

Topic 2 - American Pluralism
Unit 6: Mexican Americans and the struggle for equality

Key Question:

How have Mexican Americans struggled to be recognized as Americans?

Major Assessments

1. 4 Quizzes
2. Short answer and essay exam - 100 points

Section 1 - Overview of the shared history of the US and Mexico

Readings:

[Video - Latino Americans \(Episode 1- all\)](#)

Mapping US-Mexico history

Terms:

Extent of the Spanish Empire

Mexican independence

Texas independence

Juan Seguin

US-Mexico War

Porfirio Diaz

The Mexican Revolution of 1910

Immigration Act of 1924

Question:

Why are Latino Americans called foreigners in their own land? List and explain at least four examples from the video.

Section 2 - Mexican Americans in the Great Depression, World War II and the 1950s

Readings:

[Video - Latino Americas \(deportation episode 2, 33:30-end\)](#)

[Deportation article \(Smith\)](#)

[Zoot Suite activity readings](#)

Terms:

Deportation or repatriation?

William N. Doak

Farm workers under the New Deal

Bracero program

Zoot suits

Pachukos

Zoot suit "riots"

Mexican American service in the War

Felix Longoria

"Operation Wetback"

Question

To what extent are the events surrounding deportation in the 1930s similar to and different from deportation efforts being made today?

Section 3 - The Farm labor Movement - 1950-1970s

Readings:

[Video - Latin Americans \(Farm labor movement, Episode 5 beginning to 20:00\)](#)

[Dolores Huerta and Jerry Cohen - Statement of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee on the use of pesticides on California farms](#) - Activity

Terms:

Dolores Huerta

Caesar Chavez

United Farmworkers (UFWA)

Grape Boycotts

Health threats of pesticides

Delano to Sacramento March

Question

What similarities can be seen between the farm labor movement of the 1960s and 1970s and the unionization movement in America from 1890-1920?

Section 4 - The Chicano movement - Mexican American Civil Rights

Readings:

[Video - Latino Americans \(LA walkouts episode 5, 40:30\)](#)

[Louis Sahgun - "East L.A., 1968: 'Walkout!' The day high school students helped ignite the Chicano power movement" LA Times, 2018](#)

Terms:

Mendez v. Westminster

Sal Castro

Moctesuma Esparza

Brown Berets

1968 Los Angeles High School walkouts

Question

How was the Chicano student movement similar to and different from the movement to desegregate schools initiated by the African American community?

Section 5 - Mexican Americans in contemporary America

Readings:

Evidence regarding the status of Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants in contemporary America

Terms:

None

Question

To what extent is the rhetoric surrounding Mexican Immigration motivated by legitimate policy concerns or by racism?

For further reading

2015 NPR interview with CSULA Professor Francisco Balderrama, author of *Decade Of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation In The 1930s*. Accessed on 3.17.18 at <https://www.npr.org/2015/09/10/439114563/americas-forgotten-history-of-mexican-american-repatriation>

2017 NPR story on a play about the Zoot Suit riots of 1943 and on the role clothes play in shaping cultural identity and stereotypes. Accessed on 3.17.18 at <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2017/03/09/519211775/when-clothes-make-the-man-appear-dangerous>

Kevin R. Johnson. "The Forgotten Repatriation of Persons of Mexican Ancestry and Lessons for the War on Terror" Pace Law Review. Fall 2005. Accessed on 3.17.18 at <https://digitalcommons.pace.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://timeline.com/in-the-1930s-we-illegally-deported-600-000-u-s-citizens-because-they-had-mexican-heritage-f0c5d589a5c3&httpsredir=1&article=1147&context=plr>

Mauricio Pena. "Death in the Fields" 2015. Ant article exploring the continuing problem of heat related deaths among California agricultural workers. Accessed on 3.18.18 at <http://www.desertsun.com/story/news/2015/11/19/death-fields/74058984/>

A photo essay showing the evolution of the US Mexico Border from Business Insider, 2018. Accessed on 3.18.18 at <http://www.businessinsider.com/us-mexico-border-history-photos-2017-4>

Content Outline

- I. Relations between the US and Mexico in the 19th and early 20th century
 - A. The Texas War
 - B. The Mexican war
 - C. Rights of Mexicans living in areas seized by the United States
 - D. The US and Porfirio Diaz
 - E. The Mexican Revolution and the first large scale immigration of Mexicans to the US
- II. Mexican Americans in the Great Depression, World War II and the 1950s
 - A. Deportation
 - B. The New Deal and Mexican Americans
 - C. Mexican American service during World War II
 - D. The Zoot Suit affair
 - E. Mexican workers during World War II and the 1950s
- III. The Farm Labor Movement
- IV. The Chicano Movement: Mexican American civil rights
 - A. Early struggles to end segregation in public schools
 - B. The Los Angeles student walkouts of 1968
 - C. Chicano power, the brown berets and the continuing fight for equality
- V. The Status of Mexican Americans in contemporary American society