



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
2007 Volume I: American Voices: Listening to Fiction, Poetry, and Prose

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## **Hearing Latino Voices in American Literature as a Way for Students to Understand Their Own Hispanic Identity**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 07.01.10  
by Ekaterina Barkhatova

This unit is designed for fourth-grade bilingual students (with origin from Latin American countries) who receive Language Transitional Support Services in English in the mainstream classroom. It focuses on teaching how to find a distinctive writer's voice through appealing to one's cultural background. Along with this, reading Latin American authors is incorporated to bring students to identify themselves with the narrators who speak very explicitly about their Latino culture. The ultimate goal of the unit is for each student to be able to communicate his or her cultural experience to the audience through pieces of writing portraying his or her own unique image. This goal is based on the fact that one's voice serves as a vital part of his or her identity, so one obviously cannot conceal his or her cultural and family belonging when he or she has a chance to use voice. The unit guides students to realize that when they speak passionately, they reveal something about their family and their culture. As writers, they should capitalize on this fact and learn how to make *their* voice an integral part of their writing.

(Recommended for Reading Comprehension and Writing, Bilingual, grade 4.)

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