

Stereotypes

Mapping the Languages of Latin America

LATIN AMERICA  
Curriculum Materials for The Middle Grades

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# Stereotypes

I-15

I

CATEGORY: INTRODUCTION

CONCEPTS: LANGUAGE

ACTIVITY: MAPPING THE LANGUAGES OF LATIN AMERICA. Central and South America offer a more diverse series of cultures and nations than we often realize. Learning of the many languages spoken can provide an idea of this diversity. This exercise mentions some of the many languages that are found in different areas and allows students to locate the areas on a map.

OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to name a series of languages of Latin America and place their area of use on a map. They will also begin to visualize Latin America as a complex cultural area instead of a homogeneous entity.

MATERIALS: Large wall map of Latin America  
Reproductions of small map for each student  
Pencils

PROCEDURE: First ask students to name the languages they know of in Latin America. They may only be able to think of Spanish. Hand out maps and then provide the information below on languages. Point out each language area on the large map and have them write in the languages on their own maps. Some of the languages in Latin America, (other than Spanish) are:

1. Portuguese--spoken by almost all the population of Brazil (100 million people).
2. English--the language of Guyana, Trinidad, Grenada, Jamaica and other nearby islands, as well as the Eastern coast of Nicaragua.
3. French--the language of Haiti and French Guiana.
4. German--the common language in agricultural settlements founded by Germans in Southern Chile, Southeastern Brazil, and by about 500,000 people in Argentina.
5. Italian--the mother tongue of almost one million descendants of Italians in Buenos Aires, Argentina.
6. Yiddish--about 200,000 people in Buenos Aires speak Yiddish.
7. Japanese--many Japanese farming communities in Brazil still maintain their own language.
8. Quechua--a major Indian language in Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador with about 7 million speakers.
9. Aymara--also spoken by several million in highland Bolivia, and Peru.
10. Tupi--one of the most widespread Indian languages in the Amazon Basin.

11. Araucanian--Indian language in Chile spoken by about 200,000 in the area between Concepción and Valdivia.
12. Quiché, Cakchiquel, Mam, and Kekchi--four languages from the Mayan family of languages spoken in Guatemala.
13. Nahuatl--language of the Aztecs, still spoken by about 800,000 people in the area north, east and south of Mexico City.
14. Maya or Yucatec--spoken on the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico.
15. Guarani--an official language of Paraguay (along with Spanish). Most of the population is bilingual.



Official seal of Jamaica

