

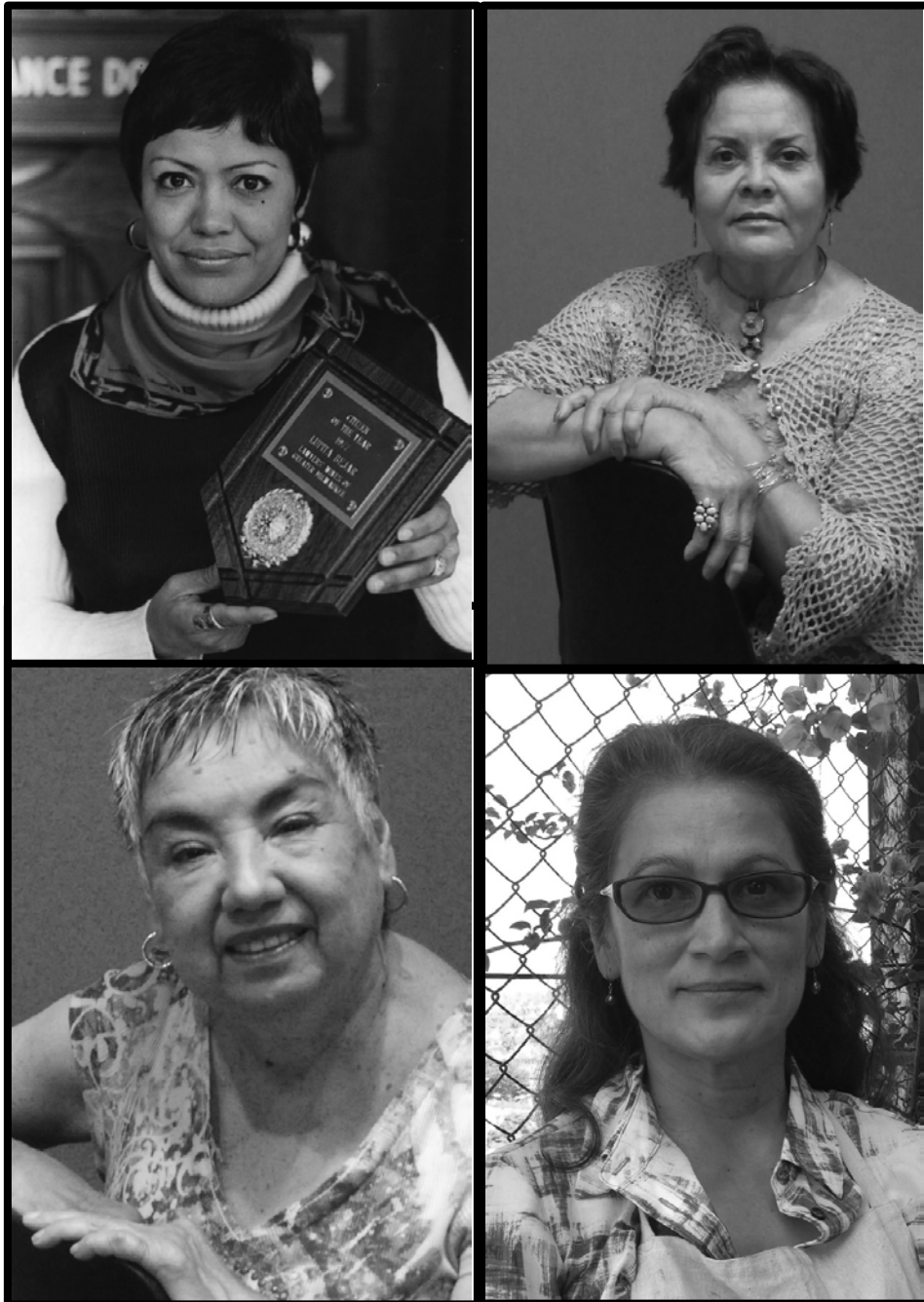


WISCONSIN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

SOMOS LATINAS

Curriculum Packet for Grades 6-12

Somos Latinas





This lesson is recommended for grades 6-12

“Every moment is an organizing opportunity, every person a potential activist, every minute a chance to change the world.” - *Dolores Huerta*

Enduring Understanding

Being an activist, and activism in general, is not limited by race, color, creed, or gender, but the intersections of these identifiers have historically posed significant social barriers in both undertaking and learning about activism in marginalized communities.

Essential Questions:

- What is activism?
- How can activism lead to change?
- How do women’s intersecting gender roles and identities make political activism more challenging?
- How is activism perceived among different social groups (i.e., marginalized communities, dominant culture, persons of color, women, etc.)?

Students will be able to

- Recognize activist actions
- Understand the context of the struggles of Latina activists
- Recognize the importance of women’s voices in activist causes
- Evaluate the efficacy of working together for change
- Reflect on what it means to be an activist in their own lives

Vocabulary

- Chicana
- Latina
- Latinx
- Chican@
- Latin@
- Community activism
- Activist

**Preface and Introduction:**

“This book begins to fill in the gaps in local histories where Latina activists are missing, and it explores their community-building strategies. It creates a platform of knowledge for current and future generations to build upon. We want all people, but particularly our Latina women and girls, to gain confidence in their own community-building skills, and to find strength in the earlier efforts of other Latinas.”

Discussion Questions:

- How did the idea come for the book?
- What clues are given that this project was a complex project that required a lot of work?
- How were the Somos Women selected and how did they get recruited into the project?
- Why did the authors write the book?
- What do the statistics about population, income, and graduation say?
- Why is it necessary to “fill in the gaps” of the missing histories of Latina women?

Define:

- Chicana
- Latina
- Latinx
- Chican@
- Latin@Activist

Self-Assessment

On a separate sheet of paper or in your journal, answer the following questions:

- What is your racial/ethnic identity?
- Do you consider yourself an activist?
- How do you define community activism?
- What areas of activism have you or would you like to participate in?

Lupita Béjar Verbeten (p.18-25)

“With your ideas, you’re not going to make it here, Lupita. Your father lives in the States. Go and live in the States where you are able to speak up without the danger of being arrested or being badly hurt.”

Discussion questions

- How did Lupita help support her family when she was young?
- Where did her activism start?
- What role did her family play in her early activism?
- How did Lupita use her personal talents to advance her activism?
- What major civil rights leaders did Lupita perform for?
- Why did Lupita dress as a clown?
- How did dressing as a clown impact Lupita’s activism?
- What do Lupita’s tactics tell us about her personality?
- What were Lupita’s thoughts on singing for school groups?



Performance task:

As a class, brainstorm a list of activist causes (environmentalism, animal rights, social justice, etc.). Individually select one that you feel strongly about. Consider your individual talents (for example, clowning, rapping, dancing, basketball, gaming, writing, or talking). Create a plan on how you can best utilize your unique abilities for the greater good. See sample below.

| Cause | Talent | Plan |
|---|-----------------------|---|
| Cleaning garbage out of lakes and streams | Writing | Write letters to local companies asking if they recycle. |
| | Google Hangout Expert | Organize a group of friends to bring trash bags to the beach and pick up garbage at the end of the weekend. |



Marie Black (p. 33- 38)

“I think that we have the responsibility of letting our young generations know our past. Once we better know our history and culture, we can be proud of it. It will encourage them and give them hope and let them know that they can accomplish many things, too!”

Discussion questions

- What was unusual about the place where Marie worked when she first moved to Racine?
- How might Marie have made friends with people she could not speak to?
- What was Marie’s experience as a business owner like?
- What factors might have contributed to Marie founding the Hispanic Business and Professionals Association?
- What is Marie’s perspective on the power of a president versus the power of a member?
- What is the importance of a community newspaper?
- Is forming a business a type of activism? Why or why not?

Performance task:

Read the Washington Post article “*Resist White Supremacy: A sign. A farm. And the fury that followed*” www.washingtonpost.com/local/resist-white-supremacy-a-sign-a-farm-and-the-fury-that-followed/2018/02/13/47e7dfa2-10e0-11e8-9065-e55346f6de81_story.html?utm_term=.29deab50eb33 and answer the following question: Should private businesses engage in political activism? Why or why not? Cite real-world examples to support your argument.

Patricia Castañeda Tucker (p.39-45)

“I didn’t hear of the word Chicano until much later. I had my own sort of reeducation. I would have to say I was a junior or senior in high school when I started to find out more about it.”

Discussion questions

- What do you think of how Patricia answered the questions of whether she is an activist and what community activism is? If the order of the questions were switched, might her answer on whether she is an activist change?
- What influence did national politics play on Patricia’s development?
- How did Patricia find out about her family genealogy? What inspired her to start asking questions?
- Why did Patricia begin working with socialism?
- What kinds of youth activities did she lead?
- What is Patricia’s view on educators and education?
- Would you classify Patricia as an activist? Why do you think she did not call herself one?

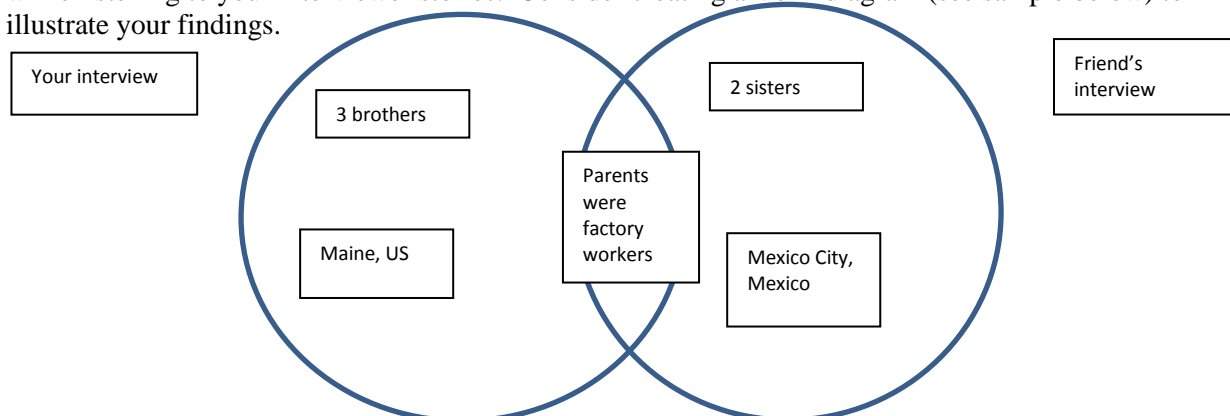


Performance task:

Find out more about your community. Sample questions to ask community members include:

- Where did your family come from and when did they arrive in this community?
- Why did they choose to live here?
- What did your parents or grandparents do for a living?
- Did you have any brothers or sisters? How many of each?
- What other parts of the world do you have family in?
- Tell me a favorite story about living here.
- Tell me about a challenge you’ve faced living here.

After you complete the interviews, work as a class to identify similarities and differences you discovered while listening to your interviewer stories. Consider creating a Venn diagram (see sample below) to illustrate your findings.



Daisy Cubias (p. 54-62)

“My country had denied us our history. So he took me to the library, and I started reading. There were so many things I didn’t know about my own county; I couldn’t believe it.”

Discussion questions

- Where did Daisy grow up, and when did she realize she had many advantages over others?
- How did Daisy resist not being able to speak her mind?
- What were some of the things Daisy learned about her country after she left and how did this impact her life?
- How did Daisy help migrant workers in Wisconsin?
- How did Daisy help Central Americans?
- What is Daisy’s form of therapy called? How did she make money from her work and use it to advance her causes?
- How does Daisy describe discrimination Latina women face? Is it different from the discrimination Latino men face? How?
- Why did Daisy become an active education advocate?
- What successes (if any) did Daisy have as an activist?



Performance task:

People need time to reduce stress in their lives, and this can be especially true of activists like Daisy. Many people choose to reduce stress through professional therapy. Others get together with friends or find quiet moments to read or listen to music. What is your form of therapy? How does it help? On a separate piece of paper or in your journal, write a brief reflection on how you choose to reduce the influence of stress in your life.



The exercises for *Somos Latinas* help to meet the following Wisconsin Academic Standards:

History

By the end of *grade eight*, students will:

B.8.1 Interpret the past using a variety of sources, such as biographies, diaries, journals, artifacts, eyewitness interviews, and other primary source materials, and evaluate the credibility of sources used

B.8.2 Employ cause-and-effect arguments to demonstrate how significant events have influenced the past and the present in United States and world history

B.8.3 Describe the relationships between and among significant events, such as the causes and consequences of wars in United States and world history

B.8.4 Explain how and why events may be interpreted differently depending upon the perspectives of participants, witnesses, reporters, and historians

B.8.5 Use historical evidence to determine and support a position about important political values, such as freedom, democracy, equality, or justice, and express the position coherently

B.8.6 Analyze important political values such as freedom, democracy, equality, and justice embodied in documents such as the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights

B.8.9 Explain the need for laws and policies to regulate science and technology

B.8.10 Analyze examples of conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among groups, societies, or nations

Political Science

By the end of *grade eight*, students will:

C.8.1 Identify and explain democracy's basic principles, including individual rights, responsibility for the common good, equal opportunity, equal protection of the laws, freedom of speech, justice, and majority rule with protection for minority rights

C.8.7 Locate, organize, and use relevant information to understand an issue of public concern, take a position, and advocate the position in a debate

C.8.8 Identify ways in which advocates participate in public policy debates



Behavioral Science

By the end of *grade eight*, students will:

- E.8.1 Give examples to explain and illustrate the influence of prior knowledge, motivation, capabilities, personal interests, and other factors on individual learning
- E.8.2 Give examples to explain and illustrate how factors such as family, gender, and socioeconomic status contribute to individual identity and development
- E.8.3 Describe the ways in which local, regional, and ethnic cultures may influence the everyday lives of people
- E.8.4 Describe and explain the means by which individuals, groups, and institutions may contribute to social continuity and change within a community
- E.8.5 Describe and explain the means by which groups and institutions meet the needs of individuals and societies
- E.8.6 Describe and explain the influence of status, ethnic origin, race, gender, and age on the interactions of individuals
- E.8.7 Identify and explain examples of bias, prejudice, and stereotyping, and how they contribute to conflict in a society
- E.8.8 Give examples to show how the media may influence the behavior and decision-making of individuals and groups
- E.8.11 Explain how beliefs and practices, such as ownership of property or status at birth, may lead to conflict among people of different regions or cultures and give examples of such conflicts that have and have not been resolved
- E.8.12 Describe conflict resolution and peer mediation strategies used in resolving differences and disputes