

TITLE OF LESSON

Multiculturalism Unit 1 Lesson 23 – Immigration and film *El Norte*

TIME ESTIMATE FOR THIS LESSON

One class period

ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS

California History- Social Science Content Standards: Grades 9-12 Historical and Social Sciences Analysis Skills

Chronological and Spatial Thinking

1. Students compare the present with the past, evaluating the consequences of past events and decisions and determining the lessons that were learned.
3. Students use a variety of maps and documents to interpret human movement, including major patterns of domestic and international migration, changing environmental preferences and settlement patterns, the frictions that develop between population groups, and the diffusion of ideas, technological innovations, and goods.

Historical Interpretation

1. Students show the connections, causal and otherwise, between particular historical events and larger social, economic, and political trends and developments.
 2. Students recognize the complexity of historical causes and effects, including the limitations on determining cause and effect.
 3. Students interpret past events and issues within the context in which an event unfolded rather than solely in terms of present-day norms and values.
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MATERIALS

“El Norte” film

Plot Diagram – Student Page

Political Cartoon A – Teacher Page

Political Cartoon B – Teacher Page

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- To learn about another, more recent, immigrant experience to the US
 - To be able to compare and contrast *El Norte* to “Rain of Gold”
 - To be able to connect the experiences of the immigrants to the experiences of Latinos in California and, eventually, to the central question
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EXPLANATION OF LESSON

During the past two lessons, students have been reading and learning about Lupe and her family’s experience in immigrating to the United States. In the next two lessons, the students will be focusing on a very different experience through the film *El Norte*. The differences and similarities between the two stories provide for a lot of discussion and, potentially, a much deeper understanding of Latino immigrants and their struggles. The teacher should take pains to draw distinctions again among sub-groups within the Latino community (e.g., braceros, zoot suiters, migrant workers). How would Lupe view the characters in *El Norte*? Would either of them see themselves as a people? These questions and discussions will probably not occur before the end of class tomorrow, but it is important to keep a focus on them. You should watch the film in its entirety BEFORE showing it to the class. Though it is possible to watch the movie in two class periods, it is more likely that you will need to skip over some parts and fast-forward through others. This is to be expected and, in fact, much of the film can be missed while still maintaining the integrity of the story and message. Preview the movie ahead of time so that you can choose the parts of the film you would like to show. See *Materials* section for relevant materials.

FOCUS AND MOTIVATE STUDENTS – WARM-UP ACTIVITY

- 1) **Journal 12** – On an overhead (or copied for students) display **Political Cartoon A** (found in the *Teacher Pages* section of this unit) to students when they enter the room. Ask them to guess where the people in the cartoon are located, what the time period is, who is speaking, who are they talking about, and why they are saying what they are saying. Have them answer these questions on a blank sheet of paper. Give them five minutes to complete the questions.
 - 2) Homework Check – Collect all homework assignments. Pass back all graded assignments and have students place them in their folders.
 - 3) **Agenda** – Have students copy the agenda you posted.
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ACTIVITIES – INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

1. Present and Discuss – When students have finished the warm up, ask a few of them to share their answers to the three questions. Ask them clarifying questions to see if they think the person is supposed to be a citizen of the US or not. After receiving and discussing a couple of viewpoints, show the students **Political Cartoon B** (found in the *Teacher Pages* section of this unit) which reveals the entire cartoon – that the individuals speaking are actually Mexicans talking about US citizens migrating west during the first half of the 19th century. At this point you might need to briefly explain the cartoon by asking simple questions for clarification. Once students understand the cartoon (most will have probably forgotten that California was a part of Mexico), lead a discussion based on the questions you asked the students to answer. In conclusion, ask students to guess what message the author of the cartoon is trying to convey (this is a difficult question). Ask them if they think the cartoonist is in favor of immigration or against it and why.
 2. Instructions – Explain to students that today they will begin to learn about a different immigrant experience to the United States through the film “El Norte.” Use the timeline to show when the story takes place (during the 1980s) and explain that it is a very different immigrant story in terms of country of origin, how they cross the border, where they settle in the US, what jobs they get, and so on. Pass out the **Plot Diagram** (found in the *Student Pages* portion of this unit). Remind students this is simply a graphic organizer that will help them to keep track of the important parts in the story of the film. Tell them they should fill this out as they watch the film. Review each of the elements of the plot listed in the sheet to make sure students know what they are to look for.
 3. Film – Begin watching the film, stopping frequently to make sure that students understand who the main characters are and other basic plot information. When you stop the film to check for understanding, ask students if there is anything they could fill in on their **Plot Diagram**. Have them write it in. Use the **Plot Diagram** sheet as a guide to keep the focus on the main questions. Make sure that at the very least you get through the border-crossing scene before the end of class.
 4. Discuss – Five minutes before the end of class, stop the film and lead a discussion that compares the experience of Lupe and her family to the immigrants in the movie. Ask students why these two experiences are so different. What does it tell you about the United States?
 5. Homework Review – For homework, have them write one paragraph predicting what they think will happen in the rest of the film. Give the students some prompting questions to get them thinking (e.g., Will they return home? Why or why not? What jobs will they find in the US? What difficulties and challenges will they face? Where do you think they will live? Why?).
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HOMEWORK

- 1) Write one paragraph predicting what you think will happen in the rest of the film.
 - 2) Study your vocabulary flash cards.
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GROUP ROLES

None

DOCUMENTATION FOR PORTFOLIO
Personal Coat of Arms Image
Interpretation Essay #1