

## Our City, Too, Is a Melting Pot

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### INTRODUCTION

When in 1908 Israel Zangwill's play *The Melting Pot* opened in Washington, D.C., its author probably did not know that his work would coin the name for the American model of assimilation. This model sustains the "...idea, so central to national identity, that this country can transform people of every color and background into 'one America'" (Booth).

Time has shown that this model holds true only in part for the ethnic majority, people who came from Western and Eastern Europe. It would be inaccurate to state that the model adequately describes this social phenomenon for all the components of the American population. While the white majority – formed by people of many different nationalities and even ethnicities– has integrated more successfully into one group; the non-white counterparts remain in a higher state of segregation.

If a survey were to be carried out among people from other countries who do not have direct contact with the United States, we would most likely be stunned about their answers to the questions, "What is an American?" "What does an American look like?" They would probably say that an American citizen is a white person that has access to many commodities and has an elevated living standard. This is clearly a mirror of the social make-up of the United States that reflects the social interactions that take place within. Such perception is perhaps the result of the quality and selection of the American culture exports, but it certainly does bring to our attention the existence of a social structure determined by race and ethnicity.

Living in Houston has provided me with the opportunity to get to know people from different origins. I have met recent immigrants as well as individuals whose families have been here longer. In my interaction with them I have noticed two different attitudes regarding their feelings about being an American or living in the United States. On one hand, there are those who try to maintain a link with the original culture of their families. On the other hand, there are those who try to assimilate in the new culture as quickly as possible.

The explanation I find of these two different attitudes lies in the circumstances that motivated the immigration. With the exception of those looking for social or economic advancement, not many people would leave their country unless they were facing overbearing circumstances, such as fear, persecution, or extreme poverty. In a simplistic approach we can categorize immigrants into two groups. Whereas the first type of immigrants relocates out of choice, the second group responds to a critical situation where their survival is at stake. Since the first type of immigrant acts out of choice, they are not likely to hold resentments against their home country and, therefore, maintain a cultural link to it. The second type of immigrants, however, will probably develop resentments against a country that failed to provide better opportunities; consequently, the affective and cultural link will perhaps fade.

As the mentor of students who are predominantly the offspring of recent immigrants, I feel that it is my personal obligation to instill the values of both their American citizenship and their ethnicity. After all, this nation has proven in the past that it has the capability to adopt and adapt

to values and customs from incoming cultures. This capability has been a key factor in building the strong country in which we live.

By teaching this unit, I will help my students realize that embracing diversity is a means of living in a more harmonious society. At the same time, I will provide them with grounds for exploring their own culture, which will hopefully result in a greater appreciation of it. I will also teach this unit in hopes that my students will not foster as much resentment against the nations that saw their ancestors grow.

The unit will tackle skills in geography by using maps of the world, thus reinforcing map skills. It will go into comparing communities around the world. It will include studies of the celebrations and folklore of different cultures, as well. All of these subjects are important elements of the HISD Social Studies curriculum for third grade. This set of lessons will also promote the appreciation of arts in various forms including photography, drawing, sketching, music, and creative writing.

As far as academic skills are concerned, the unit will make use of graphic organizers that will help represent the students' ideas and will also foster the development of critical thinking skills, such as discerning, classifying, and making inferences and generalizations. It will also provide the students with opportunities to develop research as well as oral communication skills.

## **UNIT BACKGROUND**

### **Origins of Migration**

Since the beginning of time, people have migrated for a variety of reasons. Scarcity of food, lack of water, extreme weather conditions, ambition, and even spiritual pursuits are to be counted among the first incentives for human migration. It can be said that relocation is an instinct inherent to human kind.

According to scientific research, the first Americans originally came from Asia as early as 25,000 years ago. They spread and diversified into hundreds of culturally distinct nations and tribes ("North American Natives"). This makes Amerindians one of the first human groups to experience migration. The early Americans had to face adversity both during their journey and when they were trying to adapt to the new environment. For this group, migration was probably regarded as a means to survival.

Mexican tradition tells that spirituality and survival instincts united when one of these Amerindian groups headed off in the quest for a promised land. It is believed that Huitzilopochtli, one of their divinities, told the Mexicas to settle at the spot where they found an eagle holding a serpent in its beak and perched on a stone ("Foundation Myth of Tenochtitlan"). Tradition reports that, after a long period of migration, these people found this sign and established in the land that they named Tenochtitlan, presently known as Mexico City.

Another group that has been forced to migrate throughout history is the Jewish people. There is already mention of their relocation in the Old Testament: "Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe" (Gen. 12:10). Jews were banished from Palestine by the Roman Empire in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. This was the beginning of what is now referred to as "Diaspora," a term that describes the scattering of the Jewish nation throughout the world. In the Middle Ages, the Jews were barred from Italy, France, England, and Spain. During World War II, Hitler's anti-Semitism obliged many Jews to flee Europe (Robinson). A substantial amount of Jews found refuge in the Americas during this period of their persecution.

Ancient Romans too are an example of human migration. Their empire comprised almost all of Western Europe, the adjacent territories of North Africa, and most of the Middle East

(Vanderspoel). It is most likely true that the extension of the Roman Empire was one that involved a great deal of human loss and suffering, but the positive outcomes of this hegemony cannot be denied. A common alphabet, a system of law, a type of government, to mention a few, forms a legacy that has influenced the Western World to this day.

People have not always migrated in groups. Many important historical figures underwent some type of relocation at some point of their lives. Christopher Columbus, for instance, had to leave his homeland and live in several European countries before he could find a sponsor for his ambitious project of sailing west on the Atlantic Ocean.

Columbus' landfall in America set a precedent for Europeans to look for fortune in new lands, thus opening the door to a world of possibilities. It was the beginning of migration from the Old World to the New World.

Whether migration has been triggered by necessity, spiritual pursuit, or ambition, it can certainly be said that this social phenomenon has accompanied human kind since the beginning of its existence.

### **History of Immigration to the United States of America**

After Columbus' encounter with the Americas, and once it was clarified that he had not reached Asia but a new land, the word spread in Europe that there were countless opportunities in the newly conquered territories.

It took the English almost a century to start venturing into the Americas. English explorer Humphrey Gilbert was the first one to claim lands for Queen Elizabeth I of Britain. He and his crew arrived in Newfoundland in 1583. Twenty-three years later, Captain Christopher Newport founded Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in North America. English people in search of an improved quality of life rushed to America. By 1732, the original thirteen colonies that would become the United States of America had been founded (Masur).

The English were not alone in the quest for better prospects. Europeans from various regions followed their steps. Religious persecution, famines, the end of feudalism, and changes in the world market were some of the factors that compelled their continental folks to migrate to the Americas, too (Foner 20).

In colonial days, most of America's immigrants came from Great Britain and Ireland, but some other people came from countries like Germany, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg. Later on, during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, more Germans and French, along with Norwegians and Swedes, came to the USA lured by the prospective of free land and good wages. Between 1850 and 1882, an influx of Chinese took place due to the famines in their home country. Italians started to come in 1890 and by the beginning of World War I, they accounted for a quarter of the immigrant population. During the 1970s, Latin Americans facing political persecution and harsh economic situations made their way into this country. Their countries of origin have been the primary source of immigrants until present day (Lapham).

The way the early European settlers chose the new lands in which they would establish themselves is one that catches the attention:

The Finns, for example, settled in wooded locations in western Canada and northern Ontario that closely resembled the physical landscape of their Finnish homeland. Germans, it was claimed, preferred the heavy-textured loam soils of the wooded lowlands in Pennsylvania, whereas the Scotch-Irish selected interior, thin, hilly soils, similar to those which they had known in Ulster. (McQuillan 138)

When it comes to choosing a new home, immigrants of today are not necessarily influenced by the resemblances of the new environment with that of the land left behind. Modern amenities

have made it easier for humans to adapt to new environments to the point where this is not a decisive factor in their relocation. The economic prosperity of a region or city and the presence of fellow countrymen or even family members seem to be more important issues in the newcomers' decision-making. The success of today's immigrants in the American economy depends enormously on their ability to accommodate to the new circumstances. Ethnic enclaves and networks often do well in scaffolding this process. In *From Ellis Island to JFK*, Nancy Foner explains how ethnic niches determine now and have determined in the past the integration of the newcomers into the economy of New York City:

Now, as before, distinct ethnic occupational specializations develop, as the newest arrivals steer their kin and compatriots into berths in the economy and as employers rely on ethnic recruitment to fill job openings... A focus on the occupational concentrations among three (of the larger) groups, West Indians, Dominicans, and Chinese, shows that once immigrants begin to cluster in certain lines of work, the process of niche development proceeds in much the same way it did in the past... If you end up as a patient in a New York City hospital, the nursing aide who takes your temperature and makes your bed is likely to be a West Indian. (91)

### **Immigrants in Houston**

Although the foundation of Houston took place in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was not until the 1960s that the boom in the city's economy – due to the oil industries – started to attract people from all over the United States. In his study *Public Perceptions in Remarkable Times*, Stephen L. Klineberg explains how the make-up of Houston's population has dramatically changed in less than three decades:

The Anglo population of Harris County grew by 31 percent in the 1960s and by another 25 percent in the 1970s. By 1981, Houston had overtaken Philadelphia to become the fourth largest city in America, with a population that was still almost two thirds Anglo. Only 15.5 percent of Harris County residents in 1980 were Hispanic and only 2.1 percent were Asian. (20)

The current make-up of Houston's population is the product of the collapse of the oil boom in the early 1980s and the great attraction that the city has to the immigrants from abroad. The slowdown in the oil business has contributed to an exodus of the Anglo population and thus has led to an increase in the diversity of Houston's inhabitants (Klineberg 20-21).

The new make-up of the city's population is more welcoming to new immigrants from all parts of the world because of its diversity. Klineberg describes the rising preference of the newcomers for Houston as follows:

Harris County is home to more Hispanics than San Francisco, more Asians than Miami, more African Americans than Los Angeles. This is where America's four largest ethnic populations meet in a more equal distribution than almost anywhere else in the country. All of Houston's communities are now "minorities." All will need to work together to build the new multiethnic future that will be Houston and America in the twenty-first century. (21)

According to data from the Census, there were 854,669 foreign-born inhabitants in the Houston Metropolitan Area in 2000. European-born people accounted for only 44,387, or 5% of the total. The Asian participation was 180,735, or 21%, more than four times the European contribution. Africa was the region of origin of 26,266, or 3% of the foreign-born Houstonians. Oceania contributed with 1,801 people. Most remarkably, the Americas (the Caribbean, North, Central, and South America) were represented by 601,480 people, that is 70% of the foreign-born population in Houston (Lapham).

A more thorough breakdown shows that, out of the countries labeled as the Americas, the ones that have the most representation in the Houston Metropolitan Area are – from greatest to least representation – Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Colombia. Mexico is by far the country with the most contribution to Houston’s foreign-born population. In 2000, the count of foreign-born with Mexican origins was 432,288, which was 72% of the total of immigrants coming from the Americas or 51% of the immigrants present in the Houston Metropolitan Area. The other great group was people from El Salvador. The count of Salvadorans for the 2000 Census was 64,803, that is 11% of the total immigrants from the Americas or 7% of the immigrants in the Houston Metropolitan Area (Lapham).

If we look at the breakdown of the Asian foreign-born, we will notice that the countries with the largest participation in the population of Houston are Vietnam, with 49,584; India, with 30,563; and China, with 29,799 people. That is 6%, 4%, and 3%, respectively (Lapham).

### **Background of the Sending Countries**

An analysis of social and economic indicators of the developing countries that represent the main source of immigrants to the United States may be useful to better understand the immigration phenomenon. As we saw before, Houston’s immigrants come mainly from Mexico, El Salvador, Vietnam, India, China, Honduras, Guatemala, and Colombia. Following is a brief analysis of the countries with the most representation among the foreign-born population in Houston – Mexico and El Salvador.

#### ***Mexico***

Sharing a border with the United States, along with social and economic factors that do not promote human growth among its population, makes Mexico a perfect source of immigrants. The enormous economic discrepancies between Mexico and its northern neighbors become evident when we compare the immigration rates for Mexico and Canada into the United States. Whereas in 2000 the foreign-born population proceeding from Mexico amounted to 9,177,487 people, Canada accounted for only 820,771 of the total 31,107,889 immigrants. Eleven times more Mexicans than Canadians had immigrated to the United States by 2000 (Lapham).

This information catches the attention if we bring up the fact that the United States, Canada, and Mexico have been economic partners since the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) went into effect in 1994.

The preamble of the document where the NAFTA objectives and procedures are established states that:

The Government of Canada, the Government of the United Mexican States and the Government of the United States of America, resolved to:

STRENGTHEN the special bonds of friendship and cooperation among their nations;

CONTRIBUTE to the harmonious development and expansion of world trade and provide a catalyst to broader international cooperation...

CREATE new employment opportunities and improve working conditions and living standards in their respective territories;

UNDERTAKE each of the preceding in a manner consistent with environmental protection and conservation...

PROMOTE sustainable development;

PROTECT, enhance and enforce basic workers' rights. (“North American Free Trade Agreement”)

As we can see above, NAFTA was conceived by North America and Mexico to take advantage of the geographical proximity to expedite the natural trade among the countries. But economic issues were not the only focus of this agreement. The commitment to friendship and cooperation among the nations establishes an important bond and responsibilities from the three parties to help and look after each other's interests.

The creation of jobs in the respective territories is an important component of the agreement as well. Although the document makes emphasis on jobs being generated for citizens of a particular country in their own land, the Mexican economic reality makes it difficult for their nationals to find prosperity through jobs that are not well remunerated. It is here that a social and economic dependence from Mexico to the United States may be originating.

Companies established in Mexico – many of them belonging to foreigners – act against the principles of NAFTA and carry out exploitative work practices to the detriment of the Mexican workforce. This leads to the never-ending discrepancies in the distribution of wealth, characteristic of Third World countries, along with the social injustices that result from it.

Regarding inequality, Plato once said: “There should exist among the citizens neither extreme poverty nor again excessive wealth for both are productive of great evil” (qtd. in Human Development Report 51). This thought brings our attention to problems such as violence and public insecurity characteristics of most developing countries. These adversities are most likely triggered by economical and social discrepancies among its population. “Deep disparities based on wealth, region, gender and ethnicity are bad for growth, bad for democracy and bad for social cohesion” (Human Development Report Office 51).

Italian statistician Corrado Gini developed an indicator – the Gini coefficient – to quantify inequality in a given population. A Gini coefficient of 50 or higher is said to be in the high inequality category. Most Latin American countries have a Gini coefficient of 50 or more. Mexico is no exception, with a coefficient of 54.6 (Human Development Report, table 15).

Another important indicator worthy of discussion is the Human Development Index, which is calculated by the Human Development Report Office, a subsidiary of the United Nations. According to the Human Development Report of 2005:

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite index that measures the average achievements in a country in three basic dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, as measured by life expectancy at birth; knowledge, as measured by the adult literacy rate and the combined gross enrolment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary schools; and a decent standard of living, as measured by GDP per capita in Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) US dollars. (214)

Because of the fact that this indicator takes into consideration more than just economic data, including health and educational factors, it can be considered to be a fair appraiser of a nation's well-being. Mexico ranks 53 among the United Nation members in terms of HDI, with an index of 0.814 (Human Development Report, table 1). Mexico's ranking is good because the country has one of the largest GDPs in the world, but as we saw before, it is also one of the countries with highest Gini coefficients, that is with high levels of inequality.

Another factor that promotes the exile of the numerous amounts of Mexicans is the new economic dependence that families of the neighboring country with relatives in the United States are experiencing. Once established, the exiled start supporting their families by sending money. The immigrants' remittances are quickly absorbed in the economy of their country where they have a net impact that can be denied neither by the individual families nor by the government officials of Mexico. In *The New Latinos and Houston's Global Pueblo*, Jan Swellander Rosin explains:

Remittances have grown dramatically since 1980 and seem to be immune to economic downturns in the U.S. economy. Mexico received \$16.6 billion in 2004 making it the top remittance-receiving nation in the world. In November 2004, remittances became the most important source of foreign exchange for the Mexican economy surpassing both oil and tourism. (22)

Although the positive effects of remittances are easy to see, the dependence on these should be carefully evaluated by Mexican economists for they could backfire on the economy of the receiving country. In the short term, this money may be alleviating the relatives' economy by helping them have access to more goods and cover living expenses, but in the long run, this increased income might be creating a fictitious sense of well-being that is not sustainable. On one hand, this economic model might be discouraging some of the family members that could easily participate in and invigorate the Mexican economy. On the other hand, the government might be evading its responsibilities to promote better economic prospects for its citizens (Rosin 22)

After this analysis, it is not difficult to see that many immigrants from Mexico are the victims of the economic model that their government has adopted. They immigrate to the United States and become economic refugees when they realize that their economy does not keep up with the cost of living or even leave room for higher aspirations. This is probably how in the last years they have become the largest immigrant group in the United States.

### ***El Salvador***

Located in Central America, between Guatemala and Honduras, El Salvador has a current estimated population of 6,822,378. This makes El Salvador the country with the most concentration of that region, provided it has the smallest area among the Central American countries. The population density of El Salvador, using the current estimates is about 324 people per square kilometer ("El Salvador").

The Bureau of the Census reported in 2000 that 817,336 Salvadorans lived in the United States. Using this information, we can calculate a ratio of 11.98% Salvadorans living in the United States/Salvadorans living in El Salvador. El Salvador has the largest ratio of the Americas, followed only by Mexico, which has a ratio of 8.54% ("El Salvador").

These intriguing facts can only be the tip of the iceberg of what is happening in this Central American nation. Taking a closer look to its political, social, and economic situation might be a way to better understand the reasons why so many Salvadorans decide to come to the United States.

According to the Human Development Report of 2005, El Salvador has a GINI coefficient of 53.2 (table 15). That number is slightly better than the one for Mexico, but it still is in the high inequality zone. As for the Human Development Index, El Salvador ranked 104 among member countries of the United Nations (table 1). The figures for the United States in regards to these same indicators are considerably better. The United States' GINI coefficient reported in the same document is 40.8, which is not in the high inequality range (table 15). The Human Development Index for the United States is 0.944, which is very high. This HDI made the United States rank 10 in the Human Development Report of the same year (table 1).

Economic indicators cannot be the only focus when trying to find out reasons for Salvadoran migration. Salvadorans have gone through hardship during the last decades. Having endured a civil war that started in 1979 and ended in 1992, the Salvadorans' spirit was severely damaged. The fights between the two main political forces caused human devastation for 12 years, making the economy of the country suffer consequently. With a death toll of 75,000 resulting from the

war, things only went worse for El Salvador when in 1998, Hurricane Mitch struck its land killing 200 people and leaving 30,000 people homeless (“El Salvador”).

Unfortunately, tragedy does not abandon Salvadorans even when they are looking for a better life in the United States. Along with other Central Americans, most undocumented Salvadoran immigrants come to this country by crossing both the Mexican-Guatemalan and the Mexican-American border. It is at these borders that they suffer adversity:

Passing through Mexico is called “crossing the beast” because migrants are often robbed, assaulted, raped, and murdered by corrupt government officials and vicious Central American gangs called maras... The poorest migrants who cannot afford to hire coyotes to smuggle them into the United States, stowaway on northbound trains... Everyday people are killed on the trains either when they fall under the wheels and lose their limbs or when they are thrown off by machete-wielding gang members. (Rosin 19)

If a wish for economic betterment is many times sufficient reason to migrate, human tragedy and political restlessness are surely more than ponderable factors in making the decision of migrating to the United States.

## **LESSONS PLANS**

This unit consists of four lessons. The first lesson is aimed to teach the concept of cultural differences and the meaning of the term “prejudice.” In the second lesson, the students will get familiar with the different nationalities that are represented in Houston. In the third lesson, the students will be exposed to the traditions of the different ethnic groups that make up our city. In the fourth lesson, the students will have the opportunity to expand their vision of the other ethnic groups by coming into contact with their music.

Each lesson will be 45 minutes long. Because some of the assignments are required to be completed outside the classroom, I will not teach two lessons in consecutive days in order to allow students for preparation time.

### **Lesson One**

The first step I will take in teaching this unit will be to make the students aware of the concept of cultural differences. The students will take part in a series of activities fit to achieve this objective. First, they will analyze cultural differences in the different parts of the world. Then, they will study cultural differences in the same part of the world at different times. Finally, they will study the term “prejudice” and see the importance of making fair judgments in order to get along with people from cultural backgrounds other than their own.

#### ***Materials***

- Overhead projector
- Sets of photographs depicting people from different parts of the world (one set per pair of students)
- Transparencies of the above-mentioned photographs
- Compare/Contrast charts (T-charts with two or more categories)

#### ***Activity One***

During the first part of the lesson, I will use a projector to present the students with a series of photographs of people from different parts of the world. These photographs will depict people engaged in different everyday-life activities, such as greeting, wearing different garments, celebrating, eating, or worshipping.



Once the students have a visual representation of what cultural differences look like, I will provide them with the set of pictures that they saw on the screen. The students will work in pairs to come up with as many different groups as they can. Once they have formed the groups, they will verbalize and write the rule on which they based themselves to do their classification. This information will be the heading for the first of two compare/contrast charts that we will complete together as a class. For instance, if they sort the pictures according to categories such as “People eating,” “People in church,” and “People dancing,” we would put those categories in our compare and contrast chart and then students would come up with the attributes of each picture for each category. This first part of the lesson intends to address cultural differences across space; that is how people are different in various parts of the world at a certain time. To achieve this, it is crucial that the selected photographs pertain to the same era.

### ***Activity Two***

In the second part of the lesson, I will repeat the first exercise, only this time the pictures that I will present will show people of the same culture in different points of time. Since many of my students come from Mexican families, I will use photographs of Mexican people in a variety of eras. As a whole group, we will fill out the second compare/contrast chart with two columns that we will title “Before” and “Now.” This part will tackle cultural differences across time.

### ***Activity Three***

The last part of the lesson will consist of a class discussion of how cultures change across space and time. We will discuss the meaning of the word “prejudice.” By the end of the lesson, students will better understand that it is important to have information about somebody’s cultural background before they can make a fair judgment about the way others act.

### ***Evaluation***

The evaluation tool that I will use for this lesson will be a quiz consisting of five statements that the students will have to classify into two categories: fair judgment or prejudice.

### ***Lesson Two***

The focus of the second lesson will be that the students get to know the history of their city better. To accomplish this, the students will first discover the make-up of the population of Houston. The students will use a map to locate the countries of the groups of immigrants that have come to Houston. These main groups are Mexicans, Central Americans (Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and Honduras, especially), Chinese, Vietnamese, and Indians.

### ***Materials***

- Pictures of different areas of Houston where print from different languages is evident
- Large World Map (to use with class)
- Individual World Maps for each student
- Plastic counters (to be placed on maps)
- Basic information for each country studied

### ***Activity One***

In the first activity of this lesson, I will present the students handwriting images from different languages. These images will correspond to signs of commercial establishments located in different areas of Houston. I will explain to the students that there are many ways to represent speech. I will also make them aware that those forms of writing vary throughout the regions of the world. During the guided practice, I will show the students one picture at a time. For each picture, I will ask the students to place a counter in their maps on the continent in which they think that particular kind of writing originated. I then will show the students the correct continent

and a mini profile of the country or countries where that language developed. This profile will include the name of the countries, their type of government, their religions, and the economic conditions of the countries. The purpose of providing this information is so that students will understand the reasons why immigrants come from these countries.

### ***Activity Two***

Once the students get the feel of the regions of the world and their representation of language, I will ask them to predict the kind of writing that may take place in regions of the world that we have not studied yet. I will do this by writing numbers on different parts of the map of the world. I will also label the different types of writing with letters. Students will have to match numbers and letters to show their inferences. They will do this in their Social Studies notebook.

### ***Evaluation***

To evaluate, I will show the students five different types of writing. They will have to indicate the continent where that type of writing is used.

### **Lesson Three**

The purpose of the last lessons is to provide the students with tangible experiences as to what diversity means. They will realize that Houston is a city that is formed by people of different ethnic backgrounds, each with different traditions and customs. In this particular lesson the students will discover what diversity looks like.

### ***Materials***

Calendars that include national celebrations

Art supplies such as crayons, markers, color pencils, modeling clay, construction paper.

### ***Activity One***

In the first activity, the students will look at a calendar to find out specific celebration dates that are observed in Houston. They will take note of the dates and names of celebrations and then conduct a quick research in the school library. They will work on an art project that will consist of a depiction of the tradition. In their work they will show the name of the tradition, the ethnic group to which this tradition belongs, and the details about that celebration.

### ***Activity Two***

The students will share their findings with their classmates. They will have a chance to orally report to the class in a show-and-tell fashion. This is a good moment to provide discussion opportunities for all students. It is also a good opportunity to model adequate participation and discussion skills.

### ***Evaluation***

The evaluation piece for this lesson will be the finished product of their research. Rubrics for this piece may focus on the art elements, the oral description of the product, especially in multilingual settings, and it should include an assessment of the basic command of the tradition of study.

### **Lesson Four**

During this lesson, the students will have the opportunity to listen to music from different countries as well as to share some music of their own. Again, the use of maps will be an important element of the lesson.

### **Materials**

- Teacher-selected music from around the world
- Student-selected music
- Large world map

### **Activity One**

During the first activity, I will play fragments of music from different places of the world. While the students are listening, they will first look at a map that will show the country where this music originated, and then they will make a drawing to represent the mood on which this music gets them. For example, if a song makes them feel happy they will draw a happy face and write the word “happy” under their drawing. They will also include the name of the country from which the music originates. They will do the same for every song.

### **Activity Two**

In the second activity, the students will share a piece of a favorite song with their classmates. Students will be asked to include only songs that have a language that is appropriate for the school. The teacher will listen to the songs before playing them for the whole group. A good way to do this is by asking the students to bring their song before the day when this lesson is scheduled. As they listen to the music, students will repeat the exercise of the first activity. They don't have to include information of the origin of the song in this second exercise.

### **Evaluation**

To conclude the lesson, the students will write about their favorite song. They will give details of how this song makes them feel. They will also write about when they listened to this song for the first time. They will include the lyrics of the part of the song that they enjoy the most. This will be the assessment for this lesson.

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## Supplemental Sources

### Sources for Teachers

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This funny book tells the story of two sisters in the showbiz who decide to go West and try out their fortune in new lands.
- Coerr, Eleanor. *The Josefina Story Quilt*. New York: Harper Collins, 1986.  
In this fiction book, a little girl has to learn to give up her most valued treasures in order for her family to have a better life in the West.
- Conrad, Pam. *Pedro's Journal*. New York: Scholastic, 1993.  
This book, written in the form of a journal, will provide the students with concrete experiences from the actual journey from Europe to America.
- Hermes, Patricia. *Our Strange New Land*. New York: Scholastic, 2000.  
This book will help the students better understand or relate to the trouble and suffering that immigrants go through when they get to their destination.
- Harvey, Miles. *Look What Came from China*. New York: Scholastic, 1991.  
This book will provide the students with tangible examples of the contributions of the Chinese people to the United States.
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This is the story of how an African American family makes their way North to Canada in order to escape slavery and become free citizens.
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In this chapter book, students have the opportunity to visualize how long and tedious crossing the Atlantic Ocean was at the turn of the 20th century. A family goes from Sweden to the United States and experiences many vicissitudes.