

*PALABRITAS DE MI GENTE: A COMBATIVE APPROACH TO
SUBTRACTIVE SCHOOLING*

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Palabritas de Mi Gente: A Combative Approach to Subtractive Schooling

Abstract

This thesis defines the detriments of **subtractive schooling** practices to **minority** cultures by focusing on the specific example of the Mexican American culture. It identifies the problem with teaching bicultural students through dominant group methods and strategies by examining how subtractive schooling practices affect both minority students and dominant group students and the lack of inclusion of all students' needs in **assimilationist teaching** practices. It includes a model for a sample program of **Mexican American Children's Literature** designed for the San Marcos CISD in San Marcos, Texas and suggestions for modeling programs designed to fit different cultures.

Background

The mind of a student is a complicated, intricate design that while intellectually capable of processing its own methodologies, is also very malleable and impressionable, especially at a young age. Besides trying to learn new skills and fine tune abilities already acquired on a daily basis, students also have to deal with the usual stresses of growing up. In an age of inundation with advertisement and marketing directed towards making the younger generation feel inadequate enough to want to change themselves and their identities, it is difficult for students to develop their own sense of self, let alone a sense of intellectual identity.

I was a product of uncertainty. I began public school where my four elder siblings had attended, thus I felt a sense of familiarity and comfort with my educational surroundings. My teachers assumed that because my siblings had done well in school, I would do well too. Constantly searching for my own identity, and not an identity of my siblings, I made an extra effort in all of my work to put my own fingerprints on what I did. I was never satisfied with doing what my older siblings had done. I had to produce work that was excellent according to my own standards.

The struggle that I had with my identity concerning my education was a struggle that I only saw on a small scale. At the young age of seven, I was sure of my identity concerning my work ethic and my education because I realized that I had potential that was different from my siblings. Each of us had our own strengths and weaknesses and each of us had our own sense of self. Because I had come to realize what I was capable of doing and what I was able to produce, I thought I was set.

The second semester of my fourth grade year of school, I transferred schools and began attending a magnet school to which I had to ride a bus. Not only did I not know any students or teachers, but I was unfamiliar with my environment. Suddenly, I was out of my comfort zone. While I was overjoyed at the thought of more complex assignments and a chance for different kinds of hands-on math and science experiences at my new school, I suddenly felt like a fish out of water. Although many of the students shared the same idea that schoolwork required extra effort and that going the extra mile to complete the assignments was the norm, I found myself again with a sense of confusion about my identity.

Many of the students that were now my classmates were Anglo students who came from families with money. I, on the other hand, was Mexican American and although my family always lived comfortably, I was constantly aware that my family had different problems than the families of my peers. Whereas my peers and I shared the same intellectual characteristics, we were not the same people. I, naïve and impressionable, did not see a problem with blending in with my peers. I allowed myself to immerse completely into their culture, and for the most part, Anglicized my identity.

While I ate tortillas at home and understood (sparingly) what my grandparents and parents said to me when they spoke in Spanish, I for the most part became an Anglo child. While with my friends, I spoke only English except when ordering Mexican food at restaurants, I wore “White girl” clothes, and I had crushes on White movie stars and singers. Because I was young, I failed to see that in allowing myself to let go of my Mexican American heritage, I was ultimately losing a sense of my self.

When my Anglo peers made a judgment against any Hispanic student, I knew that they were being discriminatory, but I never stood up for my Hispanic peers. I would find myself

laughing at jokes such as, “Mexican boys must have taken the grease from the cafeteria ladies to use in their hair,” and didn’t even realize how racist I was being. Even though I wanted to dress up for Cinco de Mayo, I let the ridicule that my Anglo friends had toward my culture get in the way of my own respect for my heritage.

As I grew older, I began to notice the differences between my friends and myself. Although I had grown attached to the friendships that I shared, I knew that I was different from many of my Anglo friends, and I even began to wonder why I had not previously noticed the differences. During high school, as I realized that I would soon have the chance to either follow my friends on to college or make my own separate journey, I also realized that I did not really know much about myself. I knew that I was an ambitious student who pushed to excel above and beyond the standards set forth by instructors, but other than that, I knew very little about my own unique identity. I found myself stuck between an Anglo world that I knew and had grown up in while attending school and the Mexican American world that I knew at home.

The summer after high school graduation, I decided that I was not prepared to start college because I lacked a sense of direction with my life. I realized that although I had graduated in the top ten percent of my graduating class, I did not feel I learned nearly enough. I felt like there were gaps in my education. Essentially, I felt as if I had been cheated in my education. I realized I had spent twelve years learning about a culture that was not my own. I had spent twelve years learning to be Anglo.

In coming to this realization, I tried to remember times when I had learned about Mexican Americans. Besides Spanish classes in high school and the few obscure Texas History courses that I had taken, there were very few times that I remembered being taught about Mexican Americans or Mexican American history. While we spent entire courses and semesters

learning about the histories and cultures of people of Europe, we barely touched on a culture here in Texas, the Mexican American culture. Before coming across as ethnocentric, I decided that I needed to learn more about a culture that I knew very little about before trying to make an assessment on what I had really missed.

Once in college, I had the opportunity to enroll in courses that I felt best suited what I needed to learn. I allowed myself time to detoxify the mentality that had grown to harbor in my head, the mentality that had Anglicized me. Essentially, I allowed myself to be Mexican American and to embrace that my culture could be a part of my education and that in bringing my culture into my education, I would be able to learn more. I have since found myself enthralled in learning the history, in learning the culture, and in learning the *modos* of a people that I always knew, but with whom I did not have a sense of familiarity even though I was always a part of this culture.

As I learned more I began to see how my education up until college had failed me. I felt that it had failed to teach me what I needed to know personally about myself. I began to think that maybe the fault was my own because I had never thought to question what I was studying or thought to question why my peers were learning about their ancestors and I was not. Really, though, I never had a starting place to learn about my culture. I was never given the opportunity to explore my identity while in school, whereas, most of my peers did. Students of other minority cultures and ethnicities had much the same problem. Not being a member of the dominant culture meant that you would have to spend virtually all of your mandated educational career learning about a culture other than your own. Other than being upset, however, I thought there was really very little that I could do besides learn on my own what I had missed in school.

Not until my son was born did I realize that something should actually be done. As I began to think and plan my son's education, I began to realize that I did not want him having the same problems that I had. I wanted my son to be able to learn about his own culture while learning about the cultures of others. I wanted and continue to want him to be as widely educated as possible. My ultimate desire is for him to not only have a definite sense of self, but to also have a sense of the identities of people who surround him. His education should be focused on educating him not only about skills and aptitude, but also about life skills and learning how to live in peace and accordance with people other than his own kind.

Had I learned about myself and my culture and had I known what I know now about who I am during middle school and high school, I feel as though I would have been able to learn and comprehend more of the material that I was being taught. Because I would have a sense of familiarity, that sense of security that I had when being in the comfort zone that I had in the first school that I had ever attended, I would feel more comfortable in learning. When learning is more comfortable, it also becomes more enjoyable because there is no fear of the unknown. My hope is that my son will be more comfortable during his learning experiences in school than I was.

Introduction to the Project

It is not my goal to prove that the entire educational system is a failure or that the educational system is not productive, because that is not entirely what I believe. Educators rigorously train in order to obtain the certifications that they hold to gain positions as teachers in schools. I do not intend to discredit their abilities or their training. Teachers, like any other degreed profession, also spend years learning their craft and do so with the intention to mold the minds of tomorrow.

What I do believe, however, is that there are certain changes that must be made in order to ensure that the generations to come, like the generations of my son, are given the opportunity to learn about themselves instead of just the dominant culture. Especially in regions of the United States where there are multiple cultures living in small regions, there is a need to educate many different cultures, not just one dominant group. Texas, California, and Arizona, for example, have large Mexican American populations; therefore, it would be justifiable to say that part of the curriculum of those states would be to teach about Mexican American culture. Other types of bordering states should have much the same educational policy. Especially in states that neighbor other countries, all cultures involved should be addressed, taught, and discussed. For the students to not only have a sense of identity about themselves and also to learn about the cultures they live around, they should be given the opportunity to learn about where the cultures come from and what they value.

When students have a greater sense of self, it will be more likely for them to be interested in learning more not only about themselves, but also more about others. If they are taught about themselves and their own people, they will feel reassured and will be more likely to have a sense of accomplishment and will push harder to not only set goals but to also achieve them. Much of

the problem with the educational system and the status quo is that it allows for only conformity to the dominant culture. Other cultures are expected to either conform or to drop out. Therefore, what we are teaching our students is that if you have no sense of comfort or identity in what you learn, just quit and find a job. Instead, what we should be promoting is self-exploration and cultural involvement.

While I believe that it is necessary for education to be equally diverse among all cultures, I believe that especially in the geographic region of San Marcos, Texas, it is essential that the students learn about the Mexican American culture. The culture of San Marcos is largely Mexican American and the majority of the students in the public school system are not only Mexican American, but are also low income. Much of what the children know about their culture concerns government programs and television. Sadly and circumstantially, many students do not have the luxury of being taught by their parents. In low-income households, many parents have to dedicate much of their time to making ends meet and providing the essentials alone. As the purveyor of public education, the school district is to educate the students about who they are and what they can become. If the schools do not fulfill this job, it is the students as well as society who suffer when students are not allowed to reach their full potential.

I believe that education should respond regionally, that is, that education should reflect the constituents of its regional student body population. For example, I strongly believe that in the San Marcos area, a program of Mexican American literature should be implemented to help students learn the cultures. At the high school level, students have already developed their educational identity and therefore may have already formed their sense of indifference towards education. It is imperative that culture studies begin for students at a young age so they can

accentuate their personal and educational growth. I believe that it is critical to start an immersion program of cultural studies at the earliest opportunity.

If students are given the chance at a young age to study cultures and their differences and similarities, they will have the opportunity to develop a keen sense of cultural identity. This in turn will help them to understand not only their own culture, but the cultures around them too. It is also quite possible that by creating a habitat for personal growth, students who would have otherwise not found a sense of security or a sense of familiarity and comfort in education and their schools will be able to identify with what they are learning and will be more interested in pursuing higher studies. Only by giving students a chance to learn what best interests them do we give them a chance of success in life.

Therefore, the thesis of this project is to create a semester long curriculum of Mexican American children's literature studies for a class of second grade bilingual/bicultural students in the San Marcos area. With the creation of this curriculum, I plan to explain and justify a combative approach to the concept of subtractive schooling. I will emphasize reading and writing in the curriculum and will provide the students, of mixed backgrounds, the ability to explore their own cultures while learning about the Mexican American culture. The purpose of this project is to promote each student's own sense of culture in a manner that will allow them to grow mentally and emotionally. It is my hope that the project will foster a sense of interest in learning the material that I present to them, and also help them learn about themselves in the process. By teaching the students to learn about themselves, I hope to also teach the students what they are capable of doing.

My own experiences have allowed me to see that students, especially at a young age, are very impressionable. It is up to the adults in education to provide students with the proper tools

that they need in order to have a well-rounded educational experience. The earlier we start preparing students for success, the longer the period of time that students have to begin believing in themselves and what they are capable of doing.

This project is divided into three main areas: 1. Theory, 2. Lessons Plans/Proposed Curricula, and 3. Conclusion and Implications of the Project/Study. While I do propose a curriculum modeled after the 2006-2007 school year for San Marcos CISD, it is important that I stress that this is a pilot curriculum. Based on the ideas and suggestions from the theories that I have studied in this project, I create a pilot curriculum that is merely one example of what kind of curriculum would help the students. There is not one simple solution to the errors of schooling practices; instead it is essential to study each culture's individual needs. What I propose in this project is a curriculum that I would use to accentuate the studies of a classroom in San Marcos, Texas.

In order to present a cohesive project, it is important that I first define key concepts, ideas and words that are used. *Subtractive Schooling* is the term used to refer to schooling practices when, "rather than building on students' cultural and linguistic knowledge and heritage to create biculturally and bilingually competent youth, schools subtract these identifications from them to their social and academic detriment," (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 25). Educator Angela Valenzuela elaborates further on this definition: she states that "if schools are in compliance with state law, their function is not to promote bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism in an additive fashion, but rather to subtract Mexican American children's culture, language, and community based identities," (Valenzuela 2002). Valenzuela uses this term because she feels it "brings the school into sharper focus and suggests that schools may be subtractive in ways that extend beyond the

concept of subtractive cultural assimilation to include the content and organization of the curriculum,” (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 27).

In providing this term “Subtractive Schooling”, it is also then necessary to explain the difference between the words “education” and “schooling”. “Education” refers to what the students are given and taught, the actual content of learning, while “schooling” refers to the actual practices used in order to teach the students.

It is also important to discuss which labels refer to certain groups of people. Mexican American often generally refers to any person who speaks Spanish, but that is ethnically and politically incorrect. There are distinctions between people who speak Spanish, and for the sake of this project, I will explain the distinctions between the groups discussed. “Mexican” refers to people who are from Mexico, most often first generation immigrants and “Mexican American” refers to people who have Mexican heritage, but who are born here in the United States. This same group of people will sometimes also identify themselves as “Mexican-American”. To lessen confusion, I will use only Mexican American during this project when I refer to this group of people. Three terms sometimes used interchangeably but that have distinct definitions are “Chicano”, “Latino”, and “Hispanic”. “Chicano” has more politics roots, as it is a term most often used by people of Mexican descent who firmly believe that there are severe injustices that Mexican people endure; Chicano embodies the idea of a struggle against dominant forces in order to correct the wrongs done to the Mexican and Mexican American people by other, dominant groups. “Latino” and “Hispanic” are most often used interchangeably, but also have different roots. “Hispanic”, developed by census groups in order to classify people who would otherwise fall into a “catch-all” type of group, was created in order to rectify the problems with the word “Latino”. “Latino”, seen by many as a sexist term because of the masculinity inherent

in the ending of “o”, and “Hispanic” are terms that although similar, are really terms that each individual chooses for his or her own personal reasons. It is important not to assume that any person who speaks Spanish will automatically appreciate any such reference, and instead to decide which term to use based on the preference of the person in mind.

Theory

To better assess schooling practices and the theories that call for changes in those systems, I have divided my study of those theories into two main sections: 1. The problems with schooling for bicultural/minority students and 2. How to begin to fix these problems. Each of the main sections includes subsets of references to different theorists with similar ideas. I do not mean to implicate that these theorists are the only scholars with these ideas, but for the sake of this project, I feel that these are most necessary.

The Problems with Schooling for Minority Students

Subtractive schooling practices cause the gravest problems for students of minority cultures. Dr. Angela Valenzuela, Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Texas in Austin, Texas researches subtractive schooling practices. Two major works include *Leaving Children Behind: How "Texas-Style" Accountability Fails Latino Youth* and *Subtractive Schooling: U.S. Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring*, which I will refer to as *Leaving Children Behind* and *Subtractive Schooling*, respectively in subsequent references. Both works describe the subtractive schooling practices that cause such detriment to Mexican American students. Although I have previously defined what "Subtractive Schooling" means, it is important to reassess the term in the context of the wrongs it causes against the Mexican American culture. This idea is a really a melting pot of many different ideas. Namely, subtractive schooling is a term for a schooling practice that is promotional towards one dominant culture and that fails to recognize the educational needs of the minority cultures involved, or that "rather than building on students' cultural and linguistic knowledge and heritage to create biculturally and bilingually competent youth, schools subtract these identifications from them to their social and academic detriment," (Valenzuela, 1999, p.25).

Leaving Children Behind is a compilation of work from different researchers that focuses on the test-taking culture that exists in Texas public schools and the detriment this causes to the well-being of the Latino youth who are educated based on this culture. According to these authors, this idea of “teaching students to the test” or of teaching students the skills necessary only to mastering objectives on a test, and not teaching students objectives that can be applied to the test in order to ensure success, is not only culturally biased in terms of race, but is also negligent in that it doesn’t address the needs of the Latino students in Texas.

The authors in both these texts assert there are three reasons in particular why the “Texas-Style” approach to test taking and the educational system hurt Latino students, “attaching high-stakes consequences- in the areas of retention, promotion, and graduation-to a single measure of students’ academic abilities, for attaching high stakes consequences to schools and districts and thereby encouraging a reductionist, test-driven curriculum, and for promoting uniform and objectivist way of knowing, to the detriment of other cultures, languages, and approaches to knowledge,” (Valenzuela, 2005, p.2). Thus, these authors are compelled to believe that the test-taking culture not only isolates students from different cultures, but it also attaches a certain “all-or-nothing” perspective in which students either pass the tests or have to be held back or will fail to graduate. This not only suggests that students who do not master the objectives on the test have no other skills or abilities, but it also fails to acknowledge that students who simply do not have a mastery of the English language may be able to pass other tests that they find more culturally open and aware. There may be students who fail simply because they do not understand the elements of the questions and thus do not understand what is being asked of them, or who do not recognize the elements of the questions, thus do not understand how to answer the question. In worst case scenarios, these tests that are supposed to assess basic level ideas and

concepts for dominant groups may cause more harm to minority groups than ever. In certain states, it is mandatory to pass these tests before graduation; thus if there are large numbers of minority students who are unable to pass these required tests, students will either have to repeat grade levels or may just even drop out in larger numbers.

Valenzuela also addresses that, “prescribed notions of assessment may also contribute to subtractive cultural assimilation and thereby harm, control, and exclude children and their communities,” which means that children who are Anglo and are asked questions about Mexican American culture might not understand the questions simply because they are not familiar with the culture and vice-versa (Valenzuela, 2005, p.3). The problem with the test-taking culture really rests on two levels: not only is education seemingly biased towards teaching which is directly appropriate for mastering test objectives, but the same culture can also be culturally exclusive. Therefore, cultures not represented in educational content not only fail to master the objectives, but they also suffer great consequences for not being able to do so. Asa G. Hilliard points out, as cited by Lisa Delpit, (2002) “Standardized test makers assume that there is, in general, a unique correct answer to a given question or problem,” (Delpit & Dowdy, 2002, p. 98). Standardized tests do not take into account that there may be culturally different ways to look at these questions.

Herbert Kohl presents a telling example of this problem. He gives the example of a classroom occurrence in which students in a Berkeley classroom prepare for the CBEST test, a standardized test for the state of California. An illustration depicting a woman mopping asks students to finish the sentence, “She likes to...” with the following choices: a) cop, b) hop, c) mop, and d) pop. The children in the class had difficulty answering the question because they understood that the lady in the picture really did not like to mop. The problem in this situation

was not that the children did not understand the question; instead, the problem was that the children understood this question from a different point of view than what the makers of the standardized test had intended. The cultural differences of the African American children caused them to see the question from a different perspective, a perspective that had not been anticipated. Although these children understood what was being asked of them, they felt obligated to answer the question truthfully rather than “correctly” (Delpit & Dowdy, 2002, p. 148). The question then is: How do you punish a student for not mastering objectives when they had an alternative understanding of the question?

While I am very concerned about this test-taking culture that exists in Texas, my study really encompasses one main idea from *Leaving Children Behind*, this idea is the dire need to address the educational differences that exist in order to teach Mexican-American students (and any other minority culture for that matter). The tests that are administered to Mexican-American students are one example of showing how the educational system subtracts from the culture of the Mexican-American by failing to address the differences in the culture of some students from the dominant culture.

In the three-year study for *Subtractive Schooling*, Valenzuela assesses the differences in the schooling practices used to teach Mexican and Mexican-American youth and Anglo youth. Valenzuela notes the differences between immigrant Mexican youth and Mexican-American youth, or students who were born here in the United States, but have Mexican heritage. For Valenzuela, this difference is extremely important because there is an inherent difference in the schooling expectations and goals for each group. While I agree with Valenzuela, the foci of my project are to combat the general failure to address that there are culture differences at all between Anglo and non-Anglo students. Valenzuela’s work is largely centered around the idea

of “caring”. The basis of her work revolves around two ideas of caring: that “one conception [of caring] affirms and embraces their culture and community, and the other attempts to divorce young people from their culture and community (Valenzuela, 1999). Her “book sensitively examines how the students themselves experienced personal relationships with teachers and a school curriculum that had the goal of mainstreaming them into the dominant society by subtracting their community-based language and culture” (Valenzuela, 1999).

One of the most important notions that Valenzuela proposes is that Mexican-American youth do not oppose education in general. Instead, “they oppose a schooling process that disrespects them; they oppose not education, but *schooling*,” thus, it would seem apparent that in order to get the Mexican-American students vested in their educational experience, it is important to provide them with an educational experience that they find respectful to their identity (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 5). Ultimately, what Valenzuela calls for is to provide a schooling process that demonstrates caring. If intentionally disrespectful of the student’s identity is of little merit; even if the practices were not intentionally disrespectful of the students’ identity, the practices are detrimental if the students have a perceived notion of disrespect and thereby believe that the schooling processes are against them. The perceived notion of disrespect, whether actual or not, is enough to disengage the students from the learning process. According to Valenzuela, this notion of disrespect leads to social, linguistic and cultural divisions between the students and the staff.

This damaging notion of disrespect disables students from creating relationships with their teachers and educational administration. Instead, the students begin to mistrust the schooling practices because they feel as though the teachers of these practices do not actually care whether the students succeed or not. “Relations with school personnel, especially with

teachers, play a decisive role in determining the extent to which youth find the school to be a welcoming or an alienating place. Youth, especially the U.S.-born group, frequently expressed their affiliational needs in terms of caring,” thus, it is essential that this notion of disrespect whether perceived or intentional, be addressed and corrected (Valenzuela, 1999, p.7). In order for the students to foster healthy and educationally promotional relationships with their educators, the idea of disrespect for the students’ identity must be eliminated.

Another important point that Valenzuela makes related to this idea of respect is that Mexican-American youth do not identify with the schooling practices or the models of education. She notes that scholars on the subject have found Mexican-American youth, “[reject] schooling and [underachieve] because they correlate academic achievement with ‘acting white’ and because they infer minimal payoff to effort in schooling” (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 17). Because Mexican American youth feel no connection to the schooling practices and feel that success is inherently only truly available to Anglo identities, they will instead fight to “preserve their cultural identities,” (Valenzuela, 1999, p.17).

Valenzuela encompasses the ideas of anthropologist John Ogbu into her own work with his ideas of “cultural inversion” or that youth “consciously or unconsciously oppose the cultural practices and discourses associated with the dominant group,” the dominant group being the group represented in the Anglicized schooling practices available to the Mexican-American students (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 18). Simply because the students feel as though they are being fought against in an attempt to subtract their identities from the schooling practices made available to them, they will fight back and their idea of retaliation is to shut down educationally. In short, Mexican-American students will reject the schooling practices because they (the practices) do not address their (the students’) own needs.

In a section entitled “The Subtractive Elements of Caring and Cultural Assimilation”, Valenzuela describes the two ways that school subtracts from or lessens the educational experiences of the students. The first way is that, “it dismisses their definition of education which is not only thoroughly grounded in Mexican culture, but also approximates the optimal definition of education,” and that “subtractive schooling encompasses subtractive assimilationist policies and practices that are designed to divest Mexican students of their culture and language,” (Valenzuela, 1999, p.20). Valenzuela also goes further to explain that in the Mexican culture, the term “*educación*” is used to refer to education, but has different connotations than the English word “education”. The term *educación* in Spanish also encompasses, “a foundation cultural construct that provides instructions on how one should live in the world”; based on those implications, the Mexican culture’s perception of education is that it teaches life skills as well as book material (Valenzuela, 1999, p.20). From this aspect, it is easy to see why students who perceive that there is a lack of respect from their teachers would withdraw academically; to students of the Mexican culture, schooling practices should be much more personal. Valenzuela presents this argument in explaining, “that the end-state of being *bien educada/o* is accomplished through a process characterized by respectful relations. Conversely a person who is *mal educada/o* is deemed disrespectful and inadequately oriented toward others,” (Valenzuela, 1999, p.23).

Valenzuela asserts that instead of initiating a caring relationship with its students, “schools pursue a narrow, instrumentalist logic,” or that schools use a technical discourse (Valenzuela, 1999, p.22). This technical discourse coincides with Valenzuela’s theory that schools lack the caring nature necessary to the growth of its students. She describes a technical discourse as that which “refers to impersonal and objective language, including such terms as

goals, strategies, and standardized curricula” and one in which “decisions are made in one group for another,” (Valenzuela, 1999, p.22). Instead, Valenzuela leans towards a more expressive discourse, the keywords *emotion* and *care* for individual circumstance.

Valenzuela’s theory of subtractive schooling sees schooling as a threat to its students. Instead of using the student’s dualism in heritage and culture as an opportunity, it subtracts the students’ identity and leaves them with no ground on which to stand. Furthermore, any programs intended to help the students (i.e. bilingual education) programs, but which do not reinforce the students’ complete identity, subtract from the students’ identity.

Implicit problems that Valenzuela found during her study had little to do with the students themselves, but affected the students greatly. First, the principal of the school saw the limited number of role models for the Latino students. He describes this in terms of the number of teachers of Mexican descent in the schools. Because of the cultural barriers between the predominately Anglo teachers and their students of Mexican descent, the relationship between the two groups often lacked the kind of communication necessary to foster trust. Many teachers in this particular school were also from out of state, and even from states that had limited previous experience with the Mexican culture at all. What typically ensued from the relationships between the teachers and the students was thus that the, “predominantly non-Latino teaching staff [saw] students as not sufficiently caring about school, while students [saw] teachers as not sufficiently caring for them,” (Valenzuela, 1999, p.61). The cycle thus, perpetuates that teachers seek respect from students who feel like the same teachers don’t care about who they (the students) truly are.

The idea of *Subtractive Schooling* and the problems that it presents in the pedagogy of teachers’ schooling practices then leads us into a discussion of the lack of inclusion of the needs

of minority students into the classroom. Minority students come from a different culture and thus, view things from a different perspective than their White peers. Children from minority backgrounds have language differences rooted in culture, income differences that influence their view on education, and lifestyle barriers that do not allow them to view the world the same as their White peers. Minority children live different experiences than those of their classmates. Demonstrated earlier in the example of the Berkeley students preparing for the CBEST test, different cultural experiences lead to a different understanding of even the seemingly so simple questions.

As Delpit & Dowdy cite, Karin Dahl and Victoria Purcell-Gates present another example. In a two-year study on literacy knowledge and social class implications, Dahl and Purcell-Gates followed the lives of kindergarten and first-grade students. They found that students who began school with a sense of literary importance and who already had been taught the fundamentals of language and written word were quicker to pick up other aspects of language and were better readers than those who had less exposure to these concepts. Dahl and Purcell-Gates found, “that children who *experience* other people in their lives reading and writing for many different reasons in the years before they begin school are better equipped conceptually to make sense of - to learn from - the beginning reading and writing instruction in schools,” but not all children have the same chance for these experiences (Delpit & Dowdy, 2002, p.126).

It is impossible and incorrect to assume that all children come to school with the same experiences. In a perfect world, all children would have the chance to be read to, to be taught language and living skills, and to be taught certain educational skills before beginning school, but not all children are given this opportunity. Many times, schooling practices fail to recognize that children are often victims of circumstances that they, sadly, cannot change. We, as a

society, fail children when we expect them to be responsible for having acquired skills that they could not have taught themselves.

Generally speaking, there are large numbers of minority children who are raised in low-income homes. This is not to assume that ALL minority children come from low-income homes. It is important to address the needs of the children who do come from low-income backgrounds because they do not have the same educational experiences prior to beginning school that other children may have. While many educational systems try to implement parenting classes in order to help the children and to tune the parenting skills of the parents, these classes are implemented with the idea that the parents are lacking and do not have the skills necessary to teach their children. It is a valid assumption to make that many of the parents of low-income children must spend their time working in order to provide what little they are able to provide. Sometimes there are not enough hours in the day to work long hours with minimal pay, take care of a household and actually sit down to spend quality educational time with children. Because of this, some children are not given the chance to develop skills focusing on their educational development prior to school because their parents' focus is on keeping and maintaining the household.

As Sonia Nieto points out, the inability of parents to participate in school activities should not be perceived as a lack of caring on the parents' behalf or as apathy. There are simply cultural differences in what schools led by the dominant groups expect from parents of minority students. Instead of labeling the parents and trying to put them into programs designed to develop parenting skills, there should be an attempt to understand why the parents are unable to attend school functions or to meet with the teachers. Anything other than an actual understanding relationship between the school and the parents could be interpreted as offensive

and could even push the families further away from the schooling practices that they already see as deprecating.

Children of minority backgrounds also do not have the same benefits of having parents who have had upper level educational experiences as their White peers. There are statistically fewer parents of minority backgrounds with higher education. There may be many reasons for this including the parent's need to work longer hours because of lower wages in order to keep up with the economy. There is also a greater demand for family members to contribute in minority families for the well being of the family as a whole. Because of this, family members may have to focus less on schoolwork and more on working. At any rate, parents may find it difficult to be able to teach their children, especially if they are expected to teach their children something that they themselves never really had the chance to master.

While on the subject of income differences and what this means for the experiences of the children, it is important to discuss Guadalupe Valdés and her work in *Con Respeto: Bridging the Distances Between Culturally Diverse Families and Schools*. This ethnographic study of ten immigrant families documented their ideas towards schools and family. The study's focus on the immigrant family is very helpful in understanding some of the experiences of Mexican American students. Moreover, it is important to understand any cultural differences that the mainstream dominant group may not take into consideration with their schooling practices. This content is addressed in the curriculum created for this project. (See Appendix A).

Returning to the statement that parenting classes may not always be the answer, Valdés presents the example of a student named Saúl. Saúl's parents, Velma and Pedro, thought their son's education to be very important and tried to be involved as much as possible. During the time that Saúl was in the first grade, he had a teacher named Mrs. Lockley who doubted his

educational progress and fought to have him held back a year. In Mrs. Lockley's opinion, Saúl's disengagement in school and his disinterestedness in some of the activities stemmed from a lack of parental involvement. Although Velma was actually very interested in Saúl's education and very concerned with the problems he was having, Mrs. Lockley's saw only that the notes that she was sending home to Velma were unanswered and that Velma didn't attempt to contact Mrs. Lockley herself.

Although Valdés could not describe Mrs. Lockley as insensitive or rude to Saúl's needs, she indicated that Mrs. Lockley did not acknowledge that there might have been outside factors contributing to Saúl's problems. Not only were there two deaths in the family around this same time of Velma and Pedro's supposed negligence, but also neither of the two understood English very well. In fact, the one time that Velma had attempted to speak to a teacher about Saúl's progress, the teacher laughed, and Velma, unable to understand if the teacher was laughing along with her or at her instead, was greatly offended. This perceived offense spurned Velma's own feelings that the teachers really did not care and that they were rude. Whether or not the offense was intended, the perception of the offense was enough to influence and affect Velma.

At any rate, the lack of the ability of Mrs. Lockley to realize that there were personal differences in the parenting skills and involvement of Velma and Pedro, causes a great divide in the communication between the parents and the teacher. It was not that Mrs. Lockley was not a good teacher, but she was unable to effectively communicate with the parents, and thus could not understand what was really going on with the student. Although Saúl did not have to be held back his first grade year, it was he who suffered the most through this ordeal, as his parents and he had already developed a sense of mistrust towards a system that was intended to educate him.

In this study, Valdés (1996) demonstrates how language barriers cause communication problems between parents, teachers, and students. This lack of communication hinders the success of the student, as all three parties are looking to assign the blame for the student's failure. Essentially, the problem evolves in a circular motion when there are communication problems between the parents and the educators; parents feel that the educators are at fault for not caring enough to devote time to teach the students what they need to know, and the educators feel that the parents are at fault for not impressing the value of education into their children. Instead of assigning blame, both parties should eliminate the language barriers by trying to understand each other for the sake of the children. In both the parents and the educators looking for someone to blame, the children are left thinking that there really is no one person who actually cares whether they succeed or fail.

Language barriers can cause grave problems for students; thus it is important to acknowledge the detriment that schooling practices can do to students when they fail to recognize the student's needs in terms of language ability and recognition. Though most Mexican American students already know English when entering school, there are Mexican students who do not know the English language and who have great difficulty in school because of the lack of language abilities. Even for students who do know the English language, there are still language barriers that cause the students to struggle.

Let us revisit Saúl. During his kindergarten year, he was a student of the bilingual program. His primary teacher was English speaking, and he had a Spanish-speaking teacher's aide. For the most part, the class was taught in English. If there were students who had problems with the assignments or had question on how to complete activities, the teacher's aide would offer assistance. English was the primary language of the classroom, but because there

was a Spanish speaking “translator” available, Saúl was able to complete the class with little need for worry from either the teacher or teacher’s aide. The problems began when Saúl started first grade in an English-speaking classroom. It was assumed that Saúl was able to complete kindergarten with little trouble, and was ready for an exclusively English program. Saúl’s teachers failed to recognize that one-year of teaching in a second language would not be enough for him to be able to succeed in an English-only program.

Although Saúl’s case is different from the average Mexican American student’s experience because he is an immigrant whose first language is Spanish, it represents the struggle that a student must endure when his or her language acquisition is not taken into consideration. The contributors to *The Skin That We Speak* elaborate on this very same idea in their studies of language and the African American student. Through different means, all of the contributors have the same main goal: to prove that there is no need for a child to abandon his or her home language. Instead, when a child is more comfortable learning in his or her own language, he or she will then be able to acquiesce into other languages and skills. In fact, Delpit & Dowdy point out that, “most linguists [conclude] that there was nothing inherently inferior about the language of African Americans, but that problems might arise when the language of school and the language of home met (Delpit & Dowdy, 2002, p.xx).

The problem with the language of school is that educators very often assume that one version is ultimately supreme and often do not even acknowledge communication variations. Different cultures however, communicate using different variations. Minority cultures are often criticized for their use of “slang”. Their methods of communication are often referred to as “ghetto” or “trash”. Languages and methods of communication that differ from the Standard English of schooling are often, “perceived as a deficiency that [needs] to be corrected” (Delpit &

Dowdy, 2002, p.17). To coin a difference as a deficiency merely adds to the ideals of supremacy that dominant groups often hold; essentially what this means is that dominant groups are saying, “Because you are not the same as us, you lack the ability to be like us and that is a problem that you must solve”.

Delpit & Dowdy; however see that the problems are not with the students who are perceived as “deficient” at all. In fact, they see that there are three main problems with the schooling practices that attempt to mold all English speakers into speaking standard English. First, the ratio of teacher-talk time and student-talk time skews in favor of the teachers. Of course, teachers use more talk time than students. When teachers do not agree with the language that students use, the student is reprimanded for speaking incorrectly. What this says to the student is: “When you finally get the chance to talk, I will take away your chance if you do not speak the way that I want you to speak”. In a child’s eyes, that is like telling them not to even bother volunteering to talk at all. This idea in and of itself renders itself damaging as students may be inclined to refrain from asking questions when they do not understand a lesson or they may feel like the teacher doesn’t care what they have to say if she is judging them by the style of their grammar and not the content of what they actually have to say. Also, if the child’s home language differs from the dialect used in the teacher’s instruction, there may not be a strong connection to the children’s interests and personal lives. Sadly, Delpit & Dowdy see that “teachers seldom know much about the children’s lives and communities outside of the classroom and either don’t know how to or aren’t willing to connect instruction to issues that matter to students, their families and their community.” This idea coincides with Valenzuela’s theories of caring in the classroom.

The more connected a child feels to the instruction he or she is receiving, the more likely he or she will feel interested in what the teacher has to say. Children are no different from adults in that we give more attention to the ideas that interest us. What appeals to us is what wins our attention. Teachers then, must learn to market their product (education) so that students will be interested in what they have to sell. Just as consumers see no need to continue using products that neither help their daily lives or entertain their interests, students will not continue to invest their time in learning if the practices to convey the learning are not interesting. I do not mean to take education lightly in using this comparison; I merely see it as a compatible and true similarity.

Third, Delpit & Dowdy see that, “the children whose language is considered defective are themselves viewed as defective,” meaning that whatever opinions a teacher has of a child’s language are typically the same opinions that the teacher has of the child (Delpit & Dowdy, 2002, p. 41). Then, regardless of a child’s intellect, judgment passes based upon the words he or she speaks. This too, yields a circular pattern for the students. If a child has a “deficient” language, it is more than likely a language learned at home; therefore it is the only language a student knows. Because it is what a child is most comfortable with, he or she will persist in speaking it, especially in stressful situations. Teachers perceive this attachment to the “deficient” language as an intellectual inability to learn the proper way to speak English, and thus label them as even more inept and incapable. Until an educator breaks the cycle of believing that language necessarily equates to intellectual capacities, there is little that will change either the students’ comfort with coupling the new Standard English acquisition with an already inherent home language or the teacher’s idea that the student’s intellect is substandard.

Fourth, they also suggest that when schooling practices ignore the importance of home-language, they also ignore “intellectual legacy”. If schooling practices lead children to believe that they have no cultural legacy, then, “they are forced to believe that the world and all the good things in it were created by others,” (Delpit & Dowdy, 2002, p. 41). Students then, become even wearier of “The Otherness” already implicit in the teaching practices that favor the dominant culture. Only when students can completely lose this sense of “the other” will they completely trust the schooling practices. If students are made to feel that they are not being disrespected or manipulated in any way, they will be able to engage themselves more completely in the learning practices. This is simply human nature: when a person no longer feels threatened, he or she lets his guard down and will be inviting towards experiences and ideas.

While it may not seem that language may bear much significance on a student’s ability to trust schooling practices, especially if the student’s primary language is some form of English, it is important to make the connection between language and culture. Remember, many language variations stem from cultural differences. As cited in *The Skin that We Speak*, Michael Stubbs states, “it is important to appreciate that language differences can provoke strong feelings of language loyalty group conflict, and are therefore often a critical factor in education (Delpit & Dowdy, 2002, p. 70). If a student’s allegiance to his or her culture comes in the form of language use, to deprive a child of his or her own language is a perceived denial of his or her culture, which also suggests a perceived disrespect to his or her identity.

Nieto points out a great irony to the problem of language specifically for Hispanic students. She addresses that while students may be completely fluent Spanish speakers, it is mandated that they instead speak “Castilian Spanish” in Spanish classes. For native Spanish speakers who speak different dialects of Spanish, code switching may not be very easy.

However, outside of Spanish class, Spanish speakers are not allowed to speak Spanish at all. Schooling practices thus advocate that “correct” Spanish speaking is allowed on the terms established by the school, not by personal need.

Up to this point, I have described what subtractive schooling **does** to a student’s educational experiences. I find it necessary to describe what these practices are as they ultimately force assimilation upon minority groups who should instead acculturate. While I do not advocate that assimilation is any better than acculturation, and I do not intend to judge any person for engaging in either process, I do feel that there is a problem when schooling practices force assimilation onto minority groups in order to attempt to get them to think the way the dominant groups think that they should. There are definite differences between assimilation and acculturation.

To label a person as an assimilated person means that they have completely left behind their own culture to adopt the culture of the dominant group; whereas acculturation implies that a person has adopted pieces of a new culture while retaining certain aspects of his or her own culture. This may mean that a Mexican American may listen to music in English, may not eat Mexican food and may not celebrate Mexican holidays, but will continue to speak Spanish as their primary language. Acculturation essentially means, mixing the two cultures and choosing which culture to reference in your actions on different occasions. Dr. Federico Subervi (2005) asserts that assimilation requires that the person being assimilated into a new culture must in fact also be accepted into the new culture for the process to actually have been completed. In order for acculturation to take place; however, it is not necessary for the “newer” culture to accept the changes that the acculturated person has made.

Thus, because most schooling practices demand that students learn a specific Standard English dialect and study specific books as deemed important and necessary to become successful students according to the dominant culture, they are in fact mandating assimilation. It is not any one group's decision whether or not another group is to assimilate. When assimilation becomes forced, it undermines liberties and rights.

Steps Towards a Solution

Unfortunately to educators, but fortunately for students, there is no cookie cutter solution to the problems with subtractive schooling practices. Because the idea of subtractive schooling is that the practices subtract from the minority cultures, there is no one-way to be able to provide "additive" approaches to schooling that would apply to all minority cultures across the board. Even Hispanics come from different cultures. While Mexican Americans and Mexicans have similarities in their cultures, even their cultures differ greatly. Therefore, a step towards fixing the problems with subtractive schooling is to look at each culture in question.

While I focus on the education of Mexican American students in my program, what I hope is that this program provides the groundwork for education for all students equal to that of the dominant group. This project promotes education and schooling practices that are more equal across cultures and thus promotes equity instead of supremacy of any certain culture over another. As Nieto asserts, "equal education does not just mean providing the same resources and opportunities for all students. Equal education also means considering the skills, talents, and experiences that all students bring to their education...equity is a more comprehensive term because it suggests fairness and the real possibility of equality of outcomes for a broader range of students," (Nieto, 2000, p. 10). In order for any program dealing with the education of minority students to be successful, it is important to consider their experiences and their skills in the

design and methodology. Essentially, it is imperative to set up these students for success so that they may achieve it.

Nieto also addresses Robert Merton's term "self-fulfilling prophecy" when discussing the success of students. When educators believe that students are destined to fail, the students will be more likely to fail. Students will perform largely based on the expectations of their teachers. Thus, it is imperative that in this program, and any other program for that matter, that the educators sincerely believe that their students will achieve and that their students' education will be progressive. This self-fulfilling prophecy coincides with Valenzuela's ideas of caring: if teachers care enough for their students to push the students towards success, ultimately, the students will feel appreciated and valued enough to strive for success themselves.

Ultimately, what needs to happen is an addition of cultural resources rather than a subtraction. In an interview with Valenzuela, she advocates "we need not only multicultural education, but bilingual education (or multicultural education for all)" (Valenzuela, personal communication, 2006). Therefore, not only do cultural subtractions need to be addressed, but so do linguistic subtractions as well. By creating and implementing curriculum that addresses the linguistic differences of the dominant group and minority group students, both groups benefit. Not only would the minority students learn to communicate in the mainstream method of communication better, but the dominant students would learn to understand the main home language of many of the minority students as well.

Dr. Francisco Jimenez, Professor at the University of Santa Clara and writer of award-winning children's books, also offers suggestions and advice for a more culturally sensitive curriculum. In response to an interview that I conducted concerning his opinions on subtractive

schooling practices, he offered a response in the form of an unpublished paper entitled “Multicultural Literacy: A Mandate for a Learned Society”.

In this paper, Dr. Jimenez (2006) states that he believes the task, “as educators is to recover, analyze, and transmit stories by and about the different ethnic groups that make up our culturally diverse society” (Jimenez, personal communication, November 15, 2006). He continues to state that when we include the cultures of all students in the curriculum, the students feel more valued as people. Consequently, the students who feel more valued will feel more capable and will be able to achieve better.

Lessons/Curriculum

The Books Chosen

In order to create a sample curriculum, I read, studied and compared many different children's book. The final selection of books was based on the following criteria:

Does the book relate to the Mexican American culture specifically?

Will these books be easily accessible to the children and to their teachers?

Are these books at the reading level of the children? If not, will I have ample time to explain the key points, wording, style, etc.?

Will these books engage the interest of my audience?

Out of approximately 5000-6000 new books published each year, only a small number reflect the Hispanic culture. Even fewer represent the Mexican American culture. Based on the judgments that I made from the criteria and from these astounding figures, I decided to choose books that were relatively recent and currently available. Many of the books chosen have been a winner of a national award such as the Tomás Rivera Mexican American Children's Book Award, the Pura Belpré Award, or the CLASP Américas Award. (See Websites, Appendix B)

The Curriculum

The curriculum itself is intentionally designed as a ten-week program for the second semester of school. Because it is two and a half months, it can be started in February, and will end by mid-April. Thus, the students have ample time in returning from the holiday break to adjust back to the daily regimens of school and enough time before the end of school to create a presentation for the parents based on their work.

The curriculum and the projects themselves are designed in such a manner that the projects can be completed on an 8"X 11" sheet of paper. Thus, the students can keep the projects in a folder and save them until the very end of the project. With permission from the parents, the end result would be to collect the projects and create a book, with summaries of each lesson to

present to each student and each parent in remembrance of their hard work in this project. In this way, the students will be able to share their hard work at school with their parents; thus, what the students have learned from their own experiences at home will be shared with their parents in a bound form for them to keep and treasure for as long as they wish.

Of course, modifications to the books chosen would be necessary if the students involved were not Mexican American students. These books were specifically chosen for the purpose of encouraging the children to engage in reading and educational programs that related their lives to what they learn. Even for the dominant group students, these books relate to their lives; because the dominant group students (the Anglo students) of San Marcos interact so much with Mexican Americans in the classroom and in the communities, many of these experiences in the books may very well be familiar or recognizable to them.

Ultimately, it is important to cater to the needs of the group you are addressing. This project calls for an assessment of the needs of Mexican American students because they are the greatest minority in the San Marcos area; however, if you visit other areas, there are different groups of minority students whose needs should similarly be addressed. The main goal is to create an inclusive educational program that provides for the needs of all students.

Conclusion

In the Future

I cannot say that my educational experience was anything less than successful. Even as a single parent in college, I had many more opportunities for learning than most people, in and out of my culture do. Of course, I would have liked to attend more readings, lectures, etc, but I was allowed much time for academic growth and opportunity.

My high school experience was quite the same, though I found it to be culturally biased. My parents allowed me ample time and resources to enjoy as many extra curricular activities as I saw fit. I managed to involve myself in several different clubs while participating in intellectually stimulating classes and attaining success at both while working. Aside from the cultural aspects of my schooling, my education was not lacking; I was a very well rounded and involved student.

Unfortunately, my experience is not an experience shared by many members of my culture and race. I realized on my own that there was a problem when I had the sudden epiphany that I did not know my heritage and I did not know my culture. I was able through self-determination to pave the way for self-awareness and cultural learning based on what I had been taught by my family- that success came to those who made themselves accessible to it and to those who strove to achieve it.

Many students do not have this same opportunity. Many families are limited in resources, time and support. In many cases, if children fail in school, parents find it more beneficial for them to go out into the working world than to try over and over again in an educational system in which they do not find success. Thus, if there are numbers of Mexican American students who are not having a successful schooling experience, there are numbers of

Mexican American students who are being pushed into the working world with little to no academic skills.

The number of Mexican Americans is increasing in the United States and especially in Texas. It is expected that the number of Mexican Americans in Texas will outnumber the non-Mexican American citizens in a short amount of time. According to statistics provided by *Hispanic Marketing and Public Relations: Understanding and Targeting America's Largest Minority*, the U.S. Census Bureau projects that, "one in five people in the U.S. will be Hispanic by 2030. Hispanics in Texas public schools currently outnumber the number of non-Hispanic students. Among the Hispanics, Mexican Americans are the largest subgroup; in fact, based on the current U.S. population, 67% of the people who identified themselves as Hispanics on the U.S Census Bureau survey also indicated that they were of Mexican origin. Therefore, the younger generation of Mexican Americans in Texas right now will soon be the majority of citizens in Texas. If this generation is educated using the same schooling practices that currently exist, the working world will be full of undereducated citizens trained only to work on a minimum wage level and raised to believe that their culture is not as important as the culture of their Anglo peers.

In short, if we do not take the time to educate the younger generation now, the state of Texas will become a state whose income is dependent on a class of people who have lived expecting to receive minimal wages in the economy.

Creating a project such as mine is the hope that I have for my culture. Of course, this project was very personal to me while I was completing it and will remain important to me for the rest of my life because I am Mexican American and because I see children of my race

suffering because of the status quo of the educational system. My goal with this project is to provide a means of success to these children who might not otherwise have a chance.

I am not suggesting that my project is the answer to all of the problems with the educational system for all Mexican American children. If I can only open the eyes of people that there is a serious discrimination in the educational system that provides tools for the detriment of children of non-dominant groups, then my project is a success whether or not it ever gets implemented in any school at all.

My ultimate goal is to show students that there is a way that school can become familiar to their lives. If students can find ways to relate school to their own lives, it is more likely that they will feel encouraged to continue with their education. If we engage children's interests in school at any early age, we are aiding them down the road by allowing them to connect themselves with their educational experiences. What I hope to do with projects like mine is to create an interest in education for the children. As I have previously mentioned, children are humans too, and it is a part of human nature to participate in activities that provide some means of satisfaction for us. If these children do not feel that their educational experience is satisfactory, it is more likely for them to become disinterested.

Opposition

Critics may say that in developing syllabi and curriculum geared towards educating the minority cultures, we are in fact engaging and teaching reverse discrimination and segregation. It would be a misconception about my "combative approach to subtractive schooling" to assume that I am advocating a complete replacement of the educational system that is now in place in order to teach Mexican American students curriculum that involves their culture only. This is not what I am advocating. What I advocate is that ALL cultures be included in the learning

process as a daily routine. Instead of teaching Black history month for one month in February or teaching Hispanic Awareness in September, all cultures involved regionally in the school system should be addressed throughout the year.

In fact, it is just as important for dominant group students to learn about the cultures of minority students. If dominant group students are not given the opportunity to learn about other cultures, there is no basis for them to learn to be accepting of other cultures. Especially at the young age that I have designed this program for, children have many different kinds of questions about self-exploration and identity. It is imperative for both groups of students to be able to learn about the other. Only by enhancing cultural knowledge of all separate groups of students will students be able to learn acceptance and tolerance of the differences of other. Also, because Mexican Americans are expected to become the majority population within the next 50 years in Texas, it is imperative that dominant group students are taught how to coalesce in existence in order to ensure cooperative living in the future.

By ensuring that all students are able to learn about their own culture, we would facilitate the idea that we are in fact providing role models for every single child. Some children do not find school appealing or interesting because they don't identify with the histories and peoples of another culture, and if the lessons that they are learning don't actually involve or mean anything to them personally, they lose interest.

If a child has a role model or a history to relate to, he or she has the ability to say, "Hey, I can do this great thing like this person," or "I can make a difference like this person or event". When we neglect to provide children with this way of connecting and applying what they learn to themselves personally, what the children think we are saying is, "I don't think you think that

I'm important enough to teach me about something that matters to me, but you care about the person sitting next to me who can relate to this person better than I can."

Critics may also say that if we address every distinct culture, we will not have enough time left in order to teach students the basics of an education, and while these students may learn vast amounts of information about sociology and humanities, they will not be able to master basic objectives. What I advocate is that if you teach the basics while involving every culture of every student, not only will the students master the objectives quicker because they will be more interested, but the students will learn to exist cooperatively in ways that acknowledge that every culture does matter. The idea of separating the two ideas, culture and foundational education, is where the heart of the matter lies. If we instead teach the two at one time, we facilitate greater learning.

Further Studies/Where to Continue with the Project

If there were more time to continue with this study, there are several different steps that could be taken to further to success of the program. Following you will find several ideas that I hope to continue with the research I have begun.

First, I should like to get into contact with groups for financial contributions to the project. It would be a great benefit for the students to have copies of these books for their classrooms so that they could read over the books during the days that I would not be visiting the classrooms. Financial support would also ensure that supplies such as spiral notebooks, folders, crayons, markers, etc. could be provided to all students. It would also be easier to have a project of this nature approved by the school district if I were to present a complete proposal for this project, with financial obligations outlined.

Second, I would like to actually observe the classroom I intend to teach in before hand. In doing so, the children would be comfortable enough to feel able to share their thoughts and feelings with me. As a stranger, I could be a threat to a child who is expected and encouraged to share details of their family. Observing the class beforehand would also ensure that I would be able to better tailor the curriculum to the needs of the students in the project. While I have previously worked in the San Marcos CISD in a similar teaching project, I will not have worked with the specific group of children that this program is aimed towards. By observing the classroom dynamic before actually implementing my own project, I would be able to build trust between the students and myself that would definitely help to foster the ideas behind many of the projects.

What Could Have Been Done to Improve the Project?

As with many projects, this project would have benefited from better time management. This would have allowed for more interviews that would have strengthened the foundations of my theories. Because I do not have a strong background in the educational systems, it would have been better for the project had I been able to interview additional educators to get their opinions on *subtractive schooling*. It would have been interesting to include their assessment of multicultural education as a two- faceted approach to the solution.

It also would have been beneficial to my project if I had been able to survey students from the second grade age group to determine their opinions about culture and education. Of course, I would have to develop an age appropriate survey.

Essentially, my project was to examine the concept of subtractive schooling and design a curriculum to combat its harmful effects. Future projects can study the implementation of the curriculum.

Appendix A: The Program

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week One-Monday
In My Family/En Mi Familia

Grade Level: 2 Subject: Mexican American Literature Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose I will read the first half of <i>In My Family/En Mi Familia</i> in order to engage the children in a discussion about their family and what their family means to them. I will lead the children in a discussion about family and the differences that families have and the similarities that families of different cultures share. The children will respond by writing and/or illustrating what their family means to them, or some aspect that they would like to share about their own family.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/Speaking/Purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/Speaking/Culture TEKS 2.9.A Reading/Comprehension TEKS 2.13 Reading/Culture TEKS 2.14.A Writing/purposes
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open discussion/sharing ideas Listening and comprehension Respect for others' opinions and voices Culture studies 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper (Writing Books) Pencil <i>In My Family/En Mi Familia</i> by Carmen Lomas Garza Tape Player for Music Electrical Connections
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the story to children. Ask if they recognize any of the pictures or the events on the pages after each page After reading the book, describe my own personal experiences that relate to the book 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review <i>In My Family/En Mi Familia</i> Ask questions about the story-main characters, settings, etc. 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask teacher if children can be asked to bring one item from home special to their family to use with their presentations for next class. For this class, bring a collage of your own family pictures to show the children.
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	The children will respond by writing and/or illustrating what their family means to them, or some aspect that they would like to share about their own family. The main focus is that the students are able to write about what their family is like and what it means to be a member of their family.	
Summary	The three main foci of this visit are: 1. Read the story 2. Discuss what family is, what family means, and how families are different 3. Writing time	Additional Notes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Put Spanish words on the board that the children might want to know: familia, madre, padre, etc. Denote other languages as well, such as Chinese symbols for the same words mentioned above. Before giving the magazines to the children, the instructor can tear out the inappropriate or suggestive pictures.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week One-Wednesday
In My Family/En Mi Familia

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Today lesson begins with the second half of the book, followed by an overview to lead into the individual activity, "In My Own Family, Who My Family Is".	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/Speaking/Purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/Speaking/Culture TEKS 2.9.A Reading/Comprehension TEKS 2.13 Reading/Culture TEKS 2.14.A Writing/purposes
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Idea Culture Studies Application of learned materials 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper (Writing Books) Pencil <i>In My Family/En Mi Familia</i> by Carmen Lomas Garza Tape player, connections Crayons, markers, scissors Magazines with different cultures represented in pictures such as <i>Hispanic</i>, <i>Latina</i>, <i>Ebony</i>, and <i>Oprah</i> Chart Paper
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finish reading the story to the children Ask the children if they recognize any of the pictures or the events on the pages after each page After reading the book, describe my own experiences similar to those in the book 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review <i>In My Family/En Mi Familia</i> Ask questions about the story-characters represented, settings, activities of the characters. List on chart paper 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask teacher if children can be asked to bring one item, such as a picture, from home special in their family to sue with their presentations for next class.
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	After review, place art materials in the middle of their tables. Let them decide how to begin their project. They don't have to draw. The pictures do not have to be pictures of people. The children can use any means or resources available. The student can write a caption for their picture in the form of one sentence. If the student needs help to construct the sentence, the instructor may help only at the student's will.	
Summary	The main focus of this visit is to give the children a hand on experience of relating their education to their own lives. Even if the students are not Mexican American, the can describe their own cultures and what may be different or similar to what they see in the book. The purpose of using this book first in the program is to begin to develop an awareness of the different cultures	Additional Notes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Before giving the magazines to the children, the instructor should tear out the pages that are inappropriate.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week One-Friday
In My Family/En Mi Familia

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Today's session is the sharing session in which the children will share their cultures with the class. It is not mandatory for children to share, but it is greatly encouraged.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/Speaking/Purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/Speaking/Culture TEKS 2.9.A Reading/Comprehension TEKS 2.13 Reading/Culture TEKS 2.14.A Writing/purposes
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas Respect for others' opinions and voices Culture Studies 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tape Player for Music Flashlight Stool/Small Podium setup to use for presentations Electrical connections Student Journals Writing Utensils
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain to the children what the purpose of the presentation is-to share what our family means to us with other students. 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let the children share their own experiences Allow children to be vocal and comment (positively) on student presentations. Steer children away from criticizing differences. Do not let presenters feel chastised for sharing something personal. 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan to display the students' work after presenting
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	After presentations, give the students their writing journals to write what they have learned in this first week. Suggest that they could write about something new about a different culture or something that they didn't know about a friend. Use this time as a reflection process and a time to draw attention to the artifacts the students may have brought to school.	
Summary	Today's presentations should be relaxed. The presentations are a way for the children to engage each other in one another's lives and interest them in different cultures and lifestyles.	Additional Notes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure that the presentation area is designated; must be separate from other areas. Use the flashlight to put the spotlight on the presenter. Prepare students to comment positively to presentations.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Two-Monday
My Very Own Room

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose I will read <i>My Very Own Room</i> in order to get them engaged in a discussion about their perceived spatial needs and their family life.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.10 Reading/literary response TEKS 2.13 Reading/culture
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas Respect for others' opinions and voices Culture Studies 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Journals (Writing Books) Pencil <i>My Very Own Room</i> Tape Player for Music Electrical connections
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the story to children. Ask if they recognize any of the pictures or the events on the pages after each page Tell the children about my experience in childhood: I did not have my own room until I was in the second grade. Describe how I would share rooms with my siblings and even sleep on the couch sometimes. 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let the children share their own experiences If the children identify with a picture or an event let them share it with the class 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Music appropriate to the reading to have the children listen to as they write/draw their responses
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	After reading the story, give the children their journals and ask them to brainstorm either by picture or words about either their perfect room: what would be in it, what would it look like, etc or a time when they remember their family working together to achieve a goal.	
Summary	The three main foci of the visit are <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Read <i>In My Family</i> Begin the brainstorm for the next class: Design your own room! Identify with the assistance offered by the family and extended family 	Additional Notes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> make sure that the reading area is separate from the writing area the children should not feel like they have to finish the assignment as homework, it is a work in progress book is a bilingual book

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Two-Wednesday
My Very Own Room

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose <p>Today is day two of My Very Own Room. The children will begin their activity: the design of their perfect room. The designs will be colored and saved in their collection folders.</p>	Education Standards Addressed <p>TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.10 Reading/literary response TEKS 2.13 Reading/culture</p>
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative Thinking • Application of skills learned • Culture Studies 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journal (Writing Books) • Crayons • Markers • Pencil • <i>My Very Own Room</i> • Tape Player for Music • Electrical connections
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sure to let the children know that their room does not have to be realistic...it is what they would like their perfect room to look like 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let the children share their own experiences • Ask the children to explain what they're drawing during the process, Ask them to explain why they are drawing or including the depictions that they do. 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring a prop such as a dollhouse to demonstrate the ideas of space and surroundings • Bring rulers in case they want to make their walls straight
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	<p>Throughout the day, reinforce the idea that we are creating our very own rooms just like the main character of the story. Remind the children that they can express their ideas and feelings with every book like this. Encourage them to be as free with their imaginations as possible.</p>	
Summary	<p>Actually get the children involved in creating their own interpretation of the story. For this project, don't use extra materials such as magazines and pictures. Since this will have been the fifth visit, let them experiment with their own creations.</p>	Additional Notes <p>1. If the children ask to re-read the story, encourage them that they don't have to create the same room that was created in the story. The children are already conditioned at this point that there are right and wrong answers to questions. Let this be a free exercise.</p>

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Two-Friday
My Very Own Room

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Today is the third day of this week; the day for presenting their projects to the rest of the class.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.10 Reading/literary response TEKS 2.13 Reading/culture
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas Respect for others' opinions and voices Culture Studies 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flashlight Stool for presenters to sit down or prop up their drawings while they speak
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Today the children will be provided the text for the class as they will be presenting their projects 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let the children share their own experiences 	Other Resources Bring a poster drawing of the interior of a dollhouse. After the children present, have them decide which room (space) in the house where they would want to have their room.
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	Reinforce to the children that they are not to be interruptive during the presentations, but encourage them to be interactive by waiting until presentations are over to orally participate	
Summary	Try to encourage children to participate in presenting, but if they are not interested or are afraid then do not force them to present.	Additional Notes Make sure that the presenting area is separate from the writing/brainstorming area.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Three-Monday
Grandma and Me at the Flea

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

<p>Overview & Purpose The Flea Market is a widely known market to the Mexican American culture, but the market is sometimes ridiculed as cheap or trashy. By investing time to get children of other cultures to see and learn about the connections that the Mexican American children have with places such as this and the cultural ties that they have with these places, my hope is to dispel some of the judgments that have been passed upon the Mexican American culture's engagement in this type of selling place.</p>	<p>Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.14.A Writing/purposes</p>
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	Teacher Guide	
<p>Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas Respect for others' opinions and voices Culture Studies 	<p>Materials Needed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper (Writing Books) Pencil <i>Grandma and Me at the Flea</i>
<p>Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the story to children. Ask the children if they all have been to a flea market, if they have not, ask the children who have to describe what it is like in real life. Ask children who have not visited a flea market to try to guess a place that they have been that is like flea market. Ask why 	
<p>Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let the children share their own experiences Ask the children to list the sensory experiences they would smell and see at a flea market. 	<p>Other Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring items that might be found at a flea market; share these items before reading the book
<p>Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)</p>	<p>After reading the story, give the students their writing journals and let the children write about what they would buy if they could save up their money for a year.</p>	
<p>Summary</p>	<p>For this book, the cultural value is related to responsible economics; therefore the general idea of this week's activity is to learn about saving money and about planning how to spend money.</p>	<p>Additional Notes</p> <p>1. Understand that there are some Mexican American children who will not know what a flea market is. Explain what a flea market is, and what you can find there.</p>

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Three-Wednesday
Grandma and Me at the Flea

Grade Level: 2 Subject: Mexican American Literature Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Today's activity is entitled <i>The Perfect Gift</i> , which connects along the lines of the flea market. The prompt for the project is that you have one day to shop at a flea market to find the perfect gift for one of your parents. What kind of gift would you look for? Draw me a picture or design what the perfect kind of gift would be and explain why.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.14.A Writing/purposes
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of reading activities • Creative thinking • Production of an idea, actually creating an idea that you draft 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper (Writing Books) • Pencil • Tape Player for Music • Electrical connections • Crayons • Markers • Construction paper • scissors
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the story and the characters with the students 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let the children share their own experiences 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain to the children what you would create if you had to complete the same project. Let them know why you would include certain things (based on the things that your parents like or like to do). • Explain to the children that they are designing something for their parents, not for them. While it is okay to include things or ideas that they think their parents would like, discourage them from creating a gift for a parents that fits their own interests.
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	The goal of this project is to apply the knowledge of the flea market setting that they have learned in the book to their own work. A secondary goal is to encourage the children to think about their families around them and to think about their parents' needs and wants as well.	
Summary	The goal of this project is not to design a gift that you would realistically find at a flea market, but just to encourage students to think outside of the norm in terms of purchasing power.	Additional Notes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. let the children brainstorm as much as possible, even if they want to brainstorm before the next visit, let them know its okay but not necessary

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Three-Friday
Grandma and Me at the Flea

Grade Level: 2 Subject: Mexican American Literature Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Today is the presentation day for Week Three	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.14.A Writing/purposes
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening • Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas • Respect for others' opinions and voices • Culture Studies 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tape Player for Music • Electrical connections • Flashlight • Stool • Folder (to put drawing in afterward)
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show and explain the projects to each other 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let the children share their own experiences • After a child presents, ask the other students if they can guess why the presenter's gift included certain things. • Then have the presenter answer whether or not the guesses are accurate 	Other Resources At the end of the class, have the children add a price tag to the gift to include in the advertisement sheet.
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	The instructor could gather all of the pictures of the gifts and put them in booklet form, like a advertisement sheet, to include in the final presentation book for the class.	
Summary	While the underlying premise of the book is responsible spending, the activity leans towards a different idea. Instead, the children are being encouraged to think of way to be gracious and fortuitous towards their family-they are designing a gift for a family member.	Additional Notes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The children do not have design a gift that is realistic or practical, but they do need to explain why they would want to give this gift to somebody.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Four-Monday
Chato's Kitchen

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Today's lesson will include a reading of <i>Chato's Kitchen</i> by Gary Soto.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.2.B Compare language and oral traditions
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas Respect for others' opinions and voices Culture Studies 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper (Writing Books) Pencil <i>Chato's Kitchen</i> by Gary Soto Tape Player for Music Electrical connections
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the story to children. Ask if they recognize anything from the pictures after each page After reading the book, describe my own personal experiences that relate to the book Ask the children if they understand or have heard the Spanish words in the book 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let the children share their own experiences If the children identify with a picture or an event, let them share it with the class Ask what the problem was in the story and how it got solved 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring some of the foods that the books shows Bring lowrider hot wheels to pass around so that the children will understand the adjective "lowriding" cat. * Pay attention to the words that are used that the children might not have heard used as adjectives before.
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	After reading the story, give the students their writing journals and let the children write or draw any idea that they would like to share about what their families eat.	
Summary	The main focus of this visit is to engage the children in a discussion and brainstorm concerning what their family eats. Many people fail to realize that food is an essential and determining factor in culture; by having the children explain and describe what they eat at home; they are explaining a personal aspect of their culture.	Additional Notes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> When reading the children the book, be sure to have them pay close attention to the foods. If you have brought some of the foods to show the children, let the children pass the food around to touch it and smell it. If the children would like to elaborate on the details of what the foods smell like, let them include this in their brainstorm-it will help them to come up with adjectives for Wednesday's activity.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Four-Wednesday
Chato's Kitchen

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

<p>Overview & Purpose Today's activity is a two pronged activity: first the children should discuss the problem in <i>Chato's Kitchen</i> and how the problem was solved and to begin to brainstorm the ideas for the menu and being creating the menu. I</p>	<p>Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.2.B Compare language and oral traditions</p>
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	Teacher Guide	
<p>Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening and comprehension • Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas • Respect for others' opinions and voices • Culture Studies 	<p>Materials Needed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper (Writing Books) • Pencil • Markers • Crayons
<p>Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the story with the children • Show the children the examples of the menus 	
<p>Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let the children share their own experiences • If the children identify with a picture or an event, let them share it with the class 	<p>Other Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring examples of menus from take out restaurants • Ask the teacher ahead of time to ask for volunteers (parents) to help with the next days lessons-to demonstrate how to make a food from home. Have three demonstrations that the students could help with.
<p>Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)</p>	<p>Help the children to decide what shape they want their menu to be: maybe a trifold, or a one sided sheet. Ask them to create one meal of their favorite foods for a family. They must include some kind of main course, two side items, a fruit, a drink and a dessert.</p>	
<p>Summary</p>	<p>The main goal of this activity is to apply the information learned from the book. In this book, Chato creates a menu based on cultural experiences from eating food.</p>	<p>Additional Notes Allow the children to create any kind of menu that they want, no matter how silly or unhealthy. Do ask them to use food that they see at home, but encourage any combination of the foods.</p>

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Four-Friday
Chato's Kitchen

Grade Level: 2 Subject: Mexican American Literature Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Today's lesson incorporates parents into the activity I	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.2.B Compare language and oral traditions
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas Respect for others' opinions and voices Culture Studies 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper (Writing Books) Pencil Materials and ingredients needed for the parents to demonstrate Gloves for the students Antibacterial soap
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show how to make a food item (three separate demonstrations) 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let the children share their own experiences If the children identify with a picture or an event, let them share it with the class 	Other Resources Bring cookbooks with Mexican and Mexican American recipes to show the students pictures of prepared dishes. Ask the children to describe the colors of the foods and to guess how they think they might taste based on the colors.
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	Three demonstrations from the book: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Parent could show how to make tortillas Parent could show how to make guacamole Parent could show how to make Flan 	
Summary	The purpose of this activity is to not only apply the ideas learned from the book, but also to foster parent involvement.	Additional Notes Although the parents are demonstrating in class, have them also bring each of the dishes already prepared so that the children can sample each of the foods. Before this class, send a note home with students asking for specific allergies to the foods used.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Five-Monday
¡Si, se puede!

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Read <i>¡Si, se puede!</i> to the children.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.10.A Reading/literary response TEKS 2.14 Writing/purposes
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas Respect for others' opinions and voices Culture Studies 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper (Writing Books) Pencil <i>¡Si, Se Puede!</i>
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the story to children. Ask if they recognize any of the pictures or the events on the pages after each page After reading the book, describe my own personal experiences that relate to the book 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let the children share their own experiences If the children identify with a picture or an event, let them share it with the class 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write down on the board what my goals are Explain to the children what a goal is.
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	After reading the story, give the students their writing journals Today's lesson is for the children to write a letter to themselves based on where they will be or what they will be in the future. It is a lesson based on goal setting and helping the children to imagine themselves as being something great later in life.	
Summary	The main focus of the visit is to invest in the children the idea that they are never too young to start thinking about their futures and what they hope to be and accomplish.	Additional Notes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the children that they do not have to have the same goals or hopes as their peers. Encourage the children to brainstorm about anything that is important to them.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Five-Wednesday
¡Si, se puede!

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Today's lesson is to apply the concept learned in the last visit.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.10.A Reading/literary response TEKS 2.14 Writing/purposes
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas Respect for others' opinions and voices Culture Studies 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper (Writing Books) Pencil
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revisit the previous lesson. Explain to the children that in order to be the great things or people that they want to be, they have to set goals or guidelines for themselves. Help them to design these goals. 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	Ask the children the following questions to have them review over the previous session's reading: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Who were the people in the story? What did the people do? Why do you think this is important? Do you know anybody who you think acts like the people in the book? 	Other Resources Show the children a timeline of how I decided to go to college and what I had to do in order to get there.
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	Explain to the children that they are writing about goals and how these goals will help them to be the people that they want to be in life. Introduce that the activity is going to be a letter to themselves. Explain to them how you write a letter. The letter is a letter that they are writing to themselves about their goals.	
Summary	The main focus of this activity is to get the children to understand that by making goals for themselves, they can make a difference in their lives, and maybe even in the lives of others.	Additional Notes Make sure that the children understand that their goals are to be related to what the decided they wanted to be in the previous lesson. Their goals can be as innovative as the children want them to be. The goal is not to tell them what to do, but instead to tell them HOW to plan.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Five-Friday
¡Si, se puede!

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Today the children are going to learn how to be hands on planners by planting a bean sprout for their activity.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.10.A Reading/literary response TEKS 2.14 Writing/purposes
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Application of learned concepts 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small Planters Potting Soil Gloves Water Bean Sprouts Small Rake for each group of desks
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain to the children that goal setting is another form of planning, and that planning is really just setting up directions for yourself. 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the children what they would need to plan in order to help their bean sprouts grow. Ask the children to decide when they need to water their plants Have the children decide on names for their plants 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring a book about gardening to show the children that to plant anything, you need to follow specific directions to make sure that the plant grows healthy
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	Have the children plant the bean sprouts and set up specific guidelines for the care of the plants. Write these guidelines on butcher paper and post in the room so that the entire class can read them on a daily basis.	
Summary	This lesson began generally describing to the kids how to make plans for the future, then progressed in to goal setting, and finally led to a physical application of following directions.	Additional Notes Explain to the children that they are like the plants, they have to follow certain guidelines in order to ensure that they too stay healthy and strong.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Six-Monday
Tomás and the Library Lady

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose I will read <i>Tomás and the Library Lady</i> to the children in order to engage the children in a discussion about libraries and how they can use them. The children will respond by writing and/or illustrating what kind of books they would like to find in a library.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.2.B compare language and oral traditions
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas Respect for others' opinions and voices Culture Studies 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper (Writing Books) Pencil <i>Tomás and the Library Lady</i>
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the story to the students Have them discuss their experiences at the library-ask who has been to the school library? To the public library? What are the rules? Ask them what their favorite books are and why 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the children the following questions: Who are the characters? What happens in the book? 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring copies of your own favorite book and explain why they are your favorite Bring your favorite book from your childhood. Explain to the students why it was your favorite book-did you like the story? The illustrations?
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	After reading the story, take the students back to their writing area and have them write or draw about something who helps them in their life. It could be anybody. Explain to the children the idea of helping: maybe they could describe someone who helps them to feel better when they are sad, or someone who helps them to learn to read better, or someone who helps them with their chores. Have the children write a list of the things that they would like to help other people to do.	
Summary	While I want to engage the students in a conversation about the library and the library going experience, I also want them to comprehend the underlying storyline of the book: that Tomás had a special relationship with the library lady because she helped him to learn how to explore adventures through reading and that he also helped her in return by teaching her to speak Spanish.	Additional Notes Encourage the students that they can brainstorm about a pet if they can not think of a person who helps them when they need help.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Six-Wednesday
Tomás and the Library Lady

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Today the kids will begin their projects entitled "What helping means to me".	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.2.B compare language and oral traditions
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help students to define the positive value of helping others 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper (Writing Books) Pencil <i>Tomás and the Library Lady</i> Tape Player for Music Electrical connections
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring copies of newspaper articles to the children about people helping other people. Provide examples of Habitat for Humanity, Blue Santa, The Angel Tree 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have students choose an example of helping, illustrate it, and write about it. 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe what children their age can do to help others. Provide examples of ways that they can either help their community, other children, or even another classroom.
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	Bring in school personnel who help: principal, crossing guard, cafeteria worker, another type of teacher such as a music teacher or P.E. teacher for a miniature career day.	
Summary	The goal of this project is to provide examples of helping in the community and in the school in order to illustrate how the library lady helped Tomás as a child.	Additional Notes When the students are illustrating and writing about their example of helping, it can be any extreme. They can either describe a way to help out at home, or a way to help the world. The main goal is to engage the students in thinking that precipitates the idea of helping others. Also be sure to remind children of Rivera's background and what he accomplished later in life because of the help of the librarian.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Six-Friday
Tomás and the Library Lady

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Today's activity is to connect all of the children with the community library and serves as a planning session for a field trip to the library.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.2.B compare language and oral traditions
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas Respect for others' opinions and voices Culture Studies 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper (Writing Books) Pencil Tape Player for Music Electrical connections Crayons Maps of the library
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide each child with a map of the community library and have them color in the areas with crayons that they would like to see 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have the children fill in the information sheets in order to get library cards. They can then take these sheets home to their parents to sign and bring back for the field trip. 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure that the children are also provided with the necessary field trip forms Allow children to understand the responsibilities of having a library cards Send a note to parents inviting them to class on this day if they would like to receive more information on the library.
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	Arrange a field trip to the library. Discuss with the children the things that they can take into the library, and the behaviors that are expected when in a library. Have the librarian from the community library visit with the children and explain any after school and weekend programs they might have.	
Summary	This portion of the week connects the children with the community library experience and allows the children to invite the parents to interact with them.	Additional Notes Designate a specific area for the children to bring back their books within one week so that the instructor can take them back to the library. This alleviates problems in case the parents are unable to return the books themselves.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Seven-Monday
The Pot that Juan Built

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Today's lesson will introduce the story <i>The Pot that Juan Built</i> . The children will brainstorm ideas for creating their own sculptures out of heated clay.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.4.B Listening/speaking/communication TEKS 2.10.A Reading/literary response
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas Respect for others' opinions and voices Culture Studies 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper (Writing Books) Pencil <i>The Pot That Juan Built</i> Tape Player for Music Electrical connections Markers, crayons Overhead projections of pictures of pottery
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the story to children. Ask if they recognize any of the pictures or the events on the pages after each page Describe my own experience with owning a plastic pottery wheel at a young age. Explain how I wish I had been diligent instead of giving up in frustration. 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the children if they have ever created something of their own. Helped to make a quilt? Wrapped a present? Made a cake? Explain the artistry in creation of a product. Ask the children what they would use a pot for if they made a pot out of clay. What would they put in it? Would they cook with it ? 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show the children the overhead projections of pottery from different places-ask the children to note the differences in design
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	Ask the students to draw a picture of something that they would like to mold out of clay for everyday use. They can mold a pencil holder, or a paperclip holder, or just an abstract paperweight. Ask them to color it with markers so they will have the plan drafted for the next class. Ask the students to reflect some aspect of their home life in their design.	
Summary	Today's lesson focuses on the artistic application of learned concepts. To this point, students have not yet created something with their hands to reflect their cultural influences. The clay moldings will not only reflect some aspect of their own daily lives, but if they choose to depict an aspect of their home life in the colors or designs, it will also allude to aspects of their culture.	Additional Notes Verify with art teachers that they will be able to heat the clay moldings after the next session to ensure that by the third lesson day, the children will be able to paint the colors on their moldings.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Seven-Wednesday
The Pot That Juan Built

Grade Level: 2 Subject: Mexican American Literature Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose The students will mold their clay designs according to the plans they have drawn.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.4.B Listening/speaking/communication TEKS 2.10.A Reading/literary response .
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of learned concepts • Culture studies • Making connections of literature to art 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designs from the previous lesson • Clay • Trays (large cookie sheets to place molds on after the children are done molding) • Labels to label the students' names on their work
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the story with the children. Let them lead the discussion about what they can remember about the story. Ask them if there are any ways that it reminds them of the other stories they have read. 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the children what the depictions on their designs represent. Have the other students at their tables try to guess what the designs mean 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask an art teacher to be present in the room to describe the actual real process of pottery making
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	Today the children will mold their clay in order to make their own miniature pottery. The designs on the mold should reflect either some aspect of their home or some aspect of their culture.	
Summary	Today's lesson reflects on the process of sculpting pottery as a way of connecting the children to the physical action of the story. The goal of the lesson is to demonstrate to children that they can do the things that they read about.	Additional Notes Before beginning today's lesson, make sure that you have access to heat the moldings so that they will bake.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Seven-Friday
The Pot That Juan Built

Grade Level: 2 Subject: Mexican American Literature Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose The intent of today's lesson is to decorate the clay moldings that have been baked in order to conclude the lesson on <i>The Pot That Juan Built</i> .	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.4.B Listening/speaking/communication TEKS 2.10.A Reading/literary response
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Culture Studies Connections between art and literature 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clay moldings from the previous lesson Tape Player for Music Electrical connections Paintbrush Watercolors Newspapers to cover the tables Cups of water to clean brushes
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform the children of the clean way to paint Remind the children how to clean the brushes so that they are able to paint clear true colors 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the children are painting their designs on the moldings, visit them throughout the room and ask them again what the designs represent 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring books from the library to show intricate designs that are made with pottery, especially pottery from Mexico in order to show the regional significance of the designs.
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	The children will implement the designs from Monday's lesson onto their molds.	
Summary	The main focus of this lesson is to provide the students with the opportunity to learn how to create art based on literary depictions.	Additional Notes Save the labels and trays from the Wednesday so that the children will have a designated area to keep their moldings while they dry.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Eight-Monday
I Love Saturdays y Domingos

Grade Level: 2 Subject: Mexican American Literature Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Today's lesson will focus on children engaging in a discussion about their favorite hobbies or pastimes to engage in with their families.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.13.A Reading/culture/connect life experiences with the life experiences, language, customs, and culture of others
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas Respect for others' opinions and voices Culture Studies 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper (Writing Books) Pencil <i>I Love Saturdays y Domingos</i> Tape Player for Music Electrical connections Butcher Paper
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the story to children. Ask if they recognize any of the pictures or the events on the pages after each page After reading the book, describe what I like to do with my family in my free time 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the children if they engage in the same activities that the characters in the book do. Write activities on butcher paper 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring newspaper articles to demonstrate the end product of interviewing methods
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	The children will brainstorm questions to take home to ask their parents. The questions will ask what their parents (or guardians) like to do with their family members when they were 8 years old.	
Summary	Today's lesson introduces the children into the art of interviewing. They can take one question or two questions home to ask their parents or guardians. When they return with the questions on Wednesday, they will illustrate the answers to the questions.	Additional Notes Ask the teacher to collect the answers to the questions on Tuesday so that we can see who has forgotten to bring their answers back to school. If any child has forgotten to get their question answered, then ask the children to remind them to bring them on Wednesday.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Eight-Wednesday
I Love Saturdays y Domingos

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

<p>Overview & Purpose Today the students are going to illustrate their mock interviews in a newspaper style. By doing so, the children are connecting the literature that they read to the media in a more innovative manner than by simply watching a show or listening to music. The children themselves will be creating the media in this project.</p>	<p>Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.13.A Reading/culture/connect life experiences with the life experiences, language, customs, and culture of others</p>
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	Teacher Guide	
<p>Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas Respect for others' opinions and voices Culture Studies 	<p>Materials Needed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper (Writing Books) Pencil Tape Player for Music Electrical connections Markers, Crayons
<p>Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the story with the children 	
<p>Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let the children share their own experiences If the children identify with a picture or an event, let them share it with the class Ask the children if they have ever watched the news with their parents. If so, what kind of news do they watch? 	<p>Other Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring other types of media to show students what the media is: include Spanish media and Latino oriented media as well as mainstream media. Suggestions for media: newspapers, tabloids, magazines
<p>Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)</p>	<p>Today the students are creating their own newspaper story based on activities that they have done with their family. The student is acting as the reporter and is reporting the news to the rest of the class.</p>	
<p>Summary</p>	<p>Today's lesson combines the general tone of the book, family activity and involvement and a new approach to writing for the students.</p>	<p>Additional Notes Collect the newspaper articles at the end of the day. Make copies of the articles (color would be best) for the students to put in their folders. The originals will be used as part of the classroom newspaper for next time.</p>

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Eight-Friday
I Love Saturdays y Domingos

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose During today's class, we will decide what to name our newspaper and how to decorate the cover.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.13.A Reading/culture/connect life experiences with the life experiences, language, customs, and culture of others .
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas Respect for others' opinions and voices Culture Studies 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper (Writing Books) Pencil Tape Player for Music Electrical connections Butcher paper List of names of newspapers Markers
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List names of newspapers on butcher paper Read the list to the children, explain what words like "herald", "times", and "gazette" mean. 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask for suggestions of what to name the class newspaper. Begin with suggestions like the teacher's name with "gazette" at the end, etc. 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> List Spanish words on the board that may pertain to newspapers so that the children are encouraged to create a bilingual name Make a list of media jargon, explain to the children what a headline is, what a byline is. Do not expect the children to be able to utilize these concepts, simply explain the concepts and ideas.
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	After the children have give four or five suggestions for a name for their newspaper, take a class vote to see which name is most well liked. Once the children have decided on a name, use the same process to decide what kind of illustration to use on the front page. Read the collected stories to the children and show the illustrations anonymously.	
Summary	By the end of today , the children will have contributed to a piece of work created by the whole class.	Additional Notes After class, bind the collected articles so that the students will have a copy of their completed work in the classroom.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Nine-Monday
Just a Minute

Grade Level: 2 Subject: Mexican American Literature Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Encourage artistic response to literature.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.3.D Listening/speaking/oral grammar TEKS 2.9.D Reading/Comprehension
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas Respect for others' opinions and voices Culture Studies 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper (Writing Books) Pencil <i>Just a Minute</i> by Yuyi Morales Tape Player for Music Electrical connections
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the story to children. Ask if they recognize any of the pictures or the events on the pages after each page After reading the book, describe my own personal experiences that relate to the book 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask question to gauge the students' understanding of the literature. Ask the students how they feel about the illustrations. Do they like them? Have they ever seen pictures or drawings like this before? 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring candy from Dia de la Muerte to show students how the Mexican American culture sometimes shows their respect to loved ones who have passed away.
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	Have the students recreate their own interpretations of the words of the pages. Have the students depict one interpretation for every page.	
Summary	The focus of the lesson is to have the students create a dramatic response to the book.	Additional Notes Since the story deals with death and the children may not be familiar at such a young age, do not offer your own interpretation. Let the children lead this discussion

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Nine-Wednesday
Just a Minute

Grade Level: 2 Subject: Mexican American Literature Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Teach elements of reader's theater	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.3.D Listening/speaking/oral grammar TEKS 2.9.D Reading/Comprehension
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas Respect for others' opinions and voices Dramatic interpretation of literature 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper (Writing Books) Pencil Tape Player for Music Electrical connections
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain to children how to do reader's theater Have the students rehearse their parts for reader's theater Divide the class into two performance groups 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help the students to write out their parts and have them practice. Do not expect students to be able to memorize lines on short amount of time. 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the students want to add props, encourage them to look around the classroom and invent uses for what they have available. Show the students how to make paper hats if they want to use hats as props
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	Number the students off, have them write their prospective numbers on a small piece of paper then crumple it up and put it in a bowl. Mix the numbers up and have a student draw two numbers to be the classroom elect to set up the show with a neighboring class.	
Summary	The focus of the today's lesson was to encourage performing arts through drama by re-enacting the events of a book.	Additional Notes Speak with either a first grade or a kindergarten teacher before hand to understand what the classroom elect will be doing. Have the two students set up an appointment to showcase the interpretations for the next class.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Nine-Friday
Just a Minute

Grade Level: 2 Subject: Mexican American Literature Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Provide authentic outlet for creative dramatic response	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.3.D Listening/speaking/oral grammar TEKS 2.9.D Reading/Comprehension
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas Respect for others' opinions and voices Culture Studies Dramatic interpretation of a literary work 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper (Writing Books) Pencil Tape Player for Music Electrical connections The props that the students asked to use in the prior meeting day
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a pamphlet ready for the students to take home to their parents with their performance group names, the lists of the people performing and the name of their group. 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have the children perform for the younger classes 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before the students perform, ask the teacher of the younger classroom to read the book to his or her students so that they will have an understanding of what the students are performing.
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	After the students have performed and answered any questions about their performances, have them return to their own classroom and write about their experience	
Summary	The focus of today's lesson was to encourage the children to reflect over the preparation and performance of their dramatic response.	Additional Notes If you have secured IRB notification with parents, take pictures of the performances to include in the classroom portfolio of the program.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Ten-Monday
The Three Little Pigs: Nacho, Tito, and Miguel

Grade Level: 2 Subject: Mexican American Literature Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Today the students will hear <i>The Three Little Pigs: Nacho, Tito and Miguel</i> and will discuss the cultural underpinnings of the illustrations in the book.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.9.D Reading/comprehension TEKS 2.10 Reading/literary response TEKS 2.11 Reading/text structures/literary concepts
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and comprehension Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas Respect for others' opinions and voices Culture Studies 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper (Writing Books) Pencil <i>The Three Little Pigs</i> Tape Player for Music Electrical connection
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As we read the book, the students will identify the pictures in the illustrations that they either can culturally identify with or that they can not. 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have the children name the things on the walls of the characters' walls-do the children have any of these things on their walls? 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring pictures of murals to share with the kids. Also bring pictures of graffiti, but explain that graffiti is more often than not bad, because it involves trespassing most of the time.
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	The students will make lists in their journals of the items that they see in the pictures that they like, that they have in their own homes, and that they haven't ever seen before. Ask them to discuss if they know why they do or do not have these items in their home. They will have three lists. They will discuss in their groups of seats the similarities and differences in their lists.	
Summary	Today's lesson focuses on a comparison of home settings.	Additional Notes Ask other adults to be present to help with the children's activity for next time.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Ten-Wednesday
The Three Little Pigs: Nacho, Tito, and Miguel

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Today the students will be taking a short tour of the school building to pay close attention to the walls of the school and what the setting means.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.9.D Reading/comprehension TEKS 2.10 Reading/literary response TEKS 2.11 Reading/text structures/literary concepts
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas • Respect for others' opinions and voices • Culture Studies • Application of learned material 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper (Writing Books) • Pencil • Stopwatches or watches for the group leaders
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before the students break into teams, explain to them who the pictures on the wall might be, what award plaques stand for, etc. Have the students take their writing journals with them so that they can list their observations along the way. 	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Along the way, have the group leaders (adults) ask the students if they like how the plaques on the wall look, if they like the decorations in the hallways, what they would suggest to make the hallways look more inviting. 	Other Resources Make a list of things on the chalkboard for the students to look for: plaques, trash, art, etc.
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	Break the students into teams. It is probably best to number them off 1, 2, 3, and 4, then have all of the one's in one group, all the two's in one group, etc. One adult will be responsible taking the students on the tour. The tours are about 30 minutes long. The students will write their observations of the settings along the way.	
Summary	The focus of this lesson is to show the students the connections themselves and their settings and to make them more observant of their surroundings.	Additional Notes Make sure that the adult leaders encourage the students to make any observations possible. If the students want to comment on gum stuck on the floor, it is permissible, as long as the student is making a connection between the aesthetics of their surroundings and how it makes them feel.

Sample Lesson Plan for Thesis Project
Week Ten-Friday
The Three Little Pigs: Nacho, Tito, and Miguel

Grade Level: 2

Subject: Mexican American Literature

Prepared By: Vanessa Hernandez

Overview & Purpose Since today is the last day of the official lessons, it is just a day for the children to listen and enjoy the literature. They will hear several versions of the story and compare the differences and similarities.	Education Standards Addressed TEKS 2.1 Listening/speaking/purposes TEKS 2.2 Listening/speaking/culture TEKS 2.9.D Reading/comprehension TEKS 2.10 Reading/literary response TEKS 2.11 Reading/text structures/literary concepts
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	Teacher Guide	
Objectives (Specify skills/information that will be learned.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening and comprehension • Open Discussion/Sharing Ideas • Respect for others' opinions and voices • Culture Studies 	Materials Needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper (Writing Books) • Pencil • Tape Player for Music • Electrical connections • Other versions of the story to compare
Information (Give and/or demonstrate necessary information)	Read other versions of the story	
Verification (Steps to check for student understanding)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the students what is different about the stories? • Do the stories have the same words? • Do the stories have the same pictures? • Why do they think things are different? • Why do they think some parts of the story are the same? 	Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the children if they would write a story, how would they write it? Would they use words from another language? Would they make up a language?
Activity (Describe the independent activity to reinforce this lesson)	Today is a day for reflection of the entire course of the program. The students will hear different versions of a story and reflect on their similarities and differences.	
Summary	The purpose of today's lesson is to give the children an opportunity to explore differences in literary works and to question where the differences arise and for what reasons.	Additional Notes At the end of the day, have the children tear out a sheet of paper from their journals and write down what they liked about the program and on the back, what they didn't like about the program.

Appendix B: The Websites

For more information on the Children's Book Award Programs for Latino literature, visit the following websites:

The Tomás Rivera Mexican American Children's Book Award

<http://www.education.txstate.edu/subpages/tomasrivera/>

Pura Belpré Award

<http://www.ala.org/alsc.belpre.html>

The CLASP Américas Award

<http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/CLACS/outreach/americas/html>

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Cohn, Diana. *¡ Sí, se puede! Yes, We Can!: Janitor Strike in L.A.*. Illustrated by Francisco Delgado, with an essay by Luis J. Rodríguez. Cinco Puntos Press, 2002.

Garza, Carmen Lomas. *In My Family/En mi familia*. Illustrated by Carmen Lomas Garza. Children's Book Press, 1996.

Goebel, Nancy Andrews-. *The Pot that Juan Built*. Illustrated by David Diaz. Lee & Low Books Inc., 2002.

Gonzales, Ralfka & Ana Ruíz. *My First Book of Proverbs/ Mi primer libra de dichos*. Illustrated by Ralfka Gonzales and Ana Ruíz. Children's Book Press, 1995.

Herrera, Juan Felipe. *Grandma and Me at the Flea: Los meros meros remateros*. Illustrated by Anita de Lucio-Brock. Children's Book Press, 2002.

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