

A stylized sun logo with a pink-to-yellow gradient, partially obscured by the text.

# Rochester, New York iLATIN@S!

Nazareth College of Rochester

Lesson Plans and Support Materials  
for Grades 1-2, 3, 4, and 7



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## Introduction

The presence of Latinos in the greater Rochester, New York area since the 1950s has helped shape the identity and history of the region. In the hopes of creating sources and opportunities for teaching and learning about their history and culture, a group of Nazareth College students, under the supervision of Dr. Isabel Córdova, developed a series of lesson plans for children from elementary school through high school.

These lessons are linked to the NYS Common Core ELA and Social Studies standards. Because our teachers and community educators are so busy, the lessons contain all the materials and information—other than an occasional readily-available book usually available in local libraries—teachers need to successfully implement them.

The lessons are largely motivated by a previous related project: the oral history collection, “Latino Voices” housed in the Rochester Voices digital archive of the Rochester Public Library (<http://rochestervoices.org/content/collections/latino-oral-histories>).

The goal is to bring local history and learning about Latinos into Rochester classrooms and community centers. All of our schools have increasing numbers of Latinos and their stories need to be shared and sewn into the fabric of our rich New York State histories.

The first set of lessons was completed in the summer of 2016 by Nazareth College students under the supervision of Dr. Isabel Córdova and sponsored by a Nazareth College Creative Activity and Research Showcase (CARS) grant.

Thank you for your interest and support in disseminating and implementing these lessons.

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# Grade 7

## Cuban Americans and Tales of Immigration



## Unit Outline: Module 1: Journeys and Survival

Sources: EngageNY & Odell Education

### Part 1: Understanding Close Reading

- The teacher presents an overview of the unit, discussing the purposes and elements of close reading.
- Students are oriented to the idea of attending to details through examining images.
- Students use questions to look closely for details in a text.
- Students use guiding questions to look closely for details in a multi-media text and write a few sentences explaining something they have learned.
- Students use guiding questions to independently explore a multi-media website.

### Part 2: Questioning Texts

- The teacher models how to use the Questioning Texts Tool (Odell Education) to guide a process for close reading, and then pairs practice on a text they have learned.
- Students listen to a new text and use the Questioning Texts Tool to guide their reading.
- The teacher guides the class through an analysis of the text using the Analyzing Details Tool (Odell Education).
- Students develop their own text-specific questions with which to analyze the text.
- Students write 1-3 sentences explaining their analysis of the text and list supporting textual details.

### Part 3: Analyzing Details

- Students listen to and then closely read and analyze a new text.
- The teacher guides and supports students in a comparative discussion of the texts.
- Students develop a comparative question in groups and individually write a paragraph answering their question.
- Students independently read text using a guiding question.

## Part 4: Explaining Understanding

- The teacher introduces the final culminating text-centered writing and comparative discussion.
- Students listen to three related texts and discuss them as a class.
- Students select (or are assigned) one of the texts to discuss with a small group then analyze independently.
- Students use their analysis to write a detail-based explanation of one of the texts.

## Part 5: Discussing Ideas

- The teacher leads students in a reflective conversation about productive, text-centered discussions.
- Students discuss their analysis in groups and independently prepare for leading a text-centered discussion by crafting a comparative text-dependent question.
- Students lead and participate in text-centered discussions with other students who have analyzed different texts.

## **ELA Unit: Cuban-Americans and Tales of Immigration**

### **Lesson 1: Analyzing Images & Introducing the Topic**

#### **Bell Ringer**

(Optional): Have a quarter sheet of paper asking students if they know any immigrants who are currently alive, where they came from and if they know any details about their immigration story.

#### **Unit Overview**

Teacher presents the unit and lets students know they are starting a unit on tales of Cuban immigration to the U.S.

#### **Examining Images**

Teacher places images of Cubans immigrating to Florida (see PowerPoint with images included). Have students analyze the photos by writing 3-5 analytical sentences, i.e. what they think is happening, how they think these immigrants are feeling, why they are doing what they are doing, etc.

#### **Historical Context & Discussion**

Teacher can refer to teacher guide on immigration (page 203) for quick background.

Have students watch Episode 4 “New Latinos” minute 23:37-34:20 of the PBS Latino Americans series. It will provide some background on the history of Cuban Immigration to the United States. The website location is: <http://www.pbs.org/latino-americans/en/watch-videos/#2365076190>

Students should fill out video worksheet (included on page 211) as they watch the video.

Later, teacher leads a class discussion on the images and video.

## Lesson 2: The Narrative of Alejandro Luis

### Bell Ringer

(Optional): Have students write their take-away from last class and what remains poignant to them from last time. Teacher might want to prepare questions such as:

- Why did many Cubans begin to migrate to the U.S. after the 1960s?
- To what city did they arrive in the U.S.?
- What methods of travel did Cubans use after the Bay of Pigs incident in 1961, when the relationship between Cuba and the U.S. was broken?

### Examining and Close Reading of Texts

Teacher gives students guiding questions to look for while they read The Narrative of Alejandro Luis (page 213) in small groups.

As the small groups read, they are to write 1-3 sentences explaining their analysis of the text and list supporting textual details to share with the class. Students should also develop text-specific questions with which to analyze the text.

The teacher might want to have students listen to a portion of the audio interview of Alejandro on the Rochester Voices website:

<http://www.rochestervoices.org/historical-media/interview-alejandro-luis/> )

### Discussion

Teacher has groups share their sentences and analytical questions with the rest of the class. The class will then use these questions and analyses to lead a class discussion on The Narrative of Alejandro Luis.



## Lesson 3: The Story of Elena

### Bell Ringer

(Optional): Have the following projected on the board:

“Spend a couple of minutes considering if you think the story of immigration is very similar for most Cubans. What factors might make the story of immigration similar or different for Cubans? Write your thoughts down.”

### Writing Two Voice Poetry

Have students read the short biography of Elena. They can also listen to a portion of the interview on the website *Rochester Voices* under the Latino Oral History Collection <http://www.rochestervoices.org/historical-media/interview-elena-goldfeder/>).

Students independently read texts using a guiding question:

“How is Elena ’s immigration story different than Alejandro Luis’?”

Students write a two-voice poem they will later read aloud explaining this guiding question. Students should use the prep sheet provided for the poem on page 217. Students should work in pairs.

### Discussion

Teacher leads students in a comparative discussion of the texts, explains what two voice poetry is, and what the expectations of the assignment are. The instructions and explanations are on the prep sheet.

## Lesson 4: The Life and Poetry of Richard Blanco

### Introduction to Cuban-American Poets

Students read about the life and poetry of Richard Blanco (see page 219). Blanco's full bio can be found at: <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poets/detail/richard-blanco#about>

**Students read portions** of Blanco's poem "America" which has an excerpt on page 221. It can be found in its entirety at: <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/56064> .

### Comparing Texts

In small groups students compare Blanco's biography and poem to Elena and Alejandro Luis, and discuss how living in America for a long period of time changes you or affects you.

### Detail-Based Comparison & Explanation

Students use their analysis to independently write a detail-based comparison of Blanco's experience in "America" with that of either Alejandro Luis or Elena.

## Lesson 5: Immigration Beyond Cuba & Synthesis of Material

### Immigration beyond Cuba

Students listen to segments of interviews of either: Olman Bonilla, Marilu Segura, and Raquel Martinez (see links below).

Students write a detail-based comparative analysis of how the experience of the person in the interview they listened to is SIMILAR and how it is DIFFERENT than the Cuban-Americans studied in class, and develop a comparative text-dependent question to share with the class.

### Discussion

Students lead and participate in text-centered discussions with other students who have analyzed different texts.

<http://www.rochestervoices.org/historical-media/interview-olman-bonilla/>

<http://www.rochestervoices.org/historical-media/interview-marilu-segura/>

<http://www.rochestervoices.org/historical-media/interview-raquel-martinez/>



## Connections to NYS 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies Standards

### A. Gathering, Interpreting and Using Evidence

1. Identify, select, and evaluate evidence about events from diverse sources (including written documents, works of art, photographs, charts and graphs, artifacts, oral traditions, and other primary and secondary sources). For Example: poetry, audio, photographs, provided in this unit.
2. Analyze evidence in terms of historical context, content, authorship, point of view, purpose, and format; identify bias; explain the role of bias and audience in presenting arguments or evidence. For Example: Students discussing Americanization and assimilation.
3. Describe and analyze arguments of others, with support. For Example: Writing & Discussion in all lessons.
4. Make inferences and draw general conclusions from evidence. For Example: Discussion & Analysis in each lesson.
5. Recognize an argument and identify supporting evidence related to a specific social studies topic. Examine arguments related to a specific social studies topic from multiple perspectives. Recognize that the perspective of the argument's author shapes the selection of evidence used to support it. For Example: Immigration, Communism, Castro.

### B. Chronological Reasoning

6. Identify how events are related chronologically to one another in time, and explain the ways in which earlier ideas and events may influence subsequent ideas and events. For Example: Cuban immigration over time.

7. Identify causes and effects, using examples from current events, grade-level content, and historical events. For example: causes & effects of Cuban immigration to the United States.
8. Distinguish between long-term and immediate causes and effects of an event from current events or history. For Example: Cuban Immigration from 1959-present.

### C. Comparison and Contextualization

9. Identify how the relationship between geography, economics, and history helps to define a context for events in the study of the United States. (Ex. Cuba's proximity to Florida)
10. Connect historical developments to specific circumstances of time and place and to broader regional, national, or global processes. (Ex. Castro's rise to power and Cuban immigration to the United States)

### D. Geographic Reasoning

Recognize and analyze how characteristics (cultural, economic, and physical-environmental) of regions affect the history of the United States. (Ex. Florida's proximity to Cuba)

## Teacher Information Guide

### Latin America

Latin America is the term used to describe the countries that are located directly south of the United States. It includes Mexico (in North America), Central America (Mesoamerica), all South American countries, and Caribbean islands.

“Latino” is the term used to describe people who can trace their ancestry to Latin America and will be consistently used throughout this unit. The focus of this unit will be on Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic, as they make up the majority of Rochester Latinos. Over half of all Latinos in the U.S., though, are of Mexican ancestry.

### Immigration

Latinos migrated to the United States in large numbers during the second half of the 1900’s. For this reason, the process of immigration will need to be taught differently than that of immigrants who came through Ellis Island. The majority of Caribbean Latino immigrants who came to America between 1950-present came by plane and settled in Northeastern states, most notably New York.

### Puerto Rico / Immigration period: 1945-2000

Puerto Ricans left the island due to a significant decline in agriculture, economic stress, and extensive unemployment. When they first started arriving in the 1940s and 1950s, they settled in tenement buildings in cities that had previously been occupied by Italian, Jewish, and Polish immigrants. They were frequently hired as unskilled or semi-skilled laborers in jobs such as factory workers, domestic servants, agricultural workers, and service workers.

In the 1950s, Puerto Ricans were the main source of labor in the garment industry and helped New York become a leading garment manufacturing state. Most of these workers were women. They were paid low wages, which caused some families to live in poverty. Despite those wages, however, the percentage of Puerto Rican families living in poverty in the U.S. (29%) was still drastically lower than the 65% of families Puerto Rico that were poverty-stricken. In upstate NY, many Puerto Ricans were initially hired in canning and agricultural industries.

### Cuba / Immigration period starts in 1959 (Cuban Revolution)

Many Cuban immigrants came to the United States in the 1800s and would flow freely between Cuba and the U.S.. However, the Cuban Revolution caused a significant increase in immigration. Afraid of Castro's left-leaning rule, Cubans came to the U.S. in waves. The elite class came first, followed by the middle class and, lastly, the working class. Cubans were welcomed to the U.S. more than any other immigrant group due to their previous immigration patterns in the 1800s and to cold war U.S. politics. Cubans and the U.S. government thought that the immigrants would be able to return once Castro was gone and the Revolution overturned, but decades passed without this happening. Cuba was eventually deemed to be a communist state, which led to the formation of the Cuban Refugee Program that helped settle Cubans in different states. By 1980, Cubans had the highest income and education level of the top three Latino groups in the U.S. (Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans).

### Dominican Republic / Immigration period: late 1960s – mid 1990s

Dominicans left their homeland for relief from oppressive and restrictive political leaders. They felt unsafe in the Dominican Republic, and looked to America for safety and opportunity with employment.

Prior to 1960 there was very minimal migration from the Dominican Republic. Despite settling in the U.S., Dominicans still maintained strong ties with their homeland and were often involved in Dominican economic and political life. Like the other focus Latino groups, they settled predominantly in the Northeast, with 67% of immigrants living in New York and New Jersey. Many Dominicans found employment in the service sector, but did not make as much as U.S.-born workers.



# Class Materials

## Grade 7 Cuban Americans and Tales of Immigration



## Cuban Immigration Images



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.





7.

## “The New Latinos” Video—Cuban Immigration

Listen carefully to the video and fill in the blanks. Use the word bank below for help.

upper class      200,000      The Bay of Pigs      14,000      Cuban exiles

Fidel Castro      refugees      return      Cuban immigrants      overwhelming

1. \_\_\_\_\_ led an army of revolutionaries to overthrow a dictator in Cuba in 1959 and then became the leader of the country.
2. Support for the revolution was \_\_\_\_\_ at first.
3. The first to leave was Cuba’s \_\_\_\_\_.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Cubans fled to Miami between 1959-early 1960s.
5. At the height of the Cold War, Cuban migrants were considered political \_\_\_\_\_ and welcomed to the U.S. by the government.
6. At first Cubans came to Miami thinking they would \_\_\_\_\_ soon to Cuba and that Fidel Castro would be overthrown.
7. On April 17, 1961, \_\_\_\_\_, trained by the U.S., invaded Cuba hoping to overthrow Fidel Castro. The battle was called the Bay of Pigs invasion. The invaders were defeated, setting off more waves of immigration to the U.S.
8. The population in Miami worried about having so many \_\_\_\_\_ coming to the city. They worried Cubans would take their jobs and resources.

9. After \_\_\_\_\_ the relationship with Cuba changed and it became difficult to travel between the U.S. and Cuba.
10. Propaganda and rumors that Castro would take children away from their parents prompted parents in Cuba to send children to the U.S. alone on airplanes. These were called Peter Pan flights. Between 1960-1962 Operation Peter Pan resulted in \_\_\_\_\_ unaccompanied minors arriving to Miami from Cuba.



## Alejandro Luis

Alejandro Luis was born in Havana, Cuba in 1972. The story of his immigration to the United States is very different from earlier waves of Cuban-American immigration. His journey required true grit and determination for survival.

Luis graduated from college and served in the military in Cuba. After his service, he was disappointed that he could not find a job. Luis did not like that in Cuba under Fidel Castro's government, he could not buy his own house or food. He grew tired of harsh conditions on the island, so he decided to flee from Cuba with five of his friends.

Previously, many Cuban-Americans came to the United States by airplane or boat. Alejandro Luis had to come over on a make-shift raft that he and his friends built to attempt to float to the United States.

This journey was dangerous because the raft was not very safe, and there is 90 miles of water separating Cuba from Key West in Florida. Luis also knew that if he were caught and returned to Cuba, he would face persecution from the Cuban government.

Luis and his friends ran out of food and water on their raft after their second day afloat. Their situation became life-threatening. They were able to survive three more days on the water with no food or water, and no protection from



Luis and his friends crossed to Florida in a raft that might have looked a lot like this one.

the sea, the sun, and the wind. After their fifth day on the raft, the men were found by the United States Coast Guard.

Since these men were found before landing on the Florida coast, the Coast Guard were required to return the men to Cuba. However, instead of handing over Luis and his friends to Castro's authorities, the Coast Guard held them at Guantanamo Bay, a prison and army base on the island of Cuba owned by the United States.

The men stayed at Guantanamo Bay under the Coast Guard's authority before finally being allowed to come to the United States. An immigrant aid organization offered Luis the opportunity to live anywhere in the United States, and he chose Rochester, New York. He mistook it for New York City.

Luis remembers being completely surprised that Rochester was not at all like New York City. At first he found it hard to adapt because he could not speak English. Luckily, Luis was granted the opportunity to take a year of English classes, and learned a lot of English in the jobs he held when he first came to the United States.

## Elena

Elena was born in Havana, Cuba in 1943. She likes to call it “1943 BC,” with BC standing for “Before Castro.” To her, that is a way to show her story of migration as one that occurred before the Cuban Revolution in 1959. That was when most Cubans began migrating to the United States. Elena left Cuba in 1946 as a three-year-old girl, and spent most of her childhood in New York City.



Elena’s tale of immigration reveals that not all Cubans came to the United States after Castro. It also shows that not all Cuban-Americans come here for political reasons.

In fact, Elena does not connect very well with the political strife in Cuba and the strong emotions it causes in Cuban-American communities.

Her family did not directly experience the bad times of the Batista dictatorship and the revolution led by Fidel Castro that followed. They came to New York City just like many other immigrant families do, looking for work and a

better life for themselves and for their children.

While the tale of Elena’s family immigration is not one of survival, they had to adjust to American culture. They came to the United States after the end of World War II. This was a time of great patriotic feeling in this country, which made it a challenging atmosphere for newcomers. Elena was sometimes picked on at school. She was also put under a lot of pressure to speak fluent English.

This had an effect on Elena, who eventually lost the ability to speak fluent Spanish. She became much more comfortable in English even though her parents were much more comfortable speaking Spanish.

As a consequence of forgetting most of her native language by the time Elena was an adult, she decided to go back to college as an adult learner. She eventually received a PhD in Hispanic Literature, and spent most of the rest of her life working as a Spanish professor.

Even though Elena is of Cuban heritage, she found herself surrounded by Puerto Ricans when she settled in Rochester, and found a home among them. She has been very active with the Puerto Rican community in Rochester, and in 2016 the Rochester Puerto Rican Parade was dedicated in her honor.

## Create a Two-Voice Poem

A “poem for two voices” captures two different voices—or points of view—on a topic. Your topic is Cuban immigration. Please:

1. Work with another student.
2. Use the experiences of Elena and Alejandro Luis as the two voices.
3. In each column, write some phrases about the immigration experience of each voice, but don’t worry about the order of the phrases yet.
4. In the middle column, write phrases that are shared by both voices. Again, don’t worry about the order of the phrases.
5. The first three phrases have already been filled out for you to get you started.
6. When you are finished, decide the order of how you will read the poem with your partner.
7. Practice taking turns.
8. You are both to read together the portions in the middle column, so it will take some practice.

Voice One	Both Voices	Voice Two
<b>I am Alejandro</b>		I am Elena
	a Cuban immigrant	

[illegible]

## The Life and Poetry of Richard Blanco<sup>2</sup>

When Richard Blanco's mother and the rest of the family arrived as exiles from Cuba to Madrid, she was seven months pregnant. Richard was born on February 15th, 1968.

Forty-five days later, the family emigrated once more, this time to New York City. Only a few weeks old, Blanco already belonged to three countries. This led to deep thinking about place and belonging that would shape his life and work.

The family eventually settled in Miami, where he was raised and educated. Growing up among close-knit Cuban exiles gave him a strong sense of community, dignity, and identity. He carried these things into his adult life as a writer.

Richard Blanco had a strong creative spirit since childhood, and he also excelled in math and the sciences. His parents encouraged him to study engineering. They believed that engineering would ensure a more stable and rewarding career for him. He took their advice, earning a degree from Florida International University in 1991, and began working as a consulting civil engineer in Miami.



In his mid-20s he felt he had to express his creative side through writing. This was prompted by questions of cultural identity and his personal history. He returned to Florida International University, where he was mentored by the poet Campbell McGrath. There, he earned a Master of Fine Arts in creative writing in 1997.

Blanco's first book of poetry, *City of a Hundred Fires*, was published in 1998 to critical acclaim. The collection explored his cultural yearnings and contradictions as a Cuban-American. It captured the details of his transformational first trip to Cuba, which he

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<sup>2</sup> From: <http://richard-blanco.com/bio/>



considered to be a kind of homeland. *City of a Hundred Fires* won the Agnes Lynch Starrett Poetry Prize from the University of Pittsburgh Press.

After the success of his first book, Blanco took a break from his engineering career. He accepted a position at Central Connecticut State University as a professor of creative writing. While living in Connecticut, he met his current life-partner, Dr. Mark Neveu, a renowned research scientist.

President Barack Obama selected Blanco in 2012 to serve as the fifth inaugural poet in U.S. history, joining the ranks of such luminary poets as Robert Frost and Maya Angelou.

The youngest, first Latino, immigrant, and gay person to serve in such a role, Blanco read “One Today,” an original poem he wrote for the occasion, at Obama’s inauguration ceremony on January 21, 2013.



## Excerpt from “América”

by Richard Blanco<sup>3</sup>

### III.

By seven I had grown suspicious—we were still here.

Overheard conversations about returning

had grown wistful and less frequent.

I spoke English; my parents didn’t.

We didn’t live in a two story house

with a maid or a wood panel station wagon

nor vacation camping in Colorado.

None of the girls had hair of gold;

none of my brothers or cousins

were named Greg, Peter, or Marsha;

we were not the Brady Bunch.<sup>4</sup>

None of the black and white characters

on Donna Reed or on Dick Van Dyke Show<sup>5</sup>

were named Guadalupe, Lázaro, or Mercedes.

Patty Duke’s family wasn’t like U.S. either—

they didn’t have pork on Thanksgiving,

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<sup>3</sup> [richard-blanco.com/book/city-of-a-hundred-fires/america/](http://richard-blanco.com/book/city-of-a-hundred-fires/america/)

<sup>4</sup> *The Brady Bunch* was a popular TV series about a blended white, middle-class Anglophone (English-speaking) family with six children, including Greg, Peter, and Marsha, a girl who had blonde hair. The show ran from 1969-1974.

<sup>5</sup> *The Donna Reed Show* (1958-1966), *Dick Van Dyke Show* (1961-1966), and *Patty Duke Show* (1963-1966) were also about white, middle-class Anglophone families.

they ate turkey with cranberry sauce;  
they didn’t have yucca, they had yams  
like the dittos of Pilgrims I colored in class.

#### IV.

A week before Thanksgiving  
I explained to my abuelita<sup>6</sup>  
about the Indians and the Mayflower,  
how Lincoln set the slaves free;  
I explained to my parents about  
the purple mountain’s majesty,  
“one if by land, two if by sea”  
the cherry tree, the tea party,  
the amber waves of grain,  
the “masses yearning to be free”  
liberty and justice for all, until  
finally they agreed:  
this Thanksgiving we would have turkey, as well as pork.

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<sup>6</sup> “Abuelita” means ‘Grandma.’