



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1984 Volume III: Hispanic Minorities in the United States

Teaching Culture: Beyond Language

Guide for Curriculum Unit 84.03.06
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In the past, humanists have viewed language as an intellectual discipline. Today, language has been redefined as an integral part of the culture with which it is connected. In an anthropological sense, the term “culture” refers to the behavioral patterns or life styles of a people. A knowledge of the codes of behavior of another people is important if today’s foreign language student is to communicate fully in the target language.

The goal of this unit has been to demonstrate to foreign language teachers how they can incorporate the teaching of culture into their foreign language classrooms. In this curriculum unit, I have defined the different types of culture; demonstrated its relevance to second language learning; and given suggestions as to when and how both formal and deep cultures can be incorporated into the already existing curriculum of a beginning language course. The five cultural activity sheets at the end of the unit are specifically designed so that they may be used by any classroom teacher whose goal is to expose students to the cultural diversity within their classrooms, schools, and communities.

(Recommended for any foreign language class, grades 7 through 12)

Key Words

Language Skills Spanish Foreign Language Instruction General

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