, and identity. This would be enjoyable for students to read independently, or it could provide additional information of Latin American literature.

Luckenhoff, Mark. Neighbors of the U.S. New York: Mark Twain Media, 1993.

This is a geography activity book based on five themes: geography (location, place, comparison), movement (natural forces and products), human and environmental intersections, and regions (worlds within worlds.) Five regions of the world are included: Canada, The Caribbean, Central America, Mexico and South America. It does not include all of the Caribbean Islands. It would be good as an introductory geographical locator for any of the areas mentioned.

Padillo, Felix. My Two Lights. Long Beach: Libros, 2000.

This story was inspired by a popular Puerto Rican song, "Verde Luz." In the story, Dona Luz, an old woman, sat in the park and sang Puerto Rican songs, so most passers-by thought she was crazy. A small boy felt influenced by her singing and stopped to listen. She taught him the song (cultural appreciation and pride.) Although the boy was embarrassed that he knew little Spanish, the old woman was able to allow him to travel to Puerto Rico in his imagination. This is a primary book, but it is beautifully illustrated and clearly reveals the idea of identity. It would be a good book to show students as part of an introduction to culture or to literature.

Padillo, Rebecca. Mami Amor's Little Stories. Long Beach: Libros, 2000.

This is another elementary storybook. It tells the life story of a needlewoman who emigrated from Puerto Rico to Chicago to find work in a garment factory. It simplifies the history of the garment industry, the advent of the sewing machine, which stole the artistry from the needle workers and the sadness of leaving the "golden mountain" of Puerto Rico. After a few "little stories" the family history is complete, like a puzzle. The pieces are the story elements: not wanting to leave, wanting to return, and not being able to do so. The family history is presented as "who we are and where we came from." The book has a historical overview at the end: Mami Amor was a real person. The book would appeal to students, although it is meant for younger readers.

Petersen, Arona. Kreole Ketch n' Keep. Charlotte Amalie: Jones-Holloway-Bayan Foundation, 1975.

This is a collection of West Indian stories. It is similar to collections of folk tales everywhere, and, if names and dialect were changed, it would be familiar to many cultures. The author tells traditional tales from her childhood. The book is easy to read and would be good as reference material or background for Caribbean literature for both teachers and students.

Rogozinski, Jan. A Brief History of the Caribbean. New York: Penguin Books, 1999.

This is a descriptive and analytical history of the Caribbean islands, all of which share common beginnings and similar patterns of development. The islands are viewed from the inside out, rather than from the vantage point of the United States, Europe or Africa. The text is divided into sections: Spanish Rule, Northern Europeans Come to Stay, The Sugar Empire, Abolition of Slavery and Progress and Poverty Since 1914. These sections represent the commonalities of the Caribbean islands. The text is easy to read, although complex strands of development are discussed, and illustrations and tables add to the reader's understanding throughout. It is a good reference book for teachers interested in this area of Latin America.

Santiago, Roberto (ed.) Boricuas: Influential Puerto Rican Writings: An Anthology. New York: Ballantine/One-World Books, 1995.

The anthology provides numerous examples of Puerto Rican Literary efforts from the island and the mainland. This is a good source of additional stories from the Puerto Rican authors featured in Latino-Caribbean Literature. Many of the other stories would be interesting as cultural background for teachers and students; stories for students should be carefully selected.

Seeley, Virginia. (ed.) Latino-Caribbean Literature. Paramus: Globe-Fearon, 1994.

This anthology includes four expository stories, four narrative stories, a poetry section and a play. The authors are Cuban, Dominican or Puerto Rican. The text is part of the international emphasis in the literature curriculum for eighth grade students at my school. The text is interesting, but most of the selections require some background of both an historical and a cultural nature. The anthology is suitable for students and teachers.

Soto, Gary. Living Up the Street. New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1985.

This collection of twenty-one narrative stories would appeal to students in the middle grades. The author provides autobiographical reflections of his childhood from the Mexican-American viewpoint. He describes events, his responses to the events, and his thoughts, as well. Some stories are closely connected to culture and identity but others are more universal.

Soto, Gary. Taking Sides. New York: Doubleday, Inc., 1996.

The novel concerns the emerging identity of Lincoln Mendoza who is "brown, not white." The main character has the problem of conflicted loyalties because he has moved from the barrio to the suburbs. The big basketball game becomes an intense battle which provides resolution for the character's concerns about loyalty and friendship; everyone must adjust to change. Although the characters and setting are culturally specific, the story could apply to any student in the middle grades and most students would like the novel. It could be suggested as an independent reading experience.

Tanna, Laura. Jamaican Folk Tales and Oral Histories. Kingston: Institute of Jamaican Publications, 1984.

This collection was recorded over time (1973-1984) and contains folk tales and histories. Customs, manners and attitudes of the storytellers are also included. Anansi-the-Spider stories (Nancy stories) reveal the African roots of many tales. The storytellers relate tales told by their grandparents; short biographies provide information about their lives. For example, one storyteller was a retired policeman who ran a shop and a small school, wrote plays on the side and ran a local cultural discussion group. He also "died tragically in 1974, when he slipped on a river bank, fell on his machete and bled to death before he could be moved to a doctor." This kind of detail inspires more questions than it answers. The transcriptions are interesting, but difficult to read; they work better if read aloud. Songs, rhymes, riddles, proverbs and narratives are included. This book would be of interest to teachers for background in storytelling, but a good reader could use the stories to draw parallels among common folk themes.

Taylor, Theodore. The Cay. New York: Avon Books, 1970.

The time frame is 1939 to 1942. The main character, Phillip, who has always had a low opinion of islanders, is blinded when he's struck on the head. He's originally from Virginia, and a hurricane strands him on a raft, and then on an island with Timothy, an old black man from Charlotte Amalie, Virgin Islands. He must adapt to his blindness and learn to accept Timothy. The book remains appealing to middle school students due to the themes of identity, growing up and survival. It would be a good book to use for an enrichment experience relating to the Caribbean anthology.

Wei, Deborah and Rachel Kamel (eds.) Resistance in Paradise. Philadelphia: The American Friends Service Committee, 1998.

The subtitle of the collection is "rethinking 100 years of U. S. involvement in the Caribbean and the Pacific" and that says it all. The text is from the viewpoint of those on the "other side" of U.

S. interventions and the results of those interventions are explained in historical contexts. The text is clearly written, and would be suitable for both teachers and students.

Winn, Peter. The Americas: The Changing Face of Latin America and the Caribbean. Los Angeles: The University of Berkeley Press, 1999.

The text provides an abundance of information on the status and the development of the region. It would be a suitable reference for teachers and selected sections would be beneficial to students, as well.

Williamson, Edwin. The Penguin History of Latin America. London: Penguin Books, 1992.

Five hundred years of history is presented in clearly narrated, strictly chronological order. The text is divided into sections: Empire, Challenge of the Modern World and The Twentieth Century. This is a good reference book and it is easy to use. In spite of the mental picture that "penguin history" calls up, this book would be useful to both students and teachers in examining the history of the Latin American region.

Zimmerman, Marc. U.S. Latinos: Their Culture and Literature. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.

The selection analyses trends in literary themes, such as nostalgia, racial oppression, and acculturation as they emerged and changed in the United States. Latino identity is examined and defined in terms of changing attitudes and diversity among Latina/os. Literature is described as relating to three phases of migration, development of literature, development of Puerto Rican literature and the development of Cuban literature. Other culturally connected literatures are defined. Post-modern literature and "multicultural crossovers" are briefly considered. The text would be a good background reference in considering culturally tied literature as it has developed over the last few decades.

Web sites and Internet Resources for Students and Teachers

The following citations provide general information. Some sites have additional links and can be used for more specific research.

The Caribbean Search Engine. <http://www.caribsearch.com> (available 3/6/01)

Hispanic Americans: History and Literature. <http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/hispan.htm> (available 12/26/00)

Orientation: Latin America and the Caribbean. <http://la.orientation.com> (available 2/20/01)

The Latin American Library at Tulane University. <http://www.tulane.edu/~latinlib/laphoto.html> (available 3/20/01)

The University of Pittsburgh Center for Latin American Studies. <http://www.ucis.pitt.edu/clas> (available 3/6/01)

The University of Texas Latin American Studies Resource Page. <http://www.lanic.utexas.edu> (available 2/20/01)

Virtual Community: Latino Library Research Guide <http://www.public.iastate.edu/~savega/latino> (available 2/20/01)

The following sites provide information on literature.

Dreaming in Cuban by MaryBeth Schroeder. www.evanston.lib.il.us/library/bibliographies/cuban.html (available 3/13/01)

Garcia Girls and Mambo Kings: A Latino Booklist. <http://www.flint.lib.mi.us/flp/pubs/mambo.a.bpyout.html> (available 3/6/01)

Internet Resources for the Study of Spanish American Literature. <http://gopher.fsu.edu/~jgaleano/uterat.html> (available 3/20/01)

Latino and Latina Literature: Anthologies of the 1990s by Margo Gutierrez. <http://www.lib.texas.edu/Libs/Benson/bibnot/bn-95.html> (available 3/1/01)

Latino Heritage: Literature. <http://www.utsa.edu/SpecialProject/latinoliterature> (available 12/26/00)

Literature in Latin America. <http://info.lanic.utexas.edu/la/region/literature> (available 12/26/00)

Literature Internet Resources <http://www.nau.edu/~wst/access/hotlist/lithot.html> (available 1/16/01)

Russ Filman's Caribbean Literature <http://www.freenet.hamilton.on.ca/~as462/cariblit.html> (available 1/20/01)

U.S. Latino Literature: A Critical Guide for Students <http://info.greenwood.com/books/03133311/03311374.html> (available 3/13/01)

The following sites may be used to obtain information on the authors.

The Cuban Authors

Roberto G. Fernandez

http://www.firstunivrsal.clara.net/eldorado_files/reyl.jpg. (available 3/6/01)

<http://www.amazon-de/exec/obidos/ASIN/1558852239/artvisitwww/302-3597513-4800047> (available 3/6/01)

<http://researchback.magnet.fsu.edu/ResearchR/fallwinter97/departments/portrait.htm> (available 3/13/01)

<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itsv/0200/ijse/latinol.htm> (available 3/12/01)

<http://edocs.lib.sfu.ca/projects/Cuba> (available 3/12/01)

Gustavo Perez Firmat

http://www.utexas.edu/admin/opa/news/97newsreleases/nr_199709na_heritage976094.html (available 3/6/01)

<http://www.oup-usa.org/osbm/0195146050.html> (available 3/12/01)

<http://mati.eas.asu.edu.8421/bilingual/HTML/bilinualblues.html> (available 3/12/01)

<http://www.mainlane.cc.tx.us/library/resource/comcat/eng/r0004542> (available 3/23/01)

http://hallbiography.com/ethnic_national/358.shtml (available 3/12/01)

<http://www.hispanicnews.com/archive/2000/July21/06.html> (available 3/12/01)

Pablo Medina

<http://artscl.shu.edu/poetry/previous/pablomedina.html> (available 3/12/01)

<http://www.usembassy-amman.org.jo/02CubanP.html> (available 3/13/01)

<http://biography.about.com/bl-mem-cubanamerican.html> (available 3/5/01)

<http://www.middlebury.edu/~blwc/95fac.html> (available 3/12/01)

Virgil Suarez

http://www.barcelonareview.com/12/e_us.htm (available 3/6/01)

<http://www.engl.virginia.edu/meridian/1999fal/suarez.html> (available 3/12/01)

<http://www.clackamas.cc.or.us/instruct/english/clr/suarez.htm> (available 3/6/01)

<http://www.english.fsu.edu/faculty/vsuarez.htm> (available 3/5/01)

<http://www.winspress.com/misc/vsuarez.html> (available 1/20/01)

<http://www.poems.com.beloisua.htm> (available 3/6/01)

The Dominican Authors

Julia Alvarez

<http://www.goshen.edu/~angiemb/AnnotatedBib.html> (available 3/10/01)

http://www.bellaonline.com/entertainment/books_and_literature/women_writers/articles/art9821159985672 (available 3/12/01)

<http://www.uni-wuppertal.de/FB4/anglistik/kerkhoff/Literdidaktik/Alvarez.htm> (available 3/6/01)

<http://www.cocc.edu/hun299/lessons/topics.html> (available 3/12/01)

<http://www.emory.edu/ENGLISH/Bahri/Alvarez.htm> (available 3/13/01)

<http://voices.cla.umn.edu/authors/JuliaAlvarez.htm> (available 3/5/01)

<http://www.excite.com/guide/entertainment/celebrities/writers/authors> (available 3/6/01)

Josefina Baez

<http://web.mit.edu/latinos/www/baez.htm> (available 3/12/01)

<http://web.mit.edu/latinos/www/cultural.htm> (available 3/13/01)

<http://www.wac.ucla.edu/cip/apex/biosus.htm> (available 3/12/01)

Rhina Espaillat

<http://ablemuse.com/premier/rpespaillat.htm> (available 3/6/01)

<http://www.poemtree.com> (available 3/6/01)

<http://www.theoccasional.com/poetry/P-Espaillat/P-espaillat.html> (available 3/12/01)

<http://world.std.com/jpwilson/scroll35.html> (available 3/13/01)

The Puerto Rican Authors

Judith Ortiz Cofer

<http://parallel.park.uga.edu/~jcofer/cofer-vita.html> (available 3/5/01)

<http://www.mcdougallittell.com/lit./guest.garchive.copferm3.htm> (available 3/13/01)

http://www.onlineathens.com/stories/112600/boo_1126000024.shtml (available 3/12/01)

<http://www.angelfire.com/biz/chago/C.html> (available 3/13/01)

http://www.unl.edu/womensp/usa_judith.html (available 3/12/01)

<http://www.alligator.org/edit/issues/97-fall/971010/602his.htm> (available 3/12/01)

Jesus Colon

<http://welcome.topuertorico.org/culture/famouspr.shtml> (available 2/20/01)

<http://www.lacnyc.org/pubs/update/oct97/rabide9.htm> (available 3/12/01)

Victor Hernandez Cruz

<http://poetry.minigco.com/arts/poetry/library/weekly/aa012098.htm> (available 3/6/01)

<http://www.surfablebooks.com/worldbookgeneral/humanities/literature/LatinAmerican/Dario.%20Ruben/4.htm> (available 3/13/01)

<http://hawcc.hawaii.edu/read/poetry.html> (available 3/12/01)

Sandra Maria Esteves

<http://latinopromo.com/spkrcategory/1speakers/esteves/sandramariaesteves.html> (available 3/6/01)

<http://www.tin.it/veneziapoesia/esteves.htm> (available 2/12/01)

<http://www.gusu.edu/nees/leads/bydate/fb99/021099c.html> (available 3/12/01)

<http://jmri.usb.edu/pipermail/reformnet/1997-June/001295.html> (available 3/6/01)

Nicholasa Mohr

<http://voices.cla.umn.edu/authors/NicholasaMohr.htm> (available 3/6/01)

<http://college.hmco.com/english/health/syllabuild/iguide/mohr.html> (available 3/6/01)

<http://info.greenwood.com/books/0275998/0275998/08.html> (available 3/12/01)

<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/advancement/publicrelations/news/2001/AbzugLecture2001/abzuglecture2001.html> (available 3/12/01)

Aurora Levins Morales

<http://www.speakersandartists.org/People/AuroraLevinsMorales.html> (available 3/6/01)

<http://www.georgetown.edu/bassr/health/sysslbuild/iguide/morales.html> (available 3/6/01)

<http://femrhet.cla.umn.edu/morales.htm> (available 3/12/01)

<http://latinopromo.com/spkrcategory/1speakers/levinsmorales/auroralevinsmorales.htm> (available 2/28/01)

Miguel Pinero

<http://www.labourlawjournal.it/redazione/rodriguez/index.htm> (available 3/6/01)

<http://www.amazon.de/exec/obidos/ASIN/0934770255/artist-www/302-3597531-4800047> (available 3/6/01)

<http://welcome.topuertorico.org/culture/famouspr.shtml> (available 3/12/01)

<http://latnm.com/grafico/interview/articles/algarin.thm> (available 3/13/01)

The following sites concern history: Cuba, Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico.

A Note on Tainos: Wither Progress? By Jose Barriero, 1990. <http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/41/013.html> (available 3/5/01)

Cuba. <http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives> (available 3/5/01)

Cuban History. <http://www.homeworkcentral.com/files.htpFeleia=4389&use hc> (available 2/20/01)

History of Cuba. <http://historyofcuba.com> (available 3/6/01)

Lonely Planet: Destination

Cuba. <http://libweb.uncc.edu/archives/manuscripts/Glgoldenz.t> (available 3/6/01)

The History of Cuba. <http://www.emayzine.com/lectures/HISTORY~7.htm> (available 3/5/01)

The History of the Dominican

Republic. <http://caribbeansupersite.com/domrep/history.htm> (available 3/5/01)

The History of Puerto Rico. <http://welcometopuertorico.org/history.shtml> (available 3/5/01)

Puerto Rico: Past and Present. <http://info.greenwood.com/books/03/3298/03132> (available 3/5/01)

The following sites are of interest to teachers.

Boricuas: Influential Puerto Rican Writings, review by Latino Cultures Guide. <http://latinoculture.about.com/culture/latinoculture/library/rv/blbkBoricuas.htm> (available 2/20/01)

Guide to Latino Literature by J. Christie and D. Darling. <http://webster.comnet.edu/stuweb/~latinoguide> (available 12/26/00)

Latino Literature by Kirsha Torres. <http://www.kirsha.com/literature.htm> (available 3/2/01)

Latino Literature of the Americas. <http://asweb.unco.edu/latina> (available 2/2/01)

Literature by Latinas and Latinos of the United States by R. Rodriguez. <http://wally.rit.edu/pubs/guides/reshispam.ht> (available 2/26/01)

Appendix

I. Information about the authors and the selections:

The Cuban Authors

Pablo Medina left Cuba when he was 12 years old. He has lived in the United States since 1960. He has written both poetry and prose; he has also translated the works of other writers. He has produced, directed and participated in several musical and literary performances. He currently lives and teaches in New Jersey. One of his books, Exiled Memories: A Cuban Childhood, provides some of the history of Cuban farms along with his own memories of childhood vacations. The author's cultural identity, and his thoughts on it are revealed in his writing. The book is set in pre-revolutionary (before Fidel Castro) Cuba and he has also written three collections of poetry and two novels since 1991. His most recent work is The Return of Felix Nogara (2000.)

Roberto G. Fernandez, born in Sagua la Grande, Cuba, has lived in the United States since 1961. He grew up and was educated here; he teaches Hispanic Literature at Florida State University, near his home in Tallahassee. His third novel, Raining Backwards, was one of the first Cuban American novels to be published in English, and in the United States. He uses realistic dialogue to reveal the thoughts and feelings of his characters, as well as his own thoughts on identity. He recalls his relationship with his grandmother and how important returning to Cuba was for her.

Virgil Suarez was born in Havana, Cuba, in 1962 and lived there until 1970, when his family moved to Spain. From Spain, he moved to Los Angeles, where he attended California State University. He has a degree from that University and another from Louisiana State University, where he currently teaches; he lives in Baton Rouge. He has written many short stories, articles, reviews, interviews and novels. He has even written about other authors (Hispanic American Literature: Divergence and Commonality.) One of his novels, Latin Jazz, is based on his experiences in living as a Cuban in Los Angeles; he describes problems faced by those who came to the United States after Fidel Castro came to power, and the search for identity by a family member who is caught up in the Cuban Revolution.

Gustavo Perez Firmat was born in Cuba and raised in Miami, Florida. His writing considers the problems of immigrants, particularly with language. His theme of identity concerns writing and conveying his thoughts in English rather than in Spanish. The idea of being removed from one's culture is also apparent in his poetry.

The Dominican Authors

Julia Alvarez was born in the Dominican Republic in 1950 and she came to the United States at the age of 10. She has written essays, poetry and fiction. She is well known in this country and throughout the world; she has taught poetry in schools in Kentucky, California, Vermont, Washington D. C. and Illinois. She was chosen to be one of five artists to live and work as a Resident in Altos de Chavon, an artists' colony in the Dominican Republic, in 1988. She lives in Middlebury, Vermont, where she teaches about Latino writers in the United States. Her novels, such as How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents, In the Time of the Butterflies, and Yo! reveal her thoughts and ideas on the identity theme; it is in her book of collected essays, Something to Declare, that she states her concepts directly.

Josefina Baez is a Dominican poet living in the United States. Her poetry indicates a sense of division she feels as an author far from home. She is also an actress and an educator. She is the founder and director of Latinarte Ay Ombre Theatre Troup; her work is multidisciplinary and international. She was born in La Romana, Dominican Republic and her subjective work in a variety of areas shows a changing and emerging identity. She is a staff member at the Creative Arts Laboratory at Teachers College of Columbia University.

Rhina Espillat was born in the Dominican Republic, but has lived in the United States since 1939. Although she has written in both English and Spanish, her poetry has been written in English. Her work has appeared in many anthologies and she has two poetry collections currently in print: Lapsing to Grace and Where Horizons Go. She has won prizes for her poetry, and she currently runs a monthly workshop for poets called "The Powow River Poets;" she coordinates a

yearly poetry contest sponsored by the Newburyport Art Association. Concerning the theme of identity, her preference is to reflect on her present identity rather than her past.

Ginetta E. Berloso Candelario is a poet who reflects on the identity of the immigrant. The poor often feel sadness and fear in the lands of their birth and are left with nothing but a hope of a new life in a new land. The author may be using a pseudonym.

The Puerto Rican Authors

Jesus Colon came to the United States from Cayey, Puerto Rico, in 1918, when he was seventeen years old. He was a trained cigar maker and he came to find work in New York City, but he remained concerned about the conditions of workers in both countries. He often wrote to make people aware of the problems of workers in both countries; his articles have appeared in newspapers in Puerto Rico and the United States. He wrote fiction, articles and autobiographical stories which appeared in a book called A Puerto Rican in New York. He revealed his feelings about coming to the United States and his new identity as an immigrant in the city. Jesus Colon, who died in 1974, left an accurate portrayal of what life was like for immigrants.

Nicholasa Mohr is a second-generation mainland Puerto Rican; she was born in New York in 1935. Her father died when she was 10, and she had six siblings; she often used her fantastic imagination to escape the poverty of her surroundings. She studied Hispanic art and traveled to Mexico City; in the United States she attended several schools and wanted to continue with art when she graduated from Brooklyn Museum of Art School. She first worked in graphic arts and then, slowly, she became a writer. Much of her writing concerns living in New York in the Puerto Rican community, and she is able to convey the sense of identity and "family" felt by community members. She has written thirteen, primarily young-adult, novels and she currently lives in Brooklyn. Her most recent book (1998) is called Untitled Nicholasa Mohr; in it, she continues to explore her identity.

Julia Ortiz Cofer is a poet and a novelist. She was born in Puerto Rico and moved to Paterson, New Jersey, when her father, who was in the military, was transferred there. She has lived in both Puerto Rico and the United States for extended periods of time and has experienced both cultures throughout her life. She attended Augusta College in Georgia, Florida Atlantic University, and Oxford University in England. She is able to describe the reactions and feelings of characters searching for identity.

Sandra Maria Esteves is a New York poet of Puerto Rican and Dominican heritage; she encourages readers to look within themselves for their true identities. This author has done so, and now calls herself a Puerto Rican-Dominican-Boriquena-Taino-African-American. She has published five books of poetry and is one of the founders of the Nuyorican poetry movement. Her poems have appeared in many anthologies, she has won many prestigious awards, nationally and internationally, and she has been presenting literary programs throughout the United States for the past twenty-six years; she is currently available for poetry readings, literary conferences, literary seminars and poetry and creative writing workshops.

Aurora Levins Morales is a poet who defines herself in terms of her rich and varied ancestry. She is an award-winning writer, poet, essayist and historian of Puerto Rican and Jewish descent. Her subjects are multicultural histories of resistance, feminism, cultural activism and all the ways all systems of oppression affect the identity of the individual. She has written a book with her mother, Rosario Morales, called Getting Home Alive and she frequently explores themes related to identity as a female minority and multiple identity as opposed to self-defined identities and the idea of fragmentation. She has taught at several universities and is currently the community historian of Oakland, California.

Victor Hernandez Cruz is a poet who often carries the rhythms of his boyhood home in Puerto Rico in his poetry. His first book, Snaps, was published in 1969, when he was 20 years old. He was also a member of the Nuyorican poetry movement and his subsequent five books of poetry have presented his sense of identity as a unique individual. A current book, Panoramas, begins with a memoir of his life in rural Puerto Rico and continues as an examination of the poet's identity. He has written in both English and Spanish, and has won many awards. One of his more entertaining poems concerns his explanation, in English, of Spanish as "round and vegetable." This poetry often concerns some very personal concepts of the individual and the search for identity.

Miguel Pinero was a Puerto Rican poet who was able to relate to the immigrant's struggle to find success in the United States and even to become "American." He wrote fiction and won many literary awards. He was internationally known and was concerned with social causes and the problems of the poor and the immigrants. He frequently described everyday life of the weary, those in prison and those who live desperate lives. His revelations concerning individual identity revolve around people in extreme difficulty. Some titles include: The Sun Always Shines for the Cool, A Midnight Moon at the Greasy Spoon and Eulogy for a Small-Time Thief. Miguel Pinero died in 1988 at the age of 41.

The Selections and the Historical Events: Latino Caribbean Literature (The selections appear in the order in which they appear in the text.)

"The Diary of a Cuban Boy" by Anonymous (Cuban) has historical antecedents in the Cuban refugee crisis of 1980. On April 4, 1980, Peruvian authorities refused to give up six Cubans who had sought asylum in the Peruvian embassy in Havana. Cuba, therefore, withdrew security from the embassy, and more than 7,000 Cubans went to the Peruvian embassy. Fidel Castro first agreed to allow them to leave, and then decreed that all those who wanted to leave the country were free to go. The port of Mariel was opened to a fleet of private vessels from Florida, and as many as 4,000 people per day arrived in Florida; by June more than 120,000 people had left the country. The U.S. government set up temporary centers to handle the amazing influx of people in Florida, Arizona, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. The story told by Anonymous shows his feelings about his confusion, unhappiness, and his reaction to the big change in his life and his hopes for the future as he begins to create a new identity in the United States.

"Little Things Are Big" by Jesus Colon (Puerto Rican) relates to Puerto Rican ethnicity and the cultural combination of indigenous peoples, Spanish colonists and Africans. From these three groups evolve the present day Puerto Ricans. There is little racial discrimination on the island, itself, but Puerto Ricans who come to the United States often find, as did Jesus Colon, that they must consider the identity associated with their Spanish heritage as well as their skin color. The expository story is about an incident in which a young man believes he may experience prejudice

if he offers help to a young woman in the subway. The author's feelings about his Puerto Rican identity are clearly stated.

"El Doctor" by Julia Alvarez (Dominican) is connected to the dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo. From 1492 to 1863, the island was under Spanish rule. Following independence and a long period of hardship and unrest, a government was put in place in 1924. Trujillo rose to power and from 1930 until his death in 1961, Trujillo ruled as a dictator; after his assassination, the republic suffered political unrest, terrorism, riots and severe economic difficulties. The background of total results in several characteristics the author sees in her father, the main character, who fled from Trujillo's oppression. She examines his sense of identity, and, of course, provides insight into her own character, as well.

"La Luisa" by Pablo Medina (Cuban) provides details concerning the government ownership of small farms in Cuba. After Fidel Castro came into power in 1959, he began moving toward a Socialist model and the first step was Cuban takeover of foreign owned sugar plantations. By 1968, the government owned all businesses except small farms, which were still owned and worked by manual labor. Finally, the farms like those owned by Medina's grandfather were taken over and became state farms on which much of the work was done by machinery. The old-fashioned way of life, which Medina remembered from his childhood, was gone and the identity of the small farmer was changed forever.

"An Awakening...Summer 1956" by Nicholasa Mohr (Puerto Rican) is historical fiction. The main character is described in detail, as is the small Texas town of about 50 years ago. Although the story is narrative, it has a strong basis in reality. The identity of the character is challenged as she faces mindless prejudice. The fictional event has the feeling and the appearance of reality, as it must have been experienced by many immigrants to the United States. The struggles of a Puerto Rican woman in the small Texas town seem like a personal history.

"Raining Backwards" by Roberto G. Fernandez (Cuban) reveals mixed feelings among Cuban immigrants. Some immigrants were unwilling exiles from the homeland, and they would return if the political and economic challenges changed. Some Cuban immigrants arrived with no desire to make a permanent home in the United States. There were three major instances of immigration from Cuba: 1959-1962, following the Batista government, when about 7,000 middle class Cubans fled Castro's Cuba, 1965-1973, when the U.S. government sponsored an airlift to transport immigrants by plane, and 1980, when Castro removed restrictions and allowed 120,000 people to leave the country. The narrative story is not specifically set during a particular immigration wave, but it realistically portrays the author's efforts to help his grandmother return to Cuba before she dies and his own thoughts about growing older in the United States.

"American History" by Julia Ortiz Cofer (Puerto Rican) is a narrative story which has a historical connection to the assassination of President John Kennedy in 1963. The story describes the culture of Puerto Rico and the culture of the mainland through the reactions of the characters to the national tragedy. Americans of varying cultural antecedents mourned the death of the president who had championed aid to education, a new civil rights bill and the end of discrimination in federal housing. The author describes the feeling of loss in a multiethnic neighborhood like the one in which she lived in her youth, and she also delineates the complex

feeling of the Puerto Rican teenager who experiences the much more immediate tragedy of rejection. The girl is not sure how the death of the President will affect her life, but her sense of self is surely the focus of the events in the story.

"Latin Jazz" by Virgil Suarez (Cuban) takes place during the Cuban revolution. When Fidel Castro's rebellion against dictator Fulgencio Batista began, it had many followers. Castro was a hero who had delivered the people from tyranny and economic interference from the United States, but his subsequent alliance with the Soviet Union alienated many of his former followers. The narrative story depicts the lives of various family members who fled to the United States and settled in Los Angeles during the revolution. The story is divided into sections which feature individual family members, and, as the story progresses, the lives, feelings and events intertwine. The author describes the missed feelings about the "jazzy" Cuban identity as it is translated by each of his characters.

"Affirmation #3: Take Off Your Mask" by Sandra Maria Esteves (Puerto Rican/Dominican) is a short poem about inner feelings as one's true identity.

"Dedication" by Gustavo Perez Firmat (Cuban) poetically explains the author's feelings about his mixed identity and writing in English as opposed to his native Spanish.

"Child of the Americas" by Aurora Levins Morales (Puerto Rican) reveals and defines her personal sense of identity through an explanation of her heritage.

"Migrating Notes" by Josefina Baez (Dominican) is an effective explanation of being in both cultures and sensing a division as a result; she feels her identity is fragmented.

"You Call Me By Old Names" by Rhina Espaillat (Dominican) is a short poem which provides the viewpoint on identity from a person who came to the United States as a political exile at the age of seven. The poem indicates that she prefers her current identity to her previous life.

"Poem" by Victor Hernandez Cruz (Puerto Rican) reflects the music the author knew during his formative years: Afro-Caribbean salsa. His identity as a poet has evolved from similar explorations of his youth throughout his other works.

"In My Country" by Ginetta E. Berloso Candelario (Dominican) is a poem by a journalist. It describes fear and sadness associated with migration and the idea of becoming a "new person" who flees towards hope.

"Seeing Snow" by Gustavo Perez Firmat (Cuban) cites the idea of seeing snow as a concept foreign to his former culture and to his ancestors. In effect, he is asking about his own identity, now that he lives in a place where he sees snow, and it is always surprising.

"And Then Came... Freedom to Dream" by Miguel Pinero (Puerto Rican) is a longer poem about the author's aspirations to fit in as a citizen in a new country. It also has a slightly sarcastic tone as it details the idea of trying to become a real "American" by climbing the ladder and working towards success.

II. Inquiring School Lesson Plans for Latino Caribbean Literature,

Edited by Virginia Seeley

"The Diary of a Cuban Boy" by Anonymous. Although other Standards may apply, the focus of these lesson is on Communication Standard 2 (reading) and 4 (writing.)

Opening: (Content, purpose, process, visual structure) Objective: The student will examine culturally connected literature, the theme of identity, and review the characteristics of narrative writing as measured by the completion of a variety of responses to literature.

Process: Literary characteristics of narrative and expository writing will be reviewed, using a Venn diagram as a visual structure.

Script: Today we'll consider a sample of non-fiction, or expository writing. The title is "The Diary of a Cuban Boy" and we don't know the author's name. The concept of anonymity will be discussed, if necessary. Why is it important to analyze this kind of writing? At what other times, or in what other situations would you normally examine expository writing?

Guided reading of pp. 4-15; the selection may be read aloud or silently.

An expository visual structure (graphic organizer) will be presented: matrix, list, hierarchy, topical net if a descriptive focus is desired and linear string, falling dominoes or branching tree if the focus is on sequence.

Middle: (Prior knowledge, active participation, visual structure) Continue with the expository visual structure. Elicit items for the structure from the students and add them to the diagram on the board or chart paper.

Thought Questions: How did the politics of the Cuban boy's father cause his life to change

drastically? What do you think was the worst thing about life in the camp? What do you think will

happen to the Cuban boy in the future, and why? What kind of a person is the main character and how do you know? What are the positive and negative aspects of a diary as a historical record? Review vocabulary as needed: immigrants, emigration, responsible, certificate, counter-revolutionary, familiar, abandon.

Closing: (Follow-up questions and activities)

Script: What kind of a story did we read today? How do you know...? Why did we analyze it?

How did we analyze it? When can we use the same visual structure again? Why is it important to analyze expository structure? What did the story tell us about the theme of identity? These activities may be done cooperatively. If so, Citizenship Standards 7 and 8 are also applicable.

Follow-up activities for class work and homework:

Write a prediction for the next five years of the boy's life. Compose a Literary Response form. Create an alternative visual structure to analyze the story. Illustrate the sequence of the story. Write your own exposition about a life-changing event and explain how it affected your sense of identity. Complete the text questions (p. 14.) Complete the following activities: 1) List the needs of the main character. Which needs would be common to any young person of his age? Which needs are dictated by the historical time period in which he lives? 2) Create a comparison chart which shows the reasons for the boy's frustrations concerning leaving Cuba and his hopeful attitude after he finally arrives in

Michigan. 3) Imagine that you suddenly have to emigrate to another country. Write a paragraph of explanation concerning the difficulties you might encounter and how you would feel about the move.

Note: rubrics are available in the classroom for each possible assignment.

"Little Things Are Big" by Jesus Colon. Continue with Communications Standards 2 and 4.

Opening: Continue with the identity/expository writing objective. Review expository characteristics as needed.

Script: Today we'll consider another sample of expository writing. Why is it important to analyze and understand nonfiction? (Review "content area writing.") In what situations, is it necessary to be able to analyze nonfiction? In this sample, the historical time frame is part of the setting (p. 15). Complete a "T" Chart to compare the 1920s-1950s to "today." Discuss all aspects in a cooperative or large group setting

Silent reading, pp. 16-19.

Middle: We can use a visual organizer to assist us in analyzing the story. Which visual would be most appropriate? Why? (Assist students in choosing from descriptive visuals, or devise a new visual.) Complete selected visual; review essay content.

Thought Questions: What does the author mean when he says "I buried my courtesy..."? Of what was the author afraid? Would this incident happen today? Why? Why not, or under what circumstances? Why was it necessary for the author to make his decision (final paragraph)?

Closing: What kind of a selection did we read? Why did we analyze it? How could this type of analysis help us understand other stories? When could the same visual be used again? What are some characteristics of expository writing? How can you tell that the story is nonfiction? What kind of a man was the author? How do you know? What do you think you might do in the same situation?

Follow-up activities...

Write an essay about a similar situation which you have experienced. Complete a Literary Response Form. Create an alternative graphic organizer for the essay. Illustrate the sequence of events in the story. Complete the text questions and activities (p. 19.) Complete the following activities: 1) When the author says "This is what racism and prejudice and chauvinism and official artificial divisions can do to a people and a nation," what does he mean? 2) Do you agree or disagree with the author's opinion? Explain. 3) Why does the author say he will offer his help in the future regardless of how the offer may be received? 4) What is your definition of "self-respect" and how does it relate to your identity?

"El Doctor" by Julia Alvarez. Continue with Communications Standards 2 and 4.

Opening: Continue with the identity/expository objective. Review expository characteristics and define biography and autobiography through brief discussion

Script: Today we'll examine another sample of expository literature. Why is it important to analyze and understand expository writing? Why is it important to recognize and understand biographical writing?

Guided reading: pp. 20-34.

We can use a matrix to analyze this sample. Review the construction of the matrix, if necessary.

Middle: Continue the matrix to completion, eliciting responses from students for each category (character, interests, activities, other.) This can also be completed as a cooperative activity or as partner work.

Thought Questions: What was the most important (or the most interesting) thing about "El Doctor?" Would a different biographer (i.e. one not related to him) have viewed him differently? Why or why not? What are some environmental or historical factors which might have influenced the main character? What kind of a person was he? What kind of a person is the author? How do you know?

Closing:

What did we analyze today? Why? How can you use this type of analysis in the future?

What did the author say about identity? About history? How did you know that the story was a biography? Other suitable questions may be added.

Follow up activities...

Complete the text questions (p. 35.) Write about a segment of the story in diary form. Write a similar

character sketch about a relative or about someone you know well. List the plot attributes in the story(who, what, where, when, how, why...) Create a Literary Response Form. Devise another

activity related to the story and complete it, subject to approval by the instructor. Complete the following activities:

1) Describe the characteristics of someone you know well in paragraph form. Include personality traits, how they react to specific situations, and what you find remarkable about them. 2) Why do you think that "El Doctor" could not get out of the habit of being careful with money and other resources even though he no longer had to conserve? 3) Why were the history

lessons he tried to convey to his children so important to him? 4) Do you think that "El Doctor" was a good parent? Why or why not?

"La Luisa" by Pablo Medina. Continue with Communications Standards 2 and 4.

Opening: Continue with the identity/expository objective.

Guided reading, pp. 37-44; the selection may be read aloud or silently.

Script: How can you tell that the selection is expository? Is the story an example of sequence or of description? How do you know? What is the main idea? How can you tell? What are some of the supporting details? Why is it important to understand and analyze expository writing? In what situation(s) could you use this kind of analysis? (Refer to content area reading.) Which visual structure would be appropriate as a vehicle for analysis? (Choose from descriptive graphic organizers.)

Middle: Continue with chosen visual: Topical net, Hierarchy or List. Review and present the content.

Thought questions: What is the main idea? What is the author trying to convey about the area? What kind of a person is the author? How do you know? Do you think his early environment had an affect on his later life? Explain.

Closing: What kind of a story did we read today? How did we analyze it? Why did we analyze it? How can this type of analysis be helpful in other situations? How did you know that the selection was descriptive? How did you determine the main idea? Do you think the author's identity is clearly portrayed? Why or why not?

Follow-up activities...

Write a Literary Response Form for the selection. Complete the text questions (p. 45.) Illustrate three aspects of life in La Luisa. Use an alternative structure to analyze the story. Compare the story to a similar descriptive story you have read. List the ways in which the author reveals his identity. Complete the following activities: 1) Do you think you would like to live in La Luisa? Explain. 2) Use a chart to compare La Luisa to a place that you know. 3) In order to live and survive in La Luisa, what are some skills you would need to have?

"An Awakening...Summer, 1956" by Nicholasa Mohr. Continue with Communications Standards 2 and 4.

Opening: The student will examine culturally connected literature, the theme of identity, and the characteristics of narrative writing as measured by completion of a variety of responses to literature. Background information (see p. 50.)

Script: Today we'll examine narrative writing; this sample is realistic fiction. (Review narrative and expository characteristics, if necessary.) We'll consider the aspects of realism as we study the structure of the story(characters, plot, setting, solution...) Occasionally, one part of the story structure may "stand out" or seem more important. In this story, the main character, as she reacts to the setting, seems to be the most important story element. We can use a visual organizer to analyze the story. Why would we want to analyze a narrative story? Other questions may be added.

Silent reading of pp. 51-60. Note: vocabulary makes reading the story aloud inappropriate.

Middle: Introduce and continue with the visual organizer. It consists of a chart with descriptors of what the main character says, does and feels in a large circle in the center; the minor characters, Ann and Ed can be added as satellites. Lines form a background for the circle(s) and the events of the story can be listed in sequence. The organizer can be changed or expanded as needed.

Thought Questions: Was the young woman's reaction usual or unusual? Explain. Could she have reacted in any other way? Is the historical time frame (setting) important to the story? Explain

How did the encounter change the identity of the main character? How do you know?

Closing: How is dialogue and speech important in the story? Continue with standard closing questions.

Follow up activities...

Continue with standard activities. Complete a paragraph of summary for the story. Compare this story to another you may have read or to a real incident using a Venn diagram or a "T" chart. Create a story map or graph for the selection. Write an essay in which you agree or disagree that this is a good example of realistic fiction. Complete the following activities: 1) Explain how this incident caused the main character to "grow up." 2) What effect do you think the young woman's actions had on the storekeeper? 3) Write a paragraph which reveals your own sense of self pride and identity.

"Raining Backwards" by Roberto G. Fernandez. Continue with Communications Standards 2 and 4.

Opening: Continue with the identity/narrative writing objective. Complete a predictogram, or predict from the title. Guided reading, pp. 63-71.

Script: What kind of a story is this? Do you think that the phrase "magical reality" could apply? Why or why not? How can you tell that this is a narrative story? Review story elements, if necessary. We can use a story map to analyze this selection. Present or review the visual structure.

Middle: Reread pp. 62-71, orally and complete the story map. Review fantasy and realism as needed. Complete one or more of the following activities (charts) on: elements of humor, elements of surprise, elements of fantasy, elements of realism, meaning of the title.

Thought questions: How, as a boy, did the author feel about his grandmother's requests? As an old man, how did the author feel? What caused the shift in the author's thinking? What is your opinion of the story? Why? What kind of a person is the author? How does he clarify the identity of the grandmother? Which historical event is related to this story? How do you know?

Closing: Continue with the standard closing questions. Do you think the selection has any deeper or hidden meanings? What does that say about the author?

Follow-up activities...

Continue with the standard activities. Write a paragraph about the author's purpose, or the author's message. Write an original short story which has elements of fantasy. Complete the following activities: 1) What does the title of the story mean? What is an omen? 2) How is the story like a parable or an allegory? 3) What do you think happened to the main character? Cite evidence from the story. Why do you think the older people in the story always choose their grandchildren to help them?

"American History" by Judith Ortiz Cofer. Continue with Communications Standards 2 and 4.

Opening: Continue with the identity/narrative writing objective. Review realistic fiction and present historical fiction using a Topical net or Branching tree diagram. Other categories may be selected by students.

Script: Today, we'll consider a sample of realistic fiction in which the historical setting is important. Why might it be necessary to analyze or understand historical fiction? We can use a visual structure called an Analysis of Setting to study this sample.

Oral reading of pp. 73-84.

Middle: Continue with the Analysis of Setting visual; review time, place, and events.

Thought questions: Why was it ironic that Eugene's mother rejected the narrator on the same day

that the President was assassinated? Why was her first visit to Eugene more important to the narrator than the historical tragedy? Compare the historical tragedy to the narrator's personal tragedy. What kind of a person was the main character? How do you know? What did the story tell you about the

historical events? Does identity affect how a person might respond to something which is historically significant? Explain.

Follow-up activities...

Continue with standard follow up activities. Write a "where I was when _____ happened" story of your own. Compare the story to another example of realistic fiction you have read. Complete the following activities: 1) Is this story particular to Latin culture, or could something like this happen to anyone, with a variety of reasons for the rejection? Explain. 2) Which part of the story did you remember best, or like best? Why do you think that particular part of the story was meaningful for you? 3) Write your own descriptive paragraph about rejection. How can a person deal with being rejected? How might rejection affect your sense of identity?

"Latin Jazz" by Virgil Suarez. Continue with Communications Standards 2 and 4.

Opening: Continue with identity/narrative writing objective.

Script: We will examine elements of realism as we review the events of the story; this is a sample of narrative writing. Review realism, narrative, elements of story structure, as needed. Occasionally, one aspect of story structure may seem to be more important, and, in this story, the characters are the prevalent (or predominant) aspect. We can use a Character matrix to analyze the story. Why is it important to understand/analyze narrative writing? Realistic writing? Characters?

Guided reading of pp. 87-96, aloud or silently. Students may want to read the "parts" dramatically.

Present Character matrix and review the structure as needed.

Middle: Continue with visual structure and review the content. The matrix consists of the three characters (Angel, Concha and Hugo) and an analysis of personality, situation and typical activities.

Thought Questions: What affected the lives of each character? How did each character view life? What was important to each character? What does the title mean? What historical event is connected to the story? What is your opinion of the story? Explain. What does the story tell you about the author's identity? What is the author's purpose or the writer's intent? Explain.

Closing: Continue with the standard closing questions. Why was a matrix appropriate in analyzing the characters? Why is it important to understand realistic writing? What does realistic writing tell you about identity?

Follow-up activities...

Continue with standard activities. Complete a Venn diagram using this story and "An Awakening" or some other realistic story. Write a three- paragraph summary which devotes one paragraph to each character. Write an essay on a topic of your choice which is related to one of the characters. Complete the following activities: 1) Explain what you think the title means? How is it related to the author's identity? 2) Is it easy to become "Americanized"? Why or why not? 3) Write about a single experience which might be viewed differently by two different people. Explain how each person might react to the situation. 4) If you were in Concha's position, what would you want to share about your heritage? 5) Write a brief description of your own ideas about identity and how it is realized. Write a short dramatization of the story; performance time and place must be prearranged with the instructor.

Various poetry selections by various authors. Continue with Communications Standards 2 and 4; Citizenship Standards 7 and 8 also apply to this section of the text.

Opening: The student will examine culturally connected poetry, examine the theme of identity, and review poetic conventions as measured by the completion of a poetry matrix or another summarizing format. The objective may be altered for specific poems, or the creative aspect may be emphasized by using an objective which requires more creative expression. Review the poetic conventions(rhyme, rhythm, form, author's message, symbolism, imagery, theme, figurative language and so on.) A discussion of problems with translation would also be helpful for some of the poems.

Script: Poetry may be understood and analyzed by examining the poetic elements found in each poem. Why is it important to understand poetry? Why should we read it? What does poetry have to do with identity? Other questions may be added for specific poems.

Present matrix; review the structure and complete a sample analysis using one of the poems.

Middle: Cooperative activity: Complete the poetry matrix. This may require several days. Categories can include: rhyme, rhythm, form, author's message, symbolism, figurative language, imagery, sense of identity, relationship to history and so on. Day 1: "Affirmation #3, Take Off Your Mask" by Sandra M. Esteves, "Dedication" by Gustavo P.

Firmat, and "Child of the Americas" by Aurora Levins Morales. Day 2: "You Call Me By Old Names" by Rhina Espaillat, "Poem" by Victor Cruz, and "In My Country" by Ginetta E. Berloso Candelario. Day 3: "Seeing Snow" by Gustavo P. Firmat, "Migrating Notes" by Josefina Baez, and "And Then Came...Freedom to Dream" by Miguel Pinero. A presentation of the work product can complete the analysis.

Closing: What kind of writing is poetry? How is it different from prose? How is it the same? What can a poem tell you about the author? What can a poem tell you about yourself? When can we use this type of analysis again?

Follow-up activities...

Create a booklet of original poetry, and write a reflective essay which explains any ties to identity or to your culture. Illustrate each poem. Analyze a specific poem using one of the visual structures. Other items may be completed with the approval of the instructor. Write a short biography of one of the authors.

III. The General Homework Menu and Homework Rubrics

Students may select an assignment from the homework menu. Students may not choose to complete an assignment more than once. For example, they may not create ten vocabulary puzzles. Items are arranged in order of complexity from simple to difficult; rubrics are posted in the classroom and are presented on over-heads.

1. Create a visual or graphic organizer which analyzes the content of a specific selection. (Communications Standards 2 and 4.)

Rubric: (Rubrics generally appear in a chart or table format. They are in a more narrative format here to reflect the general format of the curriculum unit.

Advanced (or exemplary): You have identified the selection by title, author and page number. You have chosen an organizer which reflects the content of the story (narrative or expository.) The organizer is related to the content and to the aspects chosen for analysis(description, sequence, hierarchy of events, etc.). All main points and supporting details are included in the visual. You have included the events of the story and indicated a relationship to the theme (identity.) You have maintained a high level in the area of conventions: spelling, grammar, punctuation and capitalization are error free. The organizer is rendered in a concise, clear manner. Corrections to your diagram are not obvious.

Above proficient(or discerning): You have identified the selection by title and author. the organizer is appropriate for the content and for the specific story. Most main points and supporting details are included in the visual. You have listed the events and the implications of the events. There are few errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation or capitalization(conventions.) The organizer is neatly rendered and lettered; corrections are not obvious.

Proficient: The selection is identified by title or page number. You have selected an organizer which is appropriate for the specific story. All main points are included in the visual. You have spelled most of the words correctly; there are few mistakes in grammar, capitalization and punctuation. The organizer is neat, in appearance.

Basic (or literal): You have identified the selection in a general way. The organizer does not match the content or the genre of the story(narrative or expository.) Some main points are included and some events are listed. There are many spelling errors. The organizer is difficult to understand due to mistakes in grammar, capitalization, and punctuation. The organizer is readable.

Below Basic (or limited): You have not identified the selection. The organizer is incomplete or it is incorrect. One or two main points are included; events are ignored and not listed. Numerous errors in all areas affect the reader's understanding of the organizer. Your organizer is illegible.

2. Select vocabulary words and create a game or a puzzle. (This item can be adapted to the development of a vocabulary test.) Communications Standards 2 and 3.

Rubric:

Advanced (or exemplary): You have selected more than ten words. The words are complex(multi-syllable) or are of a higher level of difficulty. They are not easily understood through the text alone (context clues.) The puzzle or game is complex and requires higher level thinking skills. It could be completed by a student using the text and another reference book. The game is neatly made; the rules or directions are clearly written and examples are provided.

Above proficient (or discerning): You have selected more than ten words which were of interest to you. They are defined through a combination of context clues and background knowledge. The puzzle/game is difficult. It could be completed by a student using the text and a study aid or reference. The puzzle is neatly made, printed or typed. The rules are clearly written; examples are provided.

Proficient (or thoughtful): More than ten words were selected; they are of average difficulty. They may be easily defined through context clues. The puzzle/game is moderately difficult. It could be completed by any student using the text as a reference. The game/puzzle is neatly made, printed or typed and the rules are clearly written.

Basic (or literal): Eight or nine words were selected. You chose words at random, or they are of a lower level of difficulty. They are easily understood without context clues. The puzzle/game is easy and could be completed by any student, without using the text as a reference. The puzzle or game is legible. Directions or rules are not provided.

Below Basic (or limited): You have selected seven words or fewer; the words were simple and easy to understand. The puzzle/game is simple and could be completed by any student without using the text. Your puzzle/game is not legible; rules or directions are not present.

3. Devise a comprehension test for a specific selection. (This item can be adapted to the development of a game or puzzle.) Communications Standards 2, 3 and 4.

Rubric:

Advanced (or exemplary): You have stated the purpose of the test and defined and explained comprehension; a title has been listed. The type of test matches the focus of the selection. The test may contain several different parts and each part is related to comprehension. The length of the test is appropriate to the difficulty of the content. The test is long enough to reveal comprehension. You have stated the directions clearly and indicated how the test will be scored. If needed, additional information and examples have been provided. The appearance of the document is neat; there are no errors in conventions.

Above proficient (or discerning): You have stated the purpose of the test and explained what comprehension means. The type of test matches the focus and the whole test relates to comprehension. The questions in the test are varied. The length is related to the length of the selection. Directions are clearly stated and you have indicated how the test will be scored in the test directions.

Proficient (or thoughtful): You have identified the focus of the test as comprehension. The test is objective or open-ended. The content is designated and test questions cover the main ideas in the content. The length of the test is moderate and is related to the main ideas in the content. You have written directions which are easily understood by your peers. The appearance of the test is neat; most words are spelled correctly. There are few errors in grammar, punctuation or capitalization.

Basic (or literal): You have not stated or defined the purpose of the test. The test type matches the purpose but it is not well constructed. The content is identified but it is only partially reflected in the test question. The length of the test is inappropriate: it is too long or too short. Directions are confusing or hard to understand. The test is legible, but there are many errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation or capitalization.

Below Basic (or limited): You have not indicated the purpose of the test in any way. The type of test does not match the comprehension focus. The content is not identified and is not clear from reading the test questions. The length of the test is inappropriate; it is too short. Directions are not provided. The test is hard to understand because there are many errors in conventions and it is not neatly written.

4. Read a novel set in the Caribbean region and complete a standard book review.

Communications Standards 2 and 4.

Rubric:

Advanced: You have included a complete heading and publishing information for the novel. You have included a general statement which describes the genre of the book .

A summary provides information on setting, characters, plot and interesting details. You have stated the author's purpose. In stating your opinion, you have indicated what you liked about the book, generally and specifically, what you did not like about the book, and what flaws were present. You have explained if you would read another book of the same type or by the same author, and why. You have given your general opinion of the book and made a concluding statement. The book review is neatly written in ink, or it is typed, and is error free in terms of conventions.

Above proficient: You have included a complete heading and publishing information. A general statement is present and you have provided a complete summary, but you have not indicated the author's purpose. You have stated your opinion, but you have not explained your comments. You have given your general opinion and made a concluding statement. The book review is neatly written in ink, or it is typed, and errors have been corrected neatly.

Proficient: You have included a complete heading and publishing information. A general statement is present. Your summary is present but you have not included one of the main areas: setting, characters, plot or interesting details. You have given your general opinion, but specific statements concerning reading similar books are missing. You have made a concluding statement. The book review is neatly written in ink, or it is typed, and there are few errors in conventions (grammar, spelling, capitalization, punctuation.)

Basic: You have included the publishing information, the heading and a general statement. Your summary is present, but you have not included two or more of the required areas. You have given your general opinion, but you have not provided specific examples; you have not followed the book review format. You have not included a conclusion. The book review is written neatly in ink, or it is typed, but there are numerous errors in conventions.

Below Basic: You have included the heading and most of the publishing information. You have not included a general statement which indicates what kind of a book you read. Your summary is present, but includes only the plot. You have given a general statement of opinion, but you have not included any specific examples; you have not followed the book review format. The book review is written neatly in ink, or it is typed, but there are so many errors in conventions that it is hard to understand.

5. Write and illustrate an original poem on the theme of "identity." Comprehension

Standard 4; Arts and Humanities Standards 3 and 4.

Rubric:

Advanced: You have identified and explained what "identity" means, including an introduction, if necessary. The poem is readily recognizable as original. It represents a personal viewpoint. It also contains unique or surprising insights or examples or original thought. You have made a clear statement about identity and details in the poem support your statement; the poem is meaningful to the reader. Your poem follows a self-designated format. You have provided an explanation, if the poem is not readily understood. Your illustration is in color and contains details relevant to the message of the poem. The illustration aids the reader's understanding of the text.

Above proficient: You identify the theme (identity) within the first few lines of the poem. The poem is original and represents your personal viewpoint. The message of the poem is recognized easily; details within the poem support the reader's understanding. The poem follows a format which is easily identified by the reader. The illustration is in color and contains details important to the message of the poem.

Proficient: You have stated or implied the theme. The poem is original and not copied from another source, although it may be a parody or it may show the influence of other poets. The message of the poem concerning identity is clear. The poem follows a traditional format or it is recognizable as a particular kind of poem. The illustration is in color and it matches the content of the poem; the content may be literal or inferred.

Basic: You have implied, but not clearly stated or discussed, the identity theme. The poem is not clearly original. It bears resemblance to the works of other poets. The relationship of the poem to the theme of identity is not clear. The poem follows no recognizable format. The illustration is present, but it does not match the content of the poem.

Below Basic: You have not identified the theme and it is not clear from the poem. The poem is copied from another source. There is no evidence of a message concerning the theme of identity. The writing would not be called a poem by most readers. The illustration is unrecognizable or missing.

6. Write an original song or rap on the theme of "identity." Communications Standards 4
and 7; Arts and Humanities Standards 3 and 4.

Rubric:

Advanced: You have indicated that the theme is identity through the title or by writing a brief introduction to your audience. The song/rap is obviously original; it shows a persona viewpoint. It contains unique or surprising insights or original ideas. The message of your work is clear; details in the work support your message and it is meaningful to the reader. The song/rap follows a recognizable pattern. In performance, the words/content are understandable. The performance clarifies the message and the author's intent. You have used props or costumes to further your message.

Above proficient: You have identified "identity" as the theme through a descriptive title for your song/rap. Your work is original and it presents your personal viewpoint. The message in your song/rap is easy to recognize. Details support the listener's understanding of your message. It follows a standard form which is easily identified by the audience. When performed, your message is clarified and clear to your audience.

Proficient: You have stated or implied that the theme of your song/rap is "identity." Your work is original, but it may show the influences of others; it may be a parody. The message of your song/rap is clear. It

follows a standard form which is recognized by most people. The audience understands your song/rap when you perform it.

7. Write a short story using the theme of "identity." This homework option may be adapted

To writing a first-person narrative account, or to writing an original work in the same style as the sample selections found in the text. Communications Standard 4; Arts and Humanities 1, 3 and 4.

Rubric:

Advanced: The focus is clear; the theme, mood and setting are obvious to the reader. The story is clearly fiction and the reader can easily categorize it as realistic, historic, autobiographical, mystery and so on. Characters are defined by description, actions, dialogue, secondary characters, action or plot and they interact in a meaningful way. The setting (time, place) is fully described. The plot/problem is a reasonable outgrowth of the search for identity. Details of action, characters and setting reveal the plot or the problem. The conclusion of the story solves the problem or finalizes the plot; there are no "loose ends." Dialogue is used to further the action, to help to define the characters and to add interest to the story. Action details are used to further the plot and clarify the theme. An appropriate order is used. Details are related to the identity theme. Conventions are error free. The story is neat in appearance; it is written in ink or it is typed. You have provided a cover sheet, entry slip or title page.

Above proficient: The focus is clear; the theme and purpose of the story are evident to the reader. The story is clearly fiction, although it may be autobiographical. Characters are clearly defined through actions, descriptions or dialogue. Secondary characters are present. You have described the setting (time/place) fully. The plot/problem is well presented. The details of the plot reflect the theme. The conclusion solves the problem in the story, but there may be a few unresolved subplots. Dialogue is used to define the action, explain the theme of identity or to describe characters or setting. You have provided action details to further the story line. The story follows a logical sequence. You have made few errors in conventions. The story is neatly written in ink, or it is typed. You have provided a title page.

Proficient: The focus is clear and the theme is evident to most readers. The story is clearly fiction, but it may contain some expository elements. Characters are defined by descriptions, actions or dialogue. You have indicated the setting. Your plot is clearly related to the theme of identity. The conclusion is appropriate for the plot. Dialogue, if appropriate, has been added to further the action in the story. Action details are included and the story sequence is understandable. There are some errors in conventions. The story is neatly written in pencil. You have included a descriptive title.

Basic: The focus of the story is not immediately clear to the reader. You have not made it clear that the story is fiction. You have several characters, but they are not clearly described. The setting is only indicated. Your plot or problem is not clear or it is not connected to the theme. The conclusion is ineffective, or your story does not have a definite conclusion. If you have included dialogue, it does not further the reader's understanding. Some action details are present, but they are not related to the conclusion. Errors in conventions interfere with the reader's understanding. The story is readable.

Below Basic: Your story is not focused; it is not clear that the theme is identity. No attempt to write fiction was made. You have described a few characters, but they are not meaningful. The setting is sketchy or missing. The plot is vague and you have not related it to the theme. There is no reasonable conclusion. Dialogue is missing. Very little action is present; details are uninteresting. Errors prevent the reader from understanding your story. Your story is not legible; it is hard to read and it is not neat in appearance.

8. Write a short (one scene, one act) dramatization based on a selection in the text which

focuses on the theme of identity. Communications Standards 4, 6 and 8; Arts and Humanities Standards 1-4.

Rubric: The short story rubric may be applied to this homework item, with the following additional segments.

Advanced: Your work is clearly a play. Each of the following is evident: dialogue, stage directions, introduction, narration or explanation, costume/properties description. The performance is well done and directed to an appropriate audience.

Above proficient: The dramatization is clearly a play. Each of the following is present: dialogue, stage directions, narration or explanation, costume/properties description. The performance enhances the connections to the "identity" theme for the audience.

Proficient: The dramatization is recognizable as a play. You have included: dialogue, stage directions, narration, costume/properties descriptions. The performance clarifies your definition of the theme.

Basic: It is not evident that the work is a play. Some of the format conventions are present, but you have missed some key elements. The performance is hesitant or sketchy.

Below Basic: You have not attempted to write a play about identity. Few of the format conventions are present. You did not complete your performance.

9. Write an original expository article using your own research which relates to the theme of

Identity. Communications Standards 1-4.

Rubric:

Advanced: You have included a topic sentence which indicates the focus of the article, defines the topic and explains the expository focus. You have included facts which are fully explored. A wide range of research is evident. Supporting details are provided for each fact. You have included meanings and implications of your information. Your conclusion contains a restatement, a summary and a reinforcement of your focus. Conventions are error free. The article is typed or written in ink. You have included a title page and an illustration or a graphic organizer.

Above Proficient: Your topic sentence indicates the focus of your article and defines your topic. Facts are presented in an organized way. Your knowledge of the topic is evident. Supporting information is provided for the facts; you have explained the information. Your conclusion contains a restatement and a summary. There are few errors in conventions. Your article is neatly written in ink; a visual organizer or an illustration is present. Corrections are not obvious.

Proficient: Your topic sentence presents the focus of your article. Facts are presented and fully explained. Supporting information is provided for the facts in the article. A concluding statement which restates your focus is present. Most works are spelled correctly. There are few mistakes in grammar, capitalization or punctuation. Your article is written neatly in pencil; corrections have been made neatly.

Basic: Your introductory sentence does not present the focus of the article. Some facts are presented, but your article is predominantly narrative rather than expository. Some supporting information is present. The final statement is not a conclusion; it does not flow from the information given. There are many errors in spelling. Grammar errors are evident. There are many mistakes in capitalization and punctuation. The article, however, is readable.

Below Basic: The focus of the article is not identified, or misidentified, or the topic sentence is missing. Incorrect or incomplete facts are presented or the article is actually a narrative story. Additional information is incorrect or missing. Information may be correct but have nothing to do with the topic. The

concluding statement is missing. Numerous mistakes in all conventions make the article difficult to understand. The article is difficult to read and the appearance is not neat.

10. Write a one-page Literary Response for a specific selection. (Students may use a standard format called a Literary Response Form to complete the homework item.)

Communications Standards 2 and 4.

Rubric:

Advanced: You have identified your chosen selection by title, author and page number.

You have summarized the main idea and supporting details of the story in at least one paragraph. A full, detailed explanation of how the story is meaningful to you is present. You have included an explanation of your thoughts and feelings about the events in the story. A succinct statement which contains and explains your over-all opinion concludes the response. Correct punctuation is used; there are no errors in capitalization. All words are spelled correctly and there are no errors in grammar. The response is neatly written or typed.

Above Proficient: You have identified the selection by title and author. The main idea and supporting details are presented in one paragraph or several sentences. You have explained how you relate to the story. You have explained your thoughts and feelings about the events in the story. You have included a brief statement which gives your opinion and explains your conclusions. There are few errors in conventions. The response is neatly written, or typed. Corrections are not obvious.

Proficient: The selection is clearly identified by title. The main idea is presented in paragraph form. A connection to the student is delineated in several sentences, but story details are lacking. You have included your thoughts and feelings concerning the events of the story in one or two sentences. You have included an opinion statement which concludes your response. There are some errors in the conventions. The response is neatly written. Corrections have been made neatly.

Basic: The selection is identified in a general, but not necessarily by title or by author. You have included an idea from the story, but it is not the main idea. It may be a supporting detail. You've mentioned a connection to yourself, but you have not explained it fully. The student's thoughts or feelings are mentioned, but not explained.

An opinion statement is present, but it does not conclude the response. Some key words are spelled incorrectly; there are errors in other conventions. The response is readable.

Below Basic: The selection is not identified, or it is only identified as a story. You have included an idea related to the story. An incomplete idea or a slight connection to yourself has been mentioned. The student's thoughts or feelings are not stated or explained. Your statement of opinion is missing; there is no real conclusion to your response. Many words are spelled incorrectly and the errors in the other conventions make the response difficult to understand; the response is illegible.

11. Write an essay which indicates the relationship of the story to the theme of identity. This

homework item may be adapted to other essay topics. For example: Write an essay which explains why the selection is narrative. Write an essay which explains why the selection is expository. Write an essay which explains why a specific selection could be tied to any culture. Write an essay which presents and explains the historical connection to a specific selection. Communications Standards 1-4, 5 and 7.

Rubric: (Students may also use an essay guidelines form or criteria check list.)

Advanced: Your introductory paragraph consists of three sentences or more which include a general statement, a specific topic statement and a conclusion or a transition. Your concluding paragraph consists of at least three sentences which restate the main point, summarize your reasoning and conclude the essay. The body of the essay consists of one or more paragraphs which explain the main point and provide numerous examples from the text and from your own life. The conventions are error free. The essay is written neatly in ink; any corrections are not obvious. The essay guidelines have been followed and you have made any necessary revisions (writing process.)

Above Proficient: Your introduction consists of three or more sentences which introduce the topic, make a specific statement and form a conclusion or a transition. Your concluding paragraph is at least three sentences in length; you restated the main point, summarized your reasons and concluded your essay. The body of your essay is formed of one or more paragraphs. You have explained your topic and provided numerous examples from the text. You have included examples from your own experience. There are few errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation or capitalization. The essay is written clearly in ink; the few corrections are not obvious. The essay guidelines have been followed and you have revised your work.

Proficient: Your introductory paragraph consists of three sentences which state your focus, explain the topic and provide a transition. The concluding paragraph includes three sentences in which you restate the main idea, summarize your reasoning and conclude the essay. The body of the essay consists of one paragraph in which you provide numerous examples from the text to prove your point. You also include some examples from "real life." Most words are spelled correctly. There are few mistakes in the other conventions. The essay is written neatly in pencil; corrections have been made neatly. The essay guidelines have been followed and you have made specific statements.

Basic: Your introduction is incomplete but you have included a statement on the topic and a conclusion. One or two sentences which restate and conclude your essay form the concluding paragraph. The body of your essay gives examples from the text. There are many errors in spelling. Grammar errors affect the reader's comprehension. There are many errors in punctuation and capitalization. The essay is legible. Some basic requirements from the essay guidelines are missing; you have not made necessary revisions.

Below Basic: An introduction is present, but you have only written a general statement. Your conclusion consists of a sentence which either restates or summarizes. The body of your essay contains a few statements but no examples from the text. Numerous errors in the conventions affect the reader's understanding adversely. The essay is difficult to read. No attempt has been made to follow the essay guidelines.

12. Write a research-based report which relates to the text. This homework item may be

adapted to other related topics. For example: Consider a problem specific to the Caribbean region and report on the effects the problem might have on identity. Write and present an oral report concerning one of the islands, or one of the authors. Communications Standards 1, 2, 3, 6, and 7.

Rubric:

Advanced: Your information is organized in a clear, understandable way. A main idea is stated and supported by facts. The purpose of your report is clear. Original ideas and interpretations of the facts are present. Relevant information is used and some surprising or unusual facts are present. Examples from various sources (at least 5) are cited accurately. The appearance of your report is neat; conventions are error free. The report is neatly written in ink, or it is typed. Diagrams or illustrations have been included, if appropriate. You have included a title page, entry slip or cover sheet.

Above Proficient: Information is organized in an effective way. The main idea is focused and supported by facts. The report is directed toward the central idea; facts are explained. You have used information which is relevant to the topic. You have used concrete examples from at least four texts which represent a variety of sources. Your report is neatly written in ink, or it is typed. There are few errors in the conventions and your corrections are not obvious.

Proficient: Your information is organized logically. The report has a clearly stated main idea. Facts which support the main idea are included. The report has a definite beginning, middle and ending. Basic information is present. Examples are given and explained. You have used at least three differing sources. The report is neatly written in ink. Corrections have been made neatly. Most words are spelled correctly. There are few mistakes in grammar, punctuation or capitalization.

Basic: Your information is not well organized. The main idea is unclear. Facts are limited, missing or incorrect. The report is not easily divided into recognizable parts. Opinions sometimes overshadow facts. The topic is stated but not fully explained. Few sources (two) are used. The report is readable, but there are many errors in conventions.

Below Basic: Your information is disorganized or unclear. The report is not centered on a main idea. Facts are incorrect or do not relate to the topic. The report contains more opinions or feelings than facts. Your report contains some elements of narrative writing. Your information was obtained from only one source. The report is difficult to read and it is not neatly written. Numerous errors in conventions make the report difficult for the average reader to understand.

Other: Items may be suggested by students, but they are subject to the approval of the instructor. Examples of student suggestions: Plan and participate in a cultural even associated with your Spanish class; describe it for your peers in an oral or a written report (Communications Standards 1, 2, 4, 8, and 9.) Read other works by a selected author, like Julia Alvarez, and create a comparison chart about identity (Communications Standards 1, 2, and 4.) Report (oral or written) on one aspect of culture, such as food, music or entertainment on a specific island (Communications Standards 1-4, 7, and 9.) Devise a diorama or a three dimensional map of the Caribbean region which shows significant historical events. (This last suggestion is tied to Social Studies content and could be connected to many other areas.)

IV. Assessment Options: Students will select one option. Rubrics

which follow are also posted in the class room.

1. Traditional Test: matching and an essay selection. Communications Standards 2 and 4.

Rubric:

Advanced: You successfully matched story content with the title 9/10 or 10/10 times.

You have followed conventional essay guidelines to produce a longer work of 5 or more paragraphs. Your essay includes examples from real life experiences and the text.

Your essay cites 6-8 stories; your references are clearly explained. Your essay contains unusual information or unique ideas. You included details from the text and from life experiences to support your ideas. You have written neatly and clearly. There are no errors in writing conventions.

Above Proficient: You successfully matched story content with the title 8/10 times. Your essay consists of three or more well-written paragraphs and contains clearly explained references to 3-5 stories.

Proficient: You successfully matched story content with the title 7/10 times. Your essay consists of three paragraphs: introduction, body and conclusion. You followed the essay format and met the minimum requirements for writing an analysis essay by referring to at least 2 stories. Your work is readable and there were few errors in conventions.

Basic: You have successfully matched story content with the title 6/10 times. Your essay is less than three paragraphs in length and does not follow the conventional format. You used only one story as support for your ideas. Your work was hard to read. There were many errors in writing conventions.

Below Basic: You successfully matched story content with the title 5 (or fewer)/10 times. Your essay is a paragraph or less in length. Your main idea is not clear to the reader. You have not cited stories from the text. Your work is not easy to read. You have many errors in writing conventions which affect the reader's understanding.

2. Reflective Essay: topics generated by students and listed in the classroom. Student

Suggestions usually include most of the guiding questions (Power Point introduction). If not, these questions can be suggested by the instructor. Communications Standards 2 and 4.

Rubric: The essay rubric for homework item 11 can be used.

3. Comparison paper: topics generated by students and listed in the classroom. Students

usually suggest specific stories or poems. Suggestions can be made by the instructor concerning the points of comparison: plot and setting, characters and setting, historical time frame, theme, relationships and other concepts like resiliency, maturity and changes, the author's message or writer's intent, or various aspects of the main character such as personality, reaction to the events of the story, the search for identity and so on.

Communications Standards 2 and 4; Arts and Humanities Standards 1-3.

Rubric: Generally, the essay rubric may be used for the following descriptors: introduction, conclusion conventions and appearance. Content and the writing process, however, should be added.

Advanced: The content of your paper is found in seven or more paragraphs which include specific examples from the two selections and numerous examples from your personal experience. The standard writing process has been followed: notes, outline, revisions. Your comparison paper completely explains the topic you selected.

Above Proficient: The body of your paper consists of at least five paragraphs which state the areas of comparison clearly and include examples from the texts and from personal experience. The writing process has clearly been followed and your paper answers the question or comparison area you selected.

Proficient: Your paper consists of three or more paragraphs in which you state the areas of comparison and provide examples from the text and from your experience. The writing process has been followed and you have done a complete analysis of your selected area of comparison.

Basic: One or two paragraphs which state areas of comparison and provide examples from the text are present. Basic requirements of the writing process are missing; there is no evidence of note taking, outlining or revision. Your comparisons are not clearly explained.

Below Basic: One or two paragraphs which state areas of comparison are present. No attempt has been made to follow the writing process. Your paper does not relate to one of the suggested areas of comparison.

4. Oral Presentation: the theme and connections among the stories. Communications

Standards 2, 4, 6-8.

Rubric:

Advanced: Your presentation is well planned and follows a logical sequence. You have provided an outline of your definition of the theme of identity and a fact sheet concerning your selected stories. During your presentation, you appear to be a confident speaker; you are dressed appropriately and you use your notes as reminders only. You have covered the topic in depth. You have included personal experiences, where appropriate and you have given explanations for your clearly stated conclusions. You have presented bibliographical information. You have included connections among at least five stories. You have included handouts and visual aids in your presentation. At least one unique or individual aid to communication such as samples of art or music was included in your presentation; you included costumes or elements of drama if they were appropriate.

Above Proficient: Your presentation followed a logical order and showed evidence of planning. You provided an outline and your sense of audience was apparent. You dressed appropriately and spoke confidently. You used your notes as an aid for each segment of your topic. You covered the topic and included personal experiences as you defined and explained connections among at least five stories. You included handouts and visual aids in your presentation.

Proficient: Organization is apparent in your presentation, as is your sense of audience. You dressed appropriately and spoke with confidence; your notes were used throughout the presentation. You explained your ideas on identity and included some personal experiences as you discussed connections among at least five stories. You provided handouts as an aid to communication.

Basic: Your presentation was not well organized. Your dress or demeanor showed a lack of preparation. You were a tentative speaker and you used your notes extensively. You defined "identity" and indicated connections from four selections from the text. You did not use handouts or visual aids for communication.

Below Basic: Your presentation was lacking in organization and you seemed unprepared to speak. Your dress and demeanor showed a lack of preparation. You were a hesitant speaker and read your presentation, or you did not have sufficient notes on your topic. You had no visual aids for communication.

5. Written or oral report on a similar anthology concerning content and the relationship

to identity. (See the bibliography for possible anthologies.) Communications Standards 2 and 4; Arts and Humanities Standard 1.

Rubric: The book review format and rubric can be used for this assessment item; other components of the rubric can be taken from the previous assessment item if the report is made orally.

6. Student suggested project related to the culture and at least one selection from Latino

Caribbean Literature. Projects are usually extensions of homework menu items; projects have included: dioramas, board games, recipe collections with samples and so on.

Communications Standards 1, 2 and 4; Arts and Humanities 1-4.

Rubric:

Advanced: The project reflects a specific culture (Cuban, Dominican or Puerto Rican) and a specific selection from the anthology. All elements of comparison are identified and explained. The project has a pleasing appearance; there are no errors in conventions. The project contains elements which are unusual or memorable. Additional information such as biographical or historical data is included.

Above Proficient: The project reflects a specific culture and a specific selection from the anthology. All elements of comparison are identified and explained. The project has a pleasing appearance and there are few errors in conventions. The project contains elements which are unusual or memorable.

Proficient: The project reflects a specific culture and a specific selection from the anthology. Most elements of comparison are identified and explained. The project has a pleasing appearance. There are some errors in conventions.

Basic: The project is related to, but does not accurately reflect the culture or the selection. The selection is not from the anthology. Elements of comparison are mentioned but not explained. The project is not pleasing in appearance; it is messy. There are many apparent errors in conventions.

Below Basic: The project is not related to the culture or the selection. Elements of comparison are not designated. The appearance detracts from the understanding of the topic. The project is obviously incomplete or incorrectly completed.

7. Written thematic analysis of the play, "American Justice," which is included at the

end of the anthology. Communications Standards 2 and 4; Arts and Humanities Standards 1-4.

Rubric: The essay format and rubric may be used for this assessment item for the introductory paragraph, the concluding paragraph, conventions and appearance of the work. The category which must be added is "content/analysis" of the problem, events and the solution in the play.

Advanced: You have stated the problem, events and resolution found in the play and explained each item. References to characters and the events of the play as well as other examples have been included. Elements of the play format are defined and explained.

Examples from personal experience are included and you have also included examples from other genre as well.

Above Proficient: The problem, events and resolution of the play have been restated and explained. Examples from the text have been provided and you have defined and explained elements of the play format. You have included some personal experiences.

Proficient: The problem, events and resolution of the play have been stated and explained. Examples from the text are present. You have explained and defined the elements of the play format.

Basic: You have explained two out of the three elements of the play and provided examples from the text.

Below Basic: You have explained one of the elements of the play and given an example.

8. Performance of an original drama based on one of the selections in Latino Caribbean

Literature. Communications Standards 2 and 4; Arts and Humanities Standards 2 and 3.

Rubric:

Advanced: The play consists of at least one act. There is a main character chosen from the selection, who has specific physical, social and emotional characteristics. There are secondary characters. There is one central conflict and several other conflicts involving the characters. All of the connected conflicts are resolved satisfactorily. The

characters overcome both internal and external obstacles. The dialogue conveys the story line which is taken from the selection. Each of the following is evident: stage directions, introduction or narration and costume/properties descriptions. The performance is without flaws in dialogue or action. The performance contains striking, memorable and unique elements.

Above Proficient: The play consists two or more scenes. There is a main character, drawn from the selection, who has specific characteristics which are evident in the performance. There are secondary characters which affect the action, although there is one main conflict. The main conflict is resolved. The characters overcome major obstacles. The dialogue conveys the story line which reflects the action in the selection. Each of the following is evident: stage directions, introduction or narration and costume or properties descriptions. The performance contains few miscues. The performance contains striking or memorable elements.

Proficient: The play consists of at least one scene. There is a main character who has specific characteristics. There is at least one central conflict, which reflects the story in the anthology, and which is resolved. The character overcomes one major obstacle. The dialogue conveys the story line. Each of the following is evident: stage directions, introduction or narration and costume or properties descriptions. There are few errors in dialogue or action during the performance.

Basic: The play is not recognizable as a complete scene. The main character is not clearly defined, or the characterization is confusing. The central conflict is not clearly explained, although it is resolved. The dialogue does not convey the story effectively. The performance is hesitant or contains miscues; it does not contain elements of the play format.

Below Basic: The presentation is not recognizable as a play. The main character is not distinguishable from other characters. The central conflict is not apparent or it is not resolved. Dialogue is sketchy or does not convey the story line. The performance contains errors which affect the understanding of the audience.

9. Write a detailed character sketch for main characters from two selections found in Latino

Caribbean Literature. Compare the selections based on the attributes of the characters. Include a character matrix. Communications Standards 2 and 4.

Rubric:

Advanced: The characters are identified by name and by description. The importance of the character is explained and in indication of how the character was selected is provided. You have listed the feelings of the character, along with possible reasons for these feelings; the feelings have been categorized in some way. Evidence is cited from the text to support your statements about the character. You have indicated connections to other, similar texts. You have included unusual ideas and personal connections were made. You have created a well-written and concise description of each character. Conventions are error free. The character matrix follows the accepted format but it has additional or unusual elements.

Above Proficient: The characters are identified by name and description. The importance of the character is explained. The feelings of each character are indicated along with possible reasons as shown in the text. Evidence is cited from the text. You have provided some examples from personal experience. At least one connection to another text is present. A well-written description of the attributes of each character also contains explanations and examples. There are few errors in conventions. Similarities are delineated. The character matrix follows an accepted format such as matrix, Venn diagram or "T" chart.

Proficient: The characters are identified by name and description. The feelings of the character are described in relation to events of the story. Evidence is cited from the text. Some connections to real life are noted. A complete description is present. You have explained similarities. There are few errors in conventions. The character matrix follows an accepted format.

Basic: The characters are identified appropriately but are not main characters. Feelings are not listed. You have not cited inclusive or supportive evidence for the stated attributes of the characters. An incomplete description is provided. There are errors in conventions which affect the reader's understanding. The character matrix is incomplete or it does not follow the accepted format.

Below Basic: The characters are not clearly defined. Feelings are not included as attributes. Evidence cited is incorrect or missing. Your description of the character is inadequate or incorrect. Numerous errors in conventions cause the character sketch to be hard to understand. The character matrix is missing or illegible.

10. Literary Response Form for each narrative selection, or for each expository selection, or for five poems. Communications Standards 2 and 4; Arts and Humanities Standards 1 and 3.

Rubric: The rubric and format for Literary Response homework item may be used for this assessment item.

11. Persuasive essay concerning the theme (identity) and the origins of individual identity.

Communications Standards 2 and 4.

Rubric: The rubric and essay guidelines from the homework menu may be used for this assessment item.

The Content Standards

Arts and Humanities

1. All students describe the meanings they find in various works from the visual and performing arts and literature on the basis of aesthetic understanding of the art form.
2. All students evaluate and respond critically to works from the visual and performing arts and literature of various individuals and cultures, showing that they understand important features of the works.
3. All students relate various works from the visual and performing arts and literature to the historical and cultural context within which they were created.
4. All students produce, perform or exhibit their work in the visual arts, music, dance or theater, and describe the meanings their work has for them.

Citizenship

1. All students demonstrate their skills of communicating, negotiating and cooperating with others.
2. All students demonstrate that they can work effectively with others.

Communications

1. All students use effective research and information management skills, including locating primary and secondary sources of information with traditional and emerging library technologies.
2. All students read and use a variety of methods to make sense of various kinds of complex texts.
3. All students respond orally and in writing to information and ideas gained by reading narrative and informational texts and use the information and ideas to make decisions and solve problems
4. All students write for a variety of purposes including to narrate, to inform and to persuade in all subject areas.
5. All students analyze and make critical judgments about forms of communication, separating fact from opinion, recognizing propaganda, stereotypes and statements of bias, recognizing inconsistencies and judging the validity of evidence.
6. All students exchange information orally, including understanding and giving spoken instructions, asking and answering questions appropriately and promoting effective group communications.
7. All students listen to and understand complex oral messages and identify their purpose, structure and use.
8. All students compose and make oral presentations for each academic area of study that are designed to persuade, inform or describe.
9. All students communicate appropriately in business, work and other applied situations.

Science and Technology

1. All students demonstrate basic computer literacy, including word processing, software applications and the ability to access the global information infrastructure, using current technology.