National Hispanic Heritage Month: Ideas for Teachers

Resources for Schools and Educators

National Hispanic Heritage Month: Ideas for Educators

National Hispanic Heritage Month honors the achievements, contributions, culture, and history of Hispanic and Latinx American people. The month-long celebration begins on September 15 commemorating the anniversary of independence for five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

Origins of National Hispanic Heritage Month

The commemoration kicked off in 1968 as a week-long event. It expanded to four weeks in 1988 to reflect Mexico's, Chile's and Belize's Independence days and now
Latinx Population Facts
The Latinx population reached a record 62.1 million people (or 18.7%) in the U.S. in 2020. Over the past decade, the Latinx population has slowed as the annual number of births to Latina women has declined and immigration has decreased, especially from Mexico.

Commemorate Latinx History Year-Round
National Hispanic Heritage Month is an excellent time to explore the rich history and culture of Latinx people as well as the societal bias the community faces. As with other similarly themed months, it is wise not to isolate the exploration of Latinx history and culture into one month during the year. Remember, Latino history is American history. Integrating it into the curriculum throughout the school year makes good sense.

Below is a list of PreK-12 curriculum and other resources to bring the themes of Hispanic Heritage Month to your schools and classrooms.

Lesson Plans

8 Ideas for Teaching National Hispanic Heritage Month
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL

Eight ideas for honoring National Hispanic Heritage Month in your classroom. This list of K-12 activities helps students understand the Latino experience in its complexity, incorporating literature, history, art, civil rights, film, music and more.
The humanitarian crisis at the U.S. border has worsened. Use this lesson to explore with students the experiences of migrants seeking asylum, the conditions of the detention facilities and identify actions to address the crisis.
This K-12 curriculum unit helps students understand the experiences of immigrants and the negative effects of anti-immigrant bias, appreciate the integral role that immigrants have always played in U.S. life and what they can do to challenge discrimination on personal and institutional levels.

LESSON PLAN

Sanctuary Cities and Non-Violent Resistance

HIGH SCHOOL

This lesson teaches high school students the meaning, purpose and outcomes of sanctuary cities and nonviolent resistance, both currently and throughout history. Students develop a call-to-action speech for implementing nonviolent resistance related to issues important to them.
In this lesson, high school students learn about the DREAM Act—its background, history, current status—and reflect on different perspectives about it as well as develop their own.

What is the Dream Act and Who Are the Dreamers?

In this lesson, high school students learn about the DREAM Act—its background, history, current status—and reflect on different perspectives about it as well as develop their own.

What Should Be Done about DACA?
Teach middle and high school students how they can voice their thoughts with Congress on what should be done about DACA and DREAMers. In this lesson, students learn about DREAMers/DACA recipients and reflect on what it means to be “American.”

Who Was César Chávez?

This lesson provides an opportunity for students to learn more about César Chávez, the strategies he used to create change for the migrant farm workers and to analyze and reflect on modern day civil rights and labor struggles.
Family separations and detentions are happening at the U.S. border. This lesson plan helps students understand the issue, learn about asylum and consider their own opinions.

LESSON PLAN

Voting Rights Then and Now

HIGH SCHOOL

Help high school students explore the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the difference between the right to vote and the ability to vote and reflect on some of the current day threats to voting rights and what can be done about it.
8 Must-Read Children’s Books for National Hispanic Heritage Month

Recommended children's books for National Hispanic Heritage Month

Planting Stories: The Life of Librarian and Storyteller Pura Belpré

An inspiring picture book biography of storyteller, puppeteer, and New York City's first Puerto Rican librarian, who championed bilingual literature.
CHILDREN’S LITERATURE

**Stef Soto, Taco Queen**

Estefania “Stef” Soto is itching to shake off the onion-and-cilantro embrace of Tia Perla, her family’s taco truck. She wants nothing more than for Papi to get a normal job and for Tia Perla to be a distant memory.

**Undocumented: A Worker’s Fight**

Juan grew up in Mexico working in the fields to help provide for his family. Struggling for money, he crosses over into the U.S. and becomes an undocumented worker, living in a poor neighborhood, working hard to survive.
Alma and How She Got Her Name

If you ask her, Alma Sofia Esperanza José Pura Candela has way too many names: six!

Gaby, Lost and Found

When Gaby Ramirez Howard starts volunteering at the local animal shelter, she takes special pride in writing adoption advertisements. Gaby is in need of a forever home.
herself because her mother recently was deported to Honduras.

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

How Tia Lola Came to Stay

When ten-year-old Miguel moves to Vermont with his mami after his parents' divorce, guess who flies up from the Island to help take care of him and his little sister, Juanita?

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Mango, Abuela, and Me
Mia’s Abuela has left her sunny house with parrots and palm trees to live with Mia and her parents in the city.

**Pablo Neruda: Poet of the People**

Pablo Neruda wrote poems about the things he loved—things made by his friends in the café, things found at the marketplace, things he saw in nature, and the people of Chile and their stories of struggle.
Separate Is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and Her Family’s Fight for Desegregation

Sylvia Mendez and her brothers are excited to attend the neighborhood schools but are turned away and told they have to attend the Mexican school instead.

Sonia Sotomayor: A Judge Grows in the Bronx

Before Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor took her seat in our nation's highest court, she was a little girl in the South Bronx.
Tools and Strategies

Calendar of Observances

Use this calendar of observances to increase your awareness and sensitivity about religious holidays, observances as well as ethnic and cultural festivities that may affect students, colleagues and neighbors in your community.

BLOG

Celebrate Cinco de Mayo, but Watch Out for the Stereotypes

As Cinco de Mayo festivities commence, it is important to stop and consider whether classroom observances and celebrations in general are inclusive and respectful.
On a daily basis people hear and sometimes use words and phrases that demean or ridicule. Here are some strategies for responding.

### Challenging Biased Language

On a daily basis people hear and sometimes use words and phrases that demean or ridicule. Here are some strategies for responding.

### Dos and Don’ts with Special Diversity Events

“Dos and Don’ts” to help schools host special diversity events that are thoughtful and create environments that are inclusive and safe for all multicultural students.
Education Resources on Immigration, Immigrants and Anti-Immigrant Bias

A collection of education resources for educators, parents and families on immigration, immigrants and anti-immigrant bias.

Race Talk: Engaging Young People in Conversations about Race and Racism

As a society, public conversations about race and racism have increased in volume and intensity. Here are some suggestions and strategies for having classroom conversations with young people about these issues.
Educational Resources in Spanish

**Early Childhood FAQs**
The Question Corner provides a collection of answers to frequently asked questions about anti-bias issues faced by early childhood professionals and family members.

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**Reursos Educativos**
Al crear salones de clase respetuosos e incluyentes, es importante reconocer quienes son los niños que asisten a esos salones e incluir su herencia cultural y el idioma que...