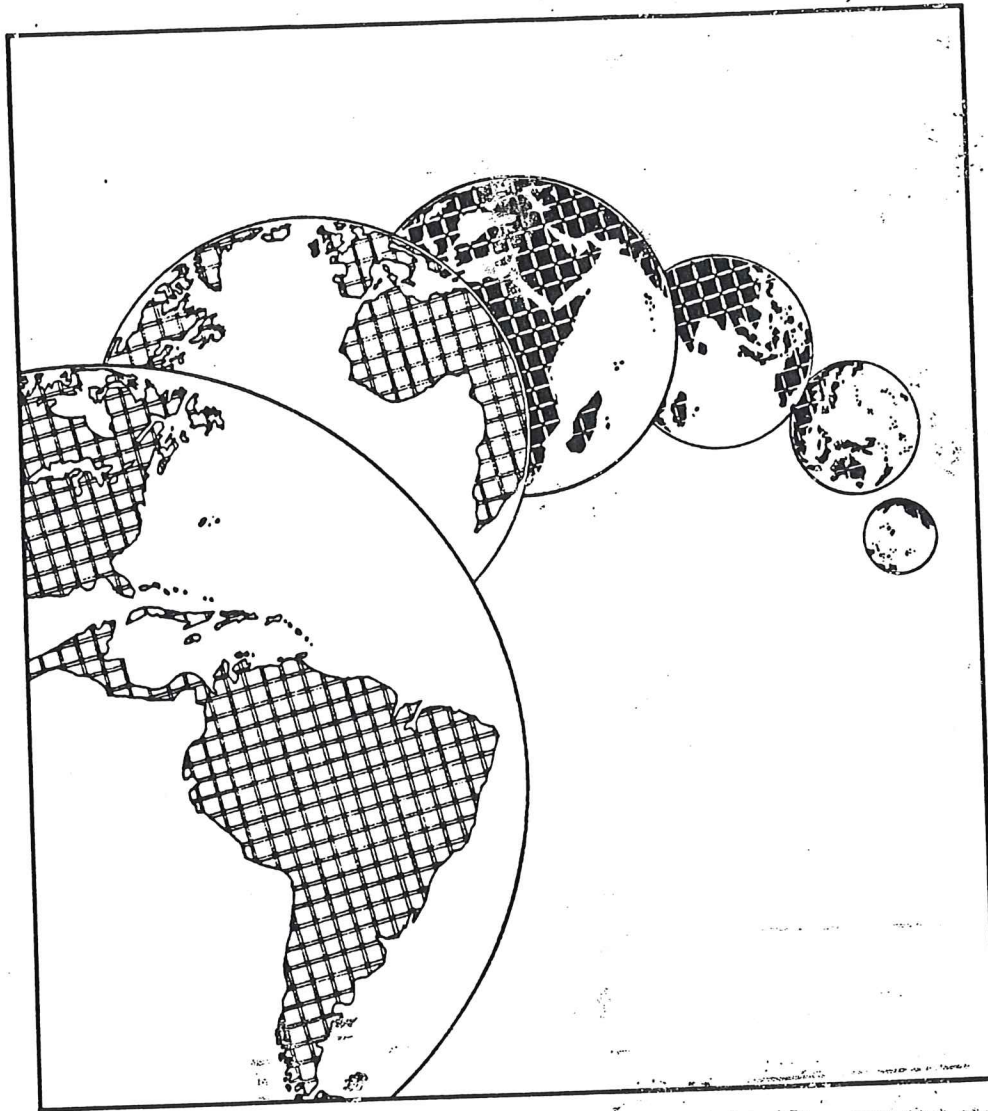


South America

Level: High School/College

Latin America and the Caribbean from a Global Perspective



A Resource Guide for Teachers

Pedro R. Bermúdez and Bárbara C. Cruz



Latin American and Caribbean Center
Florida International University
1991

(Originals in gray loose-leaf binder)

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	v
Foreword	vii
Preface	xi
Conceptual Overview	xiii
What is Global Education?	xv
"An Attainable Global Perspective"	xvii
PERSPECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS	
Mental Cartography	1
Encuentro	5
STATE OF THE PLANET AWARENESS	
Ni Modo	17
Cueca Solo	29
CROSS-CULTURAL AWARENESS	
The Other Americans	45
Retraídos	59
KNOWLEDGE OF GLOBAL DYNAMICS	
El Norte	69
"Comunista!"	81
Half a Loaf	93
AWARENESS OF HUMAN CHOICES	
Choices	129
Resources for Teaching about Latin America and the Caribbean	171
Maps of Latin America and the Caribbean	175

Cross-Cultural Awareness

THE OTHER AMERICANS

Rationale

In order to better understand Latin America and the Caribbean, its land and people must be appreciated in their own right. The social and cultural tapestry of Latin America is rich and diverse. This diversity is reflected in the language, ethnicity, and customs of its people, as well as in the geography of the region. Thus, it is important that students recognize that, although there are some generalizations about Latin America and the Caribbean that hold true, there are also many exceptions. In this lesson, students will explore some of the myths and realities that define Latin America.

Objectives

The student will:

1. describe the main political, economic, and social developments in Latin America after World War II and analyze their impact on contemporary world civilization;
2. analyze the cultural, political, and geographical diversity found in Latin America;
3. evaluate the validity of their initial impressions about Latin America.

Key Concepts

Culture, ethnicity, pluralism, stereotypes

Infusion Area

World history, geography, world cultures, global studies, sociology

Materials Needed

- "What comes to mind...?" (overhead transparency)
- "Overview of Latin America" (teacher resource)
- "Lecture Worksheet" (student resource)
- "Survey on Latin America" (student resource)

Suggested Time

Two class periods

Learning Activities

Suggested Activities for Day 1:

1. Using an overhead projector, present students with the "What comes to mind...?" transparency. Read question to students and ask them to share their thoughts regarding each of the headings with the class. Note their observations on the transparency under the appropriate heading. Ask students to withhold any judgments or reactions to these observations until every item on the transparency has been completed.

Conduct a discussion based on the following questions:

- a. How did we arrive at these impressions of Latin America? Where did we get our information from?
- b. How many of you have visited, lived in, or emigrated from Latin America?
- c. How accurate and/or valid are these observations about the region likely to be?

Keep transparency; you will refer back to it during day 2.

Suggested Activities for Day 2:

1. Preview "Overview of Latin America." Use this information as the basis for a brief lecture to the class. Distribute "Lecture Worksheet" and ask students to complete their worksheets during your presentation.
2. After the lecture, ask students to use their lists to respond to the following questions:
 - a. What did you learn from this presentation that really surprised you?
 - b. Was there anything that you learned that was exactly the opposite of what you believed?

Show students the overhead transparency completed yesterday and ask them to compare and contrast their initial observations about Latin America with the information on their lists. Introduce students to the concept of stereotype.

Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (1981) defines it as:

"a standardized mental picture that is held in common by members of a group and that represents an oversimplified opinion, affective attitude, or uncritical judgment."

Conclude the lesson by discussing the following question with the class: To what extent were your initial impressions about Latin America stereotypes?

Assessment

Have students conduct a survey of people's impressions about Latin America within their school or community using the "Survey on Latin America" sheet. Students will share their findings with their classmates.

Additional Activities

Have students select a Latin American country and conduct research about its culture. Using the information obtained, the students will develop a cultural profile of the country intended to assist travelers to that country in getting along with its people.

"Overview of Latin America"

LANGUAGE

Portuguese and Spanish (most prevalent), French, Dutch, English, indigenous dialects. Some of the more important native American languages include: Guarani, Quechua, Nahuatl, and Aymara. Chinese, Hindi, Arabic, and Slavic languages are also spoken in some areas of Central and South America (Athey).

GEOGRAPHY

Latin America is usually broken down into four basic regions: Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, and South America (Goodwin).

Latin America occupies the southern portion of the continent of North America and the entire continent of South America. It extends 33 degrees north latitude to 56 degrees south latitude, the greatest latitudinal range of any world region. Consequently, it has a highly diverse climate and geography. Latin America is larger than the United States and Canada combined. The size of the nations of Latin America vary greatly--from Brazil, which is almost as large as the entire United States, to some of the islands in the Caribbean, which are smaller than New York City (Athey).

South America is actually a misnomer; it should more appropriately be called "Southeast America" because it lies to the south and quite east of North America (DeBlij). This geographic phenomenon is apparent in the marked influence by Europe and Africa.

The Caribbean islands range from nearly flat landscapes to mountainous, volcanic terrains. Central America is mountainous, volcanic, earthquake-prone, lake-studded. Coastlands are swampy; interior lowlands are covered by dense and nearly impenetrable forests. South America's physiography is dominated by the Andean Mountains, "The Backbone of South America," on the West (a continuation of the Rocky Mountains of the U.S. and Canada) and the Amazon Basin in the North; remainder is plateau (DeBlij). All four of the world's major landforms--mountains, hills, plateaus, and plains are found in Latin America (Athey).

FOOD

The main meal in Latin America tends to be at midday. This meal consists of several courses while dinner, usually much smaller, is not served until 8 or 9 p.m.

Though certain foods (like corn, tomatoes, beans, rice, and chicken) are common to all countries, the food varies greatly from place to place (Athey).

POPULATION

In South America, population densities are fairly low, but growth rates are among the world's highest (most is on peripheral zones). Half the area and population are in Brazil (DeBlij).

Population is overwhelmingly urban. There are more cities of more than 500,000 in Latin America than in the United States (Goodwin). About two-thirds of the population lives in cities (Athey).

POLITICS

The region has been marked by frequent changes in government; many of these revolutions have been supported by the army (Schwartz, et al.).

History of authoritarian political culture; oriented toward power and power relationships (Goodwin). Caudillismo and personalism.

In most of the area, the laws are based on ancient Roman Law or on the Napoleonic Code (Athey).

RELIGION

The overwhelming majority (more than 90%) of Latin Americans are Roman Catholic (Athey). Although there are Protestants, Jews, Muslims, and Hindus in Latin America, they are small in number compared with Roman Catholics (Schwartz, et al.).

Especially in South America, the Catholic Church dominates life and is one of its unifying elements (DeBlij). The practice of religion today centers around the traditional ceremonies relating to birth, marriage, and death (Athey).

"In the Caribbean and in Brazil, the African influence has led to the development of a variety of religious rituals that combine African and Catholic traditions. These rituals have various names: in Haiti, voodoo; in Cuba, santeria; in Trinidad, sango; and in Brazil, candomble and macumba" (Athey).

FAMILY

The family is considered by many scholars of Latin America to be the single most important social institution. Each member has a clearly defined role (Athey).

Concept of extended family: a network of cousins, godparents, and close friends of blood relatives in addition to the nuclear family of father, mother, and children (Goodwin).

ETHNICITY

The region is marked by pluralism, regionalism (DeBlij).

Contributors to Latin American cultures: Spain, Portugal, England, France, the Netherlands, Africa, Asia, and the indigenous peoples. Culture is partly a mixture of historical circumstances (Goodwin).

Most of the Indians in Latin America live in Mexico, Peru, Guatemala, Bolivia, and Ecuador; there are about 30 million Indians in the region. It is estimated that more than 5 million black Africans were brought to Latin America as slaves between the early 1500s and the late 1800s; about two-thirds of them went to Brazil (Athey). Mestizos are people who are part native American and part European. Mulattos are of mixed African and European backgrounds (Schwartz, et al.).

The Latin American reality is that there is a multiplicity of cultures--very complex. (Goodwin).

REFERENCES

- Athey, Lois. *Latin America*. New York: Globe Book Company, Inc., 1987.
- DeBlij, Harm J. *Geography: Regions and Concepts*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1981.
- Fersh, Seymour (ed.) *Learning about Peoples and Cultures*. Evanston, Illinois: McDougal, Littel, and Company, 1974.
- Goodwin, Jr., Paul B. *Global Studies: Latin America*. Guilford, Conn.: Dushkin Publishing Group, Inc., 1986.

WHAT PICTURE COMES TO MIND WHEN YOU HEAR THE
TERM "LATIN AMERICA?"

LANGUAGE

GEOGRAPHY

FOOD

POPULATION

POLITICS

RELIGION

FAMILY

ETHNICITY

OTHER

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

PERIOD: _____

LECTURE WORKSHEET

Things I find especially
interesting about Latin America

Things about Latin America
I didn't know before

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

PERIOD: _____

"SURVEY ON LATIN AMERICA"

Subject #1

Subject Information

Gender: ___ Male ___ Female

Approximate Age: _____

Subject Impressions

"What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of the following things about Latin America?"

Languages: _____

Foods: _____

Politics: _____

Anything Else?: _____

Subject #2

Subject Information

Gender: ___ Male ___ Female

Approximate Age: _____

Subject Impressions

"What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of the following things about Latin America?"

Languages: _____

Foods: _____

Politics: _____

Anything Else?: _____

Subject #3

Subject Information

Gender: ___ Male ___ Female

Approximate Age: _____

Subject Impressions

"What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of the following things about Latin America?"

Languages: _____

Foods: _____

Politics: _____

Anything Else?: _____

