



Ethnic Studies Lesson 3C: Latino Americans—Hispanos, Tejanos, Californios

TOPIC:

LATINO AMERICAN HISTORY

GRADE LEVELS:

11-12

TIME:

1½ HOURS

California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Themes, Values, and Principles Alignment

Themes:

1. Identity
2. History and Movement
3. Systems of Power

Values and Principles:

1. Cultivate empathy, community actualization, cultural perpetuity, self-worth, self-determination, and the holistic well-being of all participants, especially Native People/s and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).
2. Celebrate and honor Native People/s of the land and communities of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color by providing a space to share their stories of success, community collaboration, and solidarity, along with their intellectual and cultural wealth.
3. Center and place high value on the precolonial ancestral knowledge, narratives, and communal experiences of Native People/s and people of color and groups that are typically marginalized in society.
4. Critique empire building in history and its relationship to white supremacy, racism, and other forms of power and oppression.
5. Challenge racist, bigoted, discriminatory, and imperialist/colonial beliefs and practices on multiple levels.

California English and Social Science Standards Alignment

English Language Arts Standards (11th and 12th Grade):**Reading—Informational Text (RI.11-12)**

Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text, including how revisiting the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and investigating the casta system impact Hispanos, Tejanos, and Californios. (RI.11-12.3)

Social Sciences Standards (11th and 12th Grade):**History-Social Science Content Standards—(Grades 9-12)**

Evaluate the significance of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the casta system in shaping the historical experiences and cultural identities of Hispanos, Tejanos, and Californios, as well as their relevance to contemporary Latino American communities. (History-Social Science Content Standard 4.2)

Lesson Purpose

Students will revisit the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and its impact on Hispanos, Tejanos, and Californios. Students will also investigate the casta system and its impact on Latino American identity.

Essential Questions

How does studying the casta system and Hispanos, Tejanos, and Californios after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo help us understand modern Latino/Hispanic Americans?

How has life changed for Latino/Hispanic Americans in the last 250 years?

Materials

[Denver Art Museum: Pride and anxiety in New Spain; Francisco Clapera, set of Sixteen Casta paintings, c. 1775](#)

[History Channel: What Was the Mexican-American War?](#)

[Texas A&M University: Understanding and Celebrating Tejano History](#)

[University of Nebraska at Lincoln: Hispano Homeland](#)

[San Diego History Center: The Decline of the Californios](#)

[KWL Chart for Unit 3](#)

Vocabulary

casta system

Hispanos

Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo

Tejanos

Californios

Lesson Steps***Step 1:***

- As a whole class, let students know they will be watching a video about casta art in the New Spain of the late 1700s and early 1800s. Start with the last slide at minute 5:30 of the Denver Museum's [Pride and anxiety in New Spain: Francisco Clapera, set of sixteen Casta paintings, c. 1775](#) (video 5 minutes, 38 seconds). Read the last slide aloud and take note of its warnings that these are archaic terminologies and are not used to label people today. They also were depicted in art, but were not practical in real life. There was tremendous social mobility in New Spain that is not reflected in these images, but the

pictures can still teach us about how people viewed others, how people saw themselves (identity), and the culture of New Spain.

- Ask students to help define the *casta* system in New Spain by inferring its definition from the video. Leave the definition on the board. One possible definition could be: “A racial and mixed-race classification system used by the Spanish to link one’s race with one’s social status.”

Step 2:

- Ask students what they remember studying about the Mexican American War (1846-1848). As a whole class group, let students know that they will review that time in American history by watching: [History Channel: What Was the American-Mexican War?](#) (video 2 minutes, 22 seconds). Ask students to focus on how the border between New Spain and the United States changed in 1848.

Step 3:

- As a whole class, and using a map of the United States, ask students to show how the borders changed. What areas/states were under Mexican rule one day and under the rule of the United States on the very next day? Let students know that they will be researching three groups of people that were in the territories of California, Texas, and New Mexico before they became states. Break students into three groups and have them complete a Venn diagram on chart paper that shows what the characteristics and experiences of their group were before the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and what they were after. Where the circles meet, students can state the things that stayed the same (the Californios, Tejanos, and Hispanos stayed where they were, etc.). When students return to the whole class discussion, students should be prepared to answer the question, “How does studying the *casta* system and Hispanos, Tejanos, and Californios after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo help us understand modern Latin/Hispanic Americans?”
 - Group 1: [Texas A&M University: Understanding and Celebrating Tejano History](#)
 - Group 2: [University of Nebraska at Lincoln: Hispano Homeland](#)
 - Group 3: [San Diego History Center: The Decline of the Californios](#)

Step 4:

- Have students return to the whole class group and present each of their Venn diagram posters to the class. Make sure that students address the long history of some Hispanic families in the United States. Ask if the Californios, Tejanos, and Hispanos after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo faced a different version of the *casta* system. Make sure students can answer this unit’s questions: “How does studying the *casta* system and Hispanos, Tejanos, and Californios after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo help us understand modern Latino/Hispanic Americans?” “How has life changed for Latino/Hispanic Americans in the last 250 years?” Add to this unit’s KWL chart on what was learned about modern Latino/Hispanic Americans.

Essential Question Assessment, Application, Action, and Reflection

Ask students to write a fictional journal entry for themselves that would reflect their experience on the day they woke up and found themselves living under a new country’s rule. What are the sights, sounds, and feelings they would have? Students should write a short paragraph.

Additional Readings and Resources

Sowell, Thomas. *Ethnic America: A History*. Basic Books, 1981, 247.

NOTE TO EDUCATORS REGARDING ADDITIONAL READINGS AND RESOURCES: America is a pluralistic country, ethnically. It is also a pluralistic country politically—left, right, and center. Ethnic studies educators have ready access to resources from the left-of-center in the [2021 California Model Curriculum](#) and in the [Liberated Model Curriculum](#). This Comparative Cultures Ethnic Studies curriculum favors teachers exposing students to views from across the political spectrum. Educators often lack guidance to materials from outside the left-of-center. Therefore, in the sections on Additional Readings and Resources, the Comparative Cultures Ethnic Studies curriculum alerts educators to credible resources that provide an alternative to the other Model Curricula. In doing so, this curriculum encourages educators to acquaint students with evidence-based views from left, right, and center.

Ethnic Studies 3A: KWL Chart

KNOW

WONDER

LEARNED

What do we think we already know about this topic?

What do we wonder about this topic? Write your questions below.

After the research is completed, what did we learn? Make sure to cite your source.

| <i>What do we think we already know about this topic?</i> | <i>What do we wonder about this topic? Write your questions below.</i> | <i>After the research is completed, what did we learn? Make sure to cite your source.</i> |
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