

VIVA LA REVOLUCION!

**AN EDUCATOR'S GUIDE
TO THE MEXICAN
REVOLUTION**



**PRODUCED BY THE
UNM LATIN AMERICAN
& IBERIAN INSTITUTE**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Using this Guide in the Classroom.	4
Background & History	5
Biographies.	10
Timeline	19
Introductory Activities	21
The Mexican Revolution: Film	22
The Storm That Swept Mexico: Faces of the Mexican Revolution.	22
Mexican Revolution: Photographs	23
Curriculum	24
Scavenger Hunt	24
A Bada** Retelling of the Mexican Revolution	37
Convention at Aguascalientes	43
Literary Representations	58
Primary Documents of the Revolution.	79
Women of the Revolution: Soldaderas.	85
Music of the Revolution: Corridos	92
Additional Resources	99
Appendix	102
Slideshow of Images	
Literature: Los de Abajo (Spanish & English)	
Literature: "Death of an Assassin"	
Primary Documents: Plan of San Luis Potosí (English & Spanish)	
Primary Documents: Plan of Ayala (English & Spanish)	
Primary Documents: Plan of Guadalupe (English & Spanish)	

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For more information, visit <http://laii.unm.edu>.





Image: Provided by Fototeca-INAH. Núm. 6314 | "Desfile de la vanguardia de la división Pacheco-Zapatistas"

INTRODUCTION

The Mexican Revolution is one of the most important events of the 20th Century. The first revolution of the century, it's a narrative that is at times complex, complicated, and perhaps even convoluted. While there is no way to calculate the exact number of casualties, historians estimate that one million people were killed during the Revolution. Some even say the loss of life was closer to two million. There is no question the Revolution irrevocably changed the course of Mexican history, but it also had a significant impact on the United States. More than one million Mexican refugees entered the United States attempting to escape the death and destruction wrought by the Revolution. Despite this impact, the topic of the Mexican Revolution, if taught at all, is only briefly addressed in classrooms or textbooks. As the first revolution caught on film, available resources allow students to actually see the people and events that would forever change North America.

Coinciding with the birth of filmmaking and the increased mobility offered by the reflex camera, the Mexican Revolution received extraordinary coverage by photographers and cineastes—commercial and amateur, national and international. Many images of the Revolution remain iconic to this day—Francisco Villa galloping toward the camera; Villa lolling in the presidential chair next to Emiliano Zapata; and Zapata standing stolidly in charro raiment with a carbine in one hand and the other hand on a sword, to mention only a few.

This curriculum guide is inspired by, although it stands apart from, an exhibit of photos of the Mexican Revolution - many never published before. Titled "Testimions de una guerra," the exhibit represents the most ambitious and historically accurate visual record of the Mexican Revolution. It is on view at the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico, from January 30-March 31, 2014, and is co-sponsored by the Instituto Cervantes of Albuquerque, Mexican Consulate of Albuquerque, Spanish Resource Center of Albuquerque, National Hispanic Cultural Center, and the University of New Mexico Latin American & Iberian Institute.

USING THIS GUIDE IN THE CLASSROOM

This guide provides K-12 educators with the means of thoroughly exploring the Mexican Revolution and offers suggestions for how to incorporate the topic into their classrooms.

There are a number of ways to introduce this unit. Given that visually engaging activities are often one of the most successful means of introducing new material to students, we have created introductory activities related two different films and an online photo repository containing hundreds of photos of the Revolution, along with a brief activity on the concept of the Revolution. Any of these materials would be a great way to introduce students to this unit of study.

The remainder of the activities included in this guide can be used in their entirety or mixed and matched to best meet the needs of your particular classroom and students. The content covers a variety of materials, covering topics in what we hope are creative and engaging lessons: students are introduced to the major figures of the Revolution through a scavenger hunt in which they take on the roles of important historical figures; through examining literature of the Mexican Revolution, students learn more about important historical events and people, and how writers attempted to make sense of all that happened during the Revolution; in another role-playing activity students re-enact the Convention of Aguascalientes to learn about the various platforms and motivations of key Revolutionary leaders; and, last but not least, additional units incorporate lesson plans created by other institutions in order to analyze primary source documents of the Revolution, look at the role of women in the Revolution, and study the ways in which the Revolution is represented in corridos.

In addition to the lesson plans, we have also provided here multiple forms of background information concerning the Revolution, both to expand and enhance your knowledge of the events involved and to contribute to your students' understanding.

We also concede that given limited time and resources, we were not able to cover the Revolution in as much depth as we would have liked. Fascinating topics such as art and leaders of the Revolution are not explored here. Instead, we direct your attention to an online resource — [PBS' "The Storm that Swept Mexico: The Revolution"](#) — for further information. The website provides a wealth of information.

If you use this guide in the classroom, we invite your feedback regarding how the experience unfolds. Please write to us at laii@unm.edu to let us know your thoughts.



Image: Provided by Fototeca-INAH. Núm. 4227 | "Multitud presencia la entrada de revolucionarios zapatistas a la Plaza de Armas de la ciudad de México, reproducción fotográfica"

BACKGROUND & HISTORY

MEXICO BEFORE DÍAZ

For 300 years after Hernán Cortés initiated the so-called fusion of indigenous and European histories into “one history,”¹ Mexico was largely administered by rulers from the Spanish peninsula, appointed by the Crown. Independence in 1810 severed the link to Spain and was followed by years of volatility, civil war, and the eventual loss of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California to the United States. The French invasion of the 1860s briefly returned Mexico to European rule under the monarchy of the Austrian archduke, Ferdinand Maximilian of Hapsburg, until the legendary reformer, Benito Juárez, overthrew and executed the emperor, establishing liberalism and securing Juárez’s place as a national hero.

By the mid-nineteenth century, traces of the industrial revolution had barely reached Mexico—just enough to establish a share of factories governed by sparse protective legislation regulating workplace safety and child labor. Street vendors lived cheek-to-jowl, hawking foods, crafts, rosaries, and a variety of other goods, while a tiny merchant middle class resided in houses above their stores without adequate water supply.

In the 55 years after Independence, the Mexican presidency changed hands 75 times, creating virtually no possibility for continuity of policy. This, of course, changed when a coup brought Porfirio Díaz to power in 1876. The period of Díaz’s effective control over Mexico, known as the

1 Steve J. Stern, “Paradigms of Conquest.”

Porfiriato, would last the next three decades.

PORFIRIATO

While the Porfiriato was marked by Díaz's slogan, "Order, Liberty, and Progress," the benefits of modernization were principally enjoyed by foreign capital and members of national and regional oligarchies. Sustained economic growth envisioned by Díaz's technocrats was no help to the rural poor, who suffered the emergence of debt peonage as communal ejido lands were transformed by law into the expansive haciendas of the rich. During the Porfiriato, one percent of Mexico's rural families came to own 85 percent of the land.

Despite immense growth in Mexico's largest cities, including the emergence of a fledgling urban middle class, the plight of the urban poor remained largely unchanged. Laborers toiled through twelve hour shifts, seven days per week, without pension or compensation for accidents occurring on the job. The masses eked out an existence in unsanitary housing on inadequate diets—most without visiting a doctor during the course of their entire lives. Life expectancy remained constant at about 30 years and infant mortality averaged 30 percent. The poorest barrios of Mexico City were so bad that some suggested they be burned to the ground.²

Civil and political rights were limited during the Porfiriato. Periodic regional elections were manipulated in favor of candidates supported by Díaz, the press was carefully censored, and praetorian government forces repressed labor movements in central and southern Mexico. Despite these challenges, revolutionary ideology fomented in the north as middle class northerners gained economic power without corresponding political power. Proximity to the U.S. border provided northerners access to arms, supplies, and democratic ideals like effective suffrage and a living wage. Proximity to the U.S. also meant that there was a substantial physical distance between discontent northerners and the center of Díaz's repressive reach.

THE MADERO PRESIDENCY

In the early years of the twentieth century, the northerner Francisco I. Madero came to signify opposition to another term of Porfiriato when he wrote *La sucesión presidencial en 1910*, sharply attacking Díaz's perpetual rule. When Madero ran against Díaz in the 1910 elections, he was imprisoned and eventually released to San Luis Potosí, where he boarded a train bound for the United States. Díaz was elected to yet another term.

In San Antonio, Texas, Madero drafted his revolutionary plan, declaring the election illegal and calling for uprisings to begin on November 20, 1910. The first shots were fired in Puebla, two days early, when a dissident politician and his family started a firefight with Mexican police. In the week that followed, rebel groups composed of people from all corners of Mexican society formed in the north.

2 Michael C. Meyer, et. Al, *The Course of Mexican History*, 450-51.

Some who took up arms were drawn to Madero's liberalism; many had never heard of Madero.

In May 1911, Madero's forces, commanded by Pascual Orozco and Francisco "Pancho" Villa, defeated government troops at the Battle of Juárez, effectively causing Díaz's resignation and securing a Madero presidency. The revolution, however, had just begun.

Upon taking office, Madero learned that the revolution had profoundly different meanings for different people. In the south, Emiliano Zapata demanded the immediate restoration of pueblo lands that had been seized during the Porfiriato. When Madero failed to adequately address the principally important issue of land reform, Zapata initiated an armed rebellion that spread from Morelos to Guerrero, and onward to Tlaxcala, Puebla, and into the Federal District.

In the north, Orozco called for the immediate nationalization of Mexico's railroads, coupled with social reform, including a ten-hour workday, restrictions on child labor, and improved wages. When Orozco amassed an army that marched toward Mexico City—humiliating Madero's troops in a series of battles—Madero dispatched Villa and Victoriano Huerta to put down the uprising.

Meanwhile, disgruntled career officers in Veracruz aligned themselves with Porfirio Díaz's counterrevolutionary nephew, Felix, demanding promotions. With the assistance of the U.S. Ambassador, Díaz secretly associated with Huerta and arranged for a military coup. Huerta betrayed and arrested Madero and members of his cabinet and assumed the presidency. Madero and his vice president were murdered in cold blood on their way to the penitentiary. The Huerta dictatorship was underway.

THE HUERTA DICTATORSHIP

In the north, the Governor of Coahuila, Venustiano Carranza, joined by Villa and the Sonoran Álvaro Obregón, openly rebelled against Huerta. Their Plan de Guadalupe denounced the regime and named Carranza as interim president of Mexico upon Huerta's defeat. The plan had no proposal for any type of social reform whatsoever. In the south, Zapata, still concerned with land reform, arrested and executed Huerta's peace commissioners, who had been sent to secure his allegiance. Huerta responded by censoring the press, assassinating political opponents, and increasing the size of the federal army fivefold through forced conscription of the indigent masses.

Somewhat ironically, the U.S., which had operated through its ambassador to install Huerta, elected a new president who "watchfully waited," refusing to recognize the legitimacy of Huerta's regime. In the spring of 1914, Mexico's erroneous arrest of a group of U.S. sailors who had wandered onto a restricted dock in Tampico led, through a series of strange events,³ to the U.S. naval occupation of Veracruz and the killing of hundreds of Mexicans, including many noncombatants.

3 For a synopsis of this incredible story, see Don M. Coerver and Linda Hall, *Tangled Destinies: Latin America and the United States*, 64

Thus, in the face of significant economic and military pressures on numerous fronts, Huerta resigned on July 8, 1914.

THE MEANING OF THE REVOLUTION

As Madero had learned earlier, the revolution meant different things to different people. This became a familiar pattern. As Octavio Paz later put it, “The inability of the Mexican intelligentsia to formulate the confused aspirations of the people in a coherent system became obvious as soon as the Revolution ceased to be an instinctive act and was established as a regime.”⁴

After Huerta’s resignation, the revolutionary alliance quickly fragmented as the Villistas, Zapatistas, Carrancistas, and Obregonistas espoused differing strategies and set forth contradictory designs for post-revolutionary Mexico. While the revolution began—superficially—as a unified rebellion against the Porfiriato, and later against the hated Huerta dictatorship, the absence of these shared enemies exposed the sharpest divides between the rural peasantry of southern Mexico, who pushed for immediate reform of Mexico’s antiquated land system, and the revolutionaries of the northern frontier, who valued political autonomy above all else.

Yet there was little agreement even within these groups.⁵ The diverse group that had defeated Huerta was comprised of agrarian workers, miners, professionals and intellectuals, artisans, middle-class farmers, and businessmen. While one Mexican saw land reform in terms of communal land ownership, another envisioned small private holdings, and still another expected only efficient agricultural production. To others, the aim was to remedy labor injustice, or to simply overthrow Mexico’s dictators and reinstitute the aspirational constitution of 1857.

These differences were symbolized perfectly at the 1914 Aguascalientes Convention among revolutionary leaders when the Villistas and Zapatistas broke from Carranza’s constitutionalist agenda. This led to the legendary battle of Celaya where Obregón’s machine guns, entrenched behind barbed-wire barricades, cut down Villa’s feared Division of the North, presaging Villa’s ultimate defeat.

THE REVOLUTION COMES TO AN END

In March of 1917, Carranza was elected president of a severely volatile Mexico racked by a shattered banking structure, agricultural shortages, and years of internal war. The fight against the Zapatistas raged on in Morelos. When Zapata penned an open letter to Carranza, sharply attacking Carranza’s oppression, greed, and “magnificent pretext,” the president responded by successfully ordering Zapata’s assassination at the Hacienda de Chinameca. But Carranza followed Zapata to the grave shortly after when Obregón initiated yet another armed movement against the president and marched on Mexico City. After Carranza’s death, Obregón was elected president of

4 Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude: Life and Thought in Mexico*, 145.

5 Charles C. Cumberland, *The Meaning of the Mexican Revolution*, vii-viii.

Mexico on September 5, 1920.

Unlike his predecessors, Obregón was well-respected with a broad political network. He used these connections to secure a period of stability and political reform. He signed a peace agreement with Villa and reconciled the ideological differences of most groups of Mexican society. Ten years of war were over.

IMPACTS OF THE REVOLUTION

Obregón's broad support foreshadowed the development of the official party of the late 1920s, the Partido Nacional Revolucionario. This party evolved into the present-day Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), which would aggressively promote the image of the revolution to dominate Mexican politics for the next 70 years.

SYMBOLS OF THE REVOLUTION

The Mexican revolution bred national and international icons. Villa became a world famous symbol of social revolution when he was photographed galloping alongside his troops toward the camera in 1914. Meanwhile, Zapata ascended to legendary status in Mexico and beyond by demanding the restoration of pueblo lands after Díaz's resignation. Today, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation has taken his name to symbolize its anti-NAFTA movement in the southern state of Chiapas.

Perhaps one of the best-known emblems of the revolution within Mexico is "La Adelita," one of several hyper-patriotic ballads celebrating the revolution's brave and desirable soldaderas. In *Photographing the Revolution*, the book associated with this exhibit, John Mraz suggests that every researcher of Mexican photography has heard of a little old lady living in a distant place who insists that she is "Adelita." These viejita-adelitas typically offer as evidence a blurry, reproduced photo of a woman standing on the platform of a train.⁶

While the revolutionaries themselves have been characteristically romanticized, this is certainly not the universal approach. For instance, *Los de abajo*, Mariano Azuela's widely acclaimed, contemporary-revolutionary novel, lays bare the brutality of the peasant armies of Villa, Carranza, and Obregón. Azuela's revolutionary protagonists murdered, raped, and pillaged their way through Mexico's countryside as corrupt federales did much of the same.⁷

There is certainly a cynical element to the revolution's depiction. Marxists essentially treat it as a palace feud that ultimately betrayed the workers who took up arms. To some, it was Martín Luis Guzmán's "festival of bullets," indifferent to human suffering. Perhaps others still find truth in Paz's description of a character-dominated subconscious-reality where Villa still gallops through

6 John Mraz, *Photographing the Mexican Revolution: Commitments, Testimonies, Icons*, 240-45.

7 Mariano Azuela, *Los de abajo*.

the north; Zapata still dies at every popular fair; Madero still appears on the balconies, waving the Mexican flag; and Carranza and Obregón still travel the countryside, “causing the women to flutter with alarm and the young men to leave home.”⁸ Indeed, symbols and interpretations of the meaning of this cataclysmic event in Mexican history remain endless.

8 Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude: Life and Thought in Mexico*, 145.

BIOGRAPHIES⁹

VENUSTIANO CARRANZA (1859 - 1920)

Carranza was an aristocrat, born into a wealthy family of cattle ranchers in the northern state of Coahuila. As a young man, Carranza served as a senator during the Porfiriato. However, after being slighted by Díaz during a campaign for the governorship of his home state, Carranza joined Madero in San Antonio when Madero issued the revolutionary Plan of San Luis Potosí. In exchange, Madero named Carranza the provisional governor and commander-in-chief of Coahuila. Unlike Villa and Obregón, Carranza was never a front-line leader and left much of the responsibilities of the battlefield to others.

When Huerta overthrew Madero, Carranza declared a state of rebellion against the federal government, calling for a return to the Constitution of 1857 and promising liberal ideals like freedom of speech and the right to bear arms, without any mention of labor and land reform—which Carranza considered to be unrealistic and unnecessarily divisive. For these reasons, Carranza has been labeled a constitutionalist. Carranza served as the elected president of México from 1917-1920, when he was assassinated in Tlaxcalontongo.

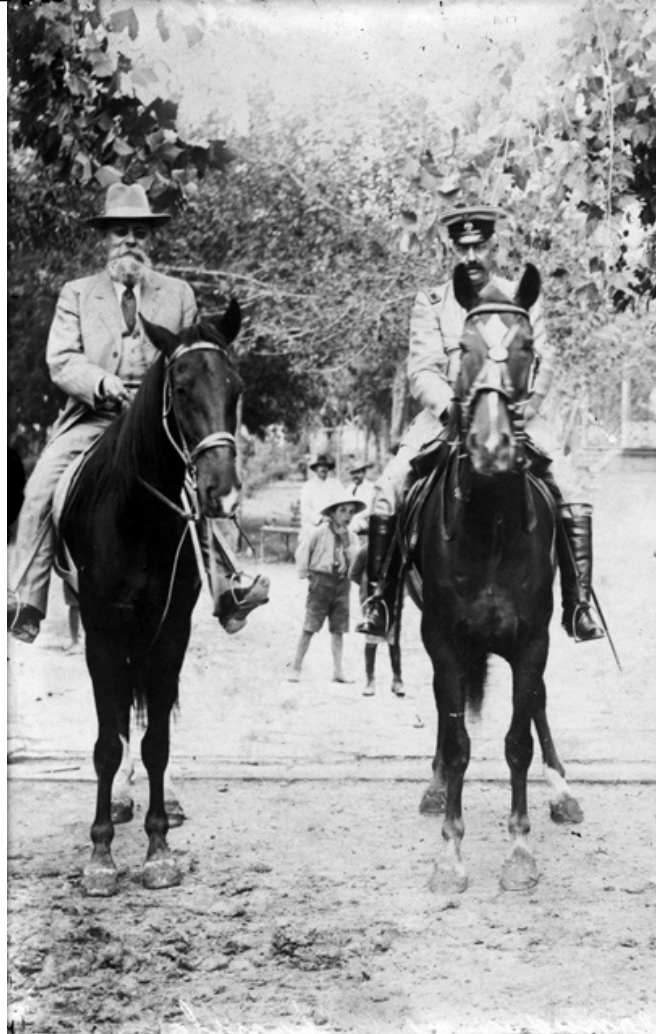


Image: Provided by Fototeca-INAH. Núm. 10996 |
“Aureliano Blanquet con Venustian Carranza montado a caballo. ”

⁹ Adapted from <http://academics.utep.edu/Portals/1719/Publications/MexicanRevolutionTimeline.pdf>.

PORFIRIO DÍAZ (1830 - 1915)¹⁰

Porfirio Diaz served as the president of México from 1876-1880 and from 1884-1911. After modifying the constitution in 1884 to stay in power, Díaz expanded the industrial sector, oversaw the construction of thousands of miles of railroad tracks, and imported technological advances such as the telegraph. This rapidly growing economy, however, primarily benefited the Mexican upper class and foreign investors while indigenous people lost their land and the gap between rich and poor grew. In 1908, Díaz announced that México was ready to hold open elections, and that he would step down once he finished his presidential term in 1910. However, he ran for the presidency again and defeated Francisco I. Madero in a rigged election. After his opponents won the Battle of Juárez in 1911, Díaz resigned as president and went into exile in Paris, France, where he died in 1915.



Image: Provided courtesy of Nevada Observer; identified as in public domain by Wikipedia. "Photograph of young Porfirio Díaz."

¹⁰ Biographical statement reprinted here with permission from the University of Texas at El Paso Center for History Teaching and Learning.

VICTORIANO HUERTA (1845 - 1916)¹¹

Victoriano Huerta ousted Madero and served as the president of México from 1913-1914. While serving as the commander in chief of the federal forces during the presidency of Madero, he united with Felix Díaz and Bernardo Reyes in planning a coup. During La Decena Trágica (The Ten Tragic Days), Huerta offered protection to Francisco I. Madero and his vice president, José María Pino Suárez, but then convinced them to resign. Madero and Pino Suárez were killed in 1913, and Huerta claimed the presidency. The country soon began to oppose the Huerta regime. U.S. president Woodrow Wilson distrusted the presidency of Huerta and occupied Veracruz in 1914. When Pancho Villa's troops defeated Huerta's federal forces in Zacatecas, Huerta resigned to exile in London and Spain. He was later arrested alongside Pascual Orozco in Newman, NM, on charges of conspiring against the United States with Germans. On January 13, 1916, Huerta died of cirrhosis in the military jail at Fort Bliss, TX.



Image: Victoriano Huerta. Identified as public domain by Wikipedia.

¹¹ Biographical statement reprinted here with permission from the University of Texas at El Paso Center for History Teaching and Learning.

FRANCISCO I. MADERO (1873 - 1913)¹²

Francisco Madero opposed the Díaz dictatorship and served as the president of México from 1911-1913. When Madero entered the presidential race in 1910, he was arrested by Díaz but fled to San Antonio, TX, where he published the Plan de San Luis Potosí that declared the election of 1910 null and encouraged the country to overthrow Díaz. After Madero's forces, under the direction of Villa and Orozco, defeated Díaz's federal troops in the Battle of Juárez of 1911, Díaz resigned. Madero was elected president on November 6, 1911, but could not enact the promises of the revolution. One of Madero's top military leaders, Victoriano Huerta, joined with others to attack Madero's government and, after ten tragic days of fighting ("La Decena Trágica"), Madero, his brother, and his vice president were killed.



Image: Francisco I. Madero. Identified as public domain by Wikipedia.

¹² Biographical statement reprinted here with permission from the University of Texas at El Paso Center for History Teaching and Learning.

ÁLVARO OBREGÓN (1880 - 1928)

If Villa was the greatest warrior of the revolution, Obregón was the greatest general. One of eighteen children from a middle-class Sonoran family, Obregón came to prominence during the second phase of the revolution as a skilled battlefield tactician and commander in the rebellion against Huerta. At the Aguascalientes Convention, Obregón sided with Carranza's constitutionalist agenda, articulated in the Plan of Guadalupe, and rejected the competing Zapatista Plan of Ayala, which called for wide-ranging and immediate social reform, including land reform. This led to the legendary Battle of Celaya in 1915, where Obregón's carefully nested machine guns massacred much of Villa's Division of the North, in a battle in which Obregón personally lost an arm.

After Carranza's death, Obregón served as president of Mexico from 1920-1924. Obregón was an extremely charismatic consensus-builder who knew how to offer the right things to the right people. He ultimately used his connections to wind down the violence, sign a peace treaty with Villa, and institutionalize Mexico. Most importantly, Obregón included agrarian reform within his framework for national reconstruction.



Image: Alvaro Obregón. Identified as public domain by Wikipedia.

PASCUAL OROZCO (1882 - 1915)¹³

Pascual Orozco joined Madero's anti-re-electionist movement. He was the commander of the rural forces of the state of Chihuahua, and fought in some of the first battles of the revolution. Orozco and Villa defeated Díaz's federal troops in Ciudad Juárez in 1911. Soon, Orozco would turn against Madero because he claimed Madero did not comply with his own Plan of San Luis Potosí. In 1912, he organized a revolt against Madero, and established his movement, the Orozquistas. When Madero was assassinated in 1913, he recognized Huerta as the president. Huerta then named him the commanding General of the Federal troops, fighting against Carranza's Constitutionalist army and Villa. Later, he went into exile in El Paso, Texas, and was killed near there by a group of Texas Rangers in 1915.



Image: Pascual Orozco. Identified as public domain by Wikipedia.

¹³ Biographical statement reprinted here with permission from the University of Texas at El Paso Center for History Teaching and Learning.

FRANCISCO VILLA (1878 - 1923)

A common bandit from the northern state of Durango, Pancho Villa was a man of contradictions. He has been portrayed as uneducated and coarse, yet he was a military genius who had a major impact on the course of Mexican history during the entire revolutionary period.

Villa joined Madero in the early days of the revolution, winning a critical battle in Juárez that ultimately secured Díaz's defeat and Madero's presidency. After Madero was betrayed by Huerta, Villa's widely feared Division of the North won battles in Zacatecas and Ojinaga, contributing to Huerta's resignation in 1914.

After the Aquascalientes Convention, Villa allied with Zapata in rebellion against Carranza's government. In one of the most well-known battles of the revolution, Villa was defeated by Obregón's machine guns at the Battle of Celaya in 1915.

Angered by U.S. support for his opponents, Villa turned his attention to Columbus, New Mexico, crossing the border, killing nineteen New Mexicans, and leaving the town in flames. The U.S. would use this invasion to justify General Pershing's "expedition" into Mexico to search for Villa. Never located by U.S. troops, Villa would eventually sign a peace agreement with then president Obregón. On July 20, 1923, Villa was assassinated in his home in Chihuahua.

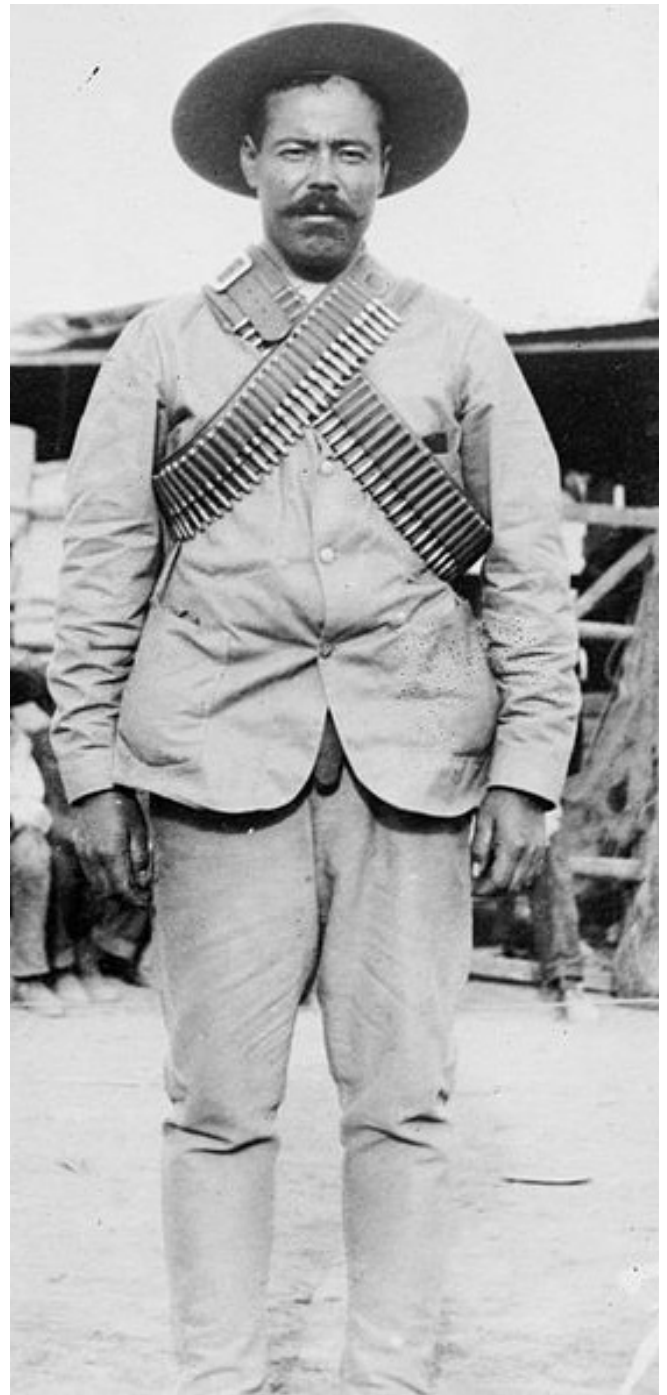


Image: Francisco "Pancho" Villa (1877–1923), Mexican revolutionary general, wearing bandoliers in front of an insurgent camp. Identified as public domain by Wikipedia.

EMILIANO ZAPATA (1879 - 1919)

Zapata was born to a peasant family in Morelos in 1879. Today, he remains a legend within and outside of Mexico. While he was not particularly involved in the fight against Díaz, he put immense pressure on Madero and all of the revolutionary leaders to return land to the people that had been stolen during the Porfiriato. Disenchanted with Madero's slow moving reforms in 1911, Zapata drafted the Plan of Ayala, calling for comprehensive and immediate land reform. His rebellion in the south was critical in the defeat of both Madero and later, Huerta.

After Huerta's defeat, Zapatista delegates made a scene at the Aguascalientes Convention, criticizing the pretext of the revolution, refusing to sign the Mexican flag with the other delegates, calling attention to the oppression of indigenous peoples, and pointing out that without land, abstract concepts important to the constitutionalists, like "effective suffrage" and "no re-election," meant nothing to the vast majority of Mexicans. Zapata allied with Villa and rebelled against Carranza's government until he was assassinated in cold blood on April 10, 1919.



Image: Provided by Fototeca-INAH. Núm. 33343 | "Emiliano Zapata en su cuartel de Cuernavaca, retrato"

TIMELINE¹⁴

1884

- ☞ Porfirio Díaz begins his second term as president of Mexico and modifies the constitution to stay in power.

1908

- ☞ In an interview with an American journalist, Díaz announces that he will retire at the end of his term because Mexico is ready to hold free elections.

1910

- ☞ Díaz runs for reelection but when Francisco I. Madero enters the race he has Madero put in jail and he wins the election.
- ☞ Madero escapes to San Antonio, TX, where he drafts the Plan of San Luis Potosí that calls for the overthrow of the Díaz regime.
- ☞ The Revolution begins with insurrections in several states in northern Mexico (November 20); over the next decade thousands of Mexicans flee to El Paso and the U.S.

1911

- ☞ Madero's troops, under the direction of Francisco "Pancho" Villa and Pascual Orozco, attack federal troops in Ciudad Juárez as hundreds of bystanders watch from rooftops and train cars; this Battle of Juárez lasts for three days (May 8-10).
- ☞ Having lost in Juárez, Díaz resigns and flees to Paris, France (May 25).
- ☞ Madero wins election to the Mexican presidency.
- ☞ Emiliano Zapata drafts the Plan of Ayala that denounces Madero, recognizes Orozco as the leader of the Revolution, and calls for land reform (November 25)
- ☞ The U.S. sends troops to the border, fearing that the Revolution would cross over into their territory.

1912

- ☞ Orozco breaks his alliance with Madero, who assigns Villa and Victoriano Huerta to combat Orozco's rebels in the north.

1913

- ☞ Huerta joins with Felix Díaz (Porfirio's nephew) and Bernardo Reyes in planning a coup against Madero.
- ☞ During ten tragic days ("La Decena Trágica") in Mexico City, the forces of Huerta, Díaz, and Reyes attack Madero's army (February 9-18); Madero, his brother, and his vice president are killed.

¹⁴ Timeline information statement reprinted here with permission from the University of Texas at El Paso Center for History Teaching and Learning.

- ↻ Huerta assumed the presidency.
- ↻ Venustiano Carranza drafts a Plan of Guadalupe that accuses Huerta of restoring a dictatorship and committing treason (March 26); Carranza calls for a return to the values of the Constitution of 1857 and his supporters are called Constitutionalists.
- ↻ Villa attacks Huerta's troops in the Second Battle of Juárez.

1914

- ↻ Huerta faces increasing suspicion and opposition.
- ↻ U.S. president Woodrow Wilson sends troops to occupy Veracruz, Mexico (April).
- ↻ Villa's forces defeat Huerta's forces in Zacatecas and Huerta resigns (July).
- ↻ Carranza declares himself president, but the claim is contested for nearly a year on legal and military grounds.
- ↻ Villa and Zapata break from Carranza and continue to challenge him (September)
- ↻ Carranza flees to Veracruz, where he negotiates the removal of U.S. troops (November).

1915

- ↻ Carranza's supporters, under the direction of Álvaro Obregón, defeat Villa at the Battle of Celaya (April 13); Zapata's supporters are defeated (May).
- ↻ Carranza returns to Mexico City (August).
- ↻ The U.S. recognizes Carranza as Mexico's president (October).
- ↻ Mariano Azuela writes *Los de abajo* (The Underdogs), the first novel about the revolution, in an adobe home in El Paso.

1916

- ↻ Villa's supporters attack a train in Santa Ysabel, Chihuahua, and kill 17 Americans.
- ↻ Anglo residents in El Paso attack Mexicans in a race riot (January 13).
- ↻ Villa raids Columbus, NM (March).
- ↻ U.S. General John J. Pershing leads 10,000 soldiers into Mexico in a "Punitive Expedition" that fails to capture Villa.

1917

- ↻ A new Mexican Constitution is drafted and Carranza is elected president.

1919

- ↻ Villa is defeated at the last Battle of Juárez; Zapata is assassinated at Chinamecca.

1920

- ↻ Obregón is elected president of Mexico.



Image: Source unknown. Photographer: Agustin Victor Casasola.

INTRODUCTORY MATERIALS: WHAT IS A REVOLUTION?

MATERIALS NEEDED

Whiteboard or chalkboard, pens, pencils, markers, paper

PROCEDURE

1. Write the word “revolution” on the board for the entire class.
2. Give students two minutes to write what they think the word “revolution” means, what other words they associate with “revolution,” and/or where they’ve heard the word “revolution” and in what contexts they’ve seen it used.
3. At the end of the two minutes, ask students to turn to the person next to them and discuss what they wrote for “revolution.” Give them approximately five minutes to do this.
4. Next, ask students to form groups of 4 or 5 with the students sitting closest to them. As a group, they should discuss their ideas for the meaning of the word “revolution” and create a definition for the word. Give them five to ten minutes to do this.
5. Reconvene as a whole class and ask each group to share their definition. Write each definition on the board. Once all groups have shared, look at all of the definitions to see if there are any common ideas. Create a final working definition of the word “revolution.” Keep this definition posted throughout the unit.

THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION: FILM

MATERIALS NEEDED

- ↻ Video on “The Mexican Revolution” found at http://english.bicentenario.gob.mx/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=108&Itemid=83
- ↻ Internet access
- ↻ Computer, LCD projector, or Smart Board for class viewing of film

PROCEDURE

1. Watch the five-minute film created by the Bicentennial Office of the Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de las Revoluciones de Mexico. It will provide a quick overview of the important events and people of the Mexican Revolution.
2. Ask students to share their initial reactions to what they saw in the film. Take notes and keep them posted so that students can refer back to them throughout the unit. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:
 - ↻ What was the purpose of the Mexican Revolution?
 - ↻ What events led up to the Mexican Revolution?
 - ↻ Who were the major figures of the Revolution?
 - ↻ What words would you use to describe the Revolution?

THE STORM THAT SWEEPED MEXICO: FILM

MATERIALS NEEDED

- ↻ DVD of “The Storm that Swept Mexico” video (available through PBS, local or university libraries). More information can be found at <http://www.pbs.org/itvs/storm-that-swept-mexico/>
- ↻ DVD player/TV for class viewing of film

PROCEDURE

1. Watch the beginning of “The Storm that Swept Mexico.” It is a two-disc, multiple-hour film. Once students have watched the beginning of the film, the film can be viewed in shorter sections throughout the rest of the unit. If you do not have access to the film, use the trailer to provide a quick visual overview of the important events and people of the Mexican Revolution.
2. Ask students to share their initial reactions to what they saw in the film. Take notes and keep them posted so that students can refer back to them throughout the unit. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:

- ☞ What was the purpose of the Mexican Revolution?
- ☞ What events led up to the Mexican Revolution?
- ☞ Who were the major figures of the Revolution?
- ☞ What words would you use to describe the Revolution?

MEXICAN REVOLUTION: PHOTOGRAPHY

MATERIALS NEEDED

- ☞ Digital photo archive (Fototeca) of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) website found at: <http://fototeca.inah.gob.mx/fototeca/>
- ☞ Internet access
- ☞ Computer, LCD projector, or Smart Board for class viewing of photographs
- ☞ Optional: Slideshow provided in the appendix of this guide; images are purposefully selected to show individuals in less formal, less stereotypical settings.

PROCEDURE

1. Display the Fototeca-INAH website.
2. The site is in Spanish, but is easy to navigate even if you're not familiar with the Spanish language. Find the search box labeled "Buscar." In that box type "revolucion" (note Spanish spelling with a c), and click on the "Buscar" box. The site will then pull up over 200 pages of photos of the Mexican Revolution.
3. Hover over the individual photos to display a larger version of the thumbnail provided. Look for images that are of interest to the students. When you find one, click on the first of the three boxes below the photo thumbnail to display the larger version. Note: the second of the three boxes will display the subject or title of the photograph, providing more information about whom or what is shown. Use the following questions to guide the discussion of the photos:
 - ☞ What do you think is shown in the photo?
 - ☞ Are there people? What do they look like? Do you know who they are? What are their facial expressions? How are they dressed?
 - ☞ What is in the background of the photo? Was it taken inside or outside?
 - ☞ Does anything surprise you about the photo?
 - ☞ Does it tell us anything important about the Revolution?



Image: Provided by Fototeca-INAH. Núm. 4851 | "Palacio Nacional, mural del arco central realizado por Diego Rivera"

CURRICULUM

SCAVENGER HUNT

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVE

This activity is inspired by and adapted from Rethinking School's "The U.S.-Mexico War Tea Party" found in *The Line Between Us* (Wisconsin: Rethinking Schools, 2006).

Spanning more than ten years, the Mexican Revolution is a complex historical event that involved numerous individuals. The scavenger hunt activity will introduce students to many of these individuals, and the various motivations of those individuals participating in or resisting the Revolution. Each student will take on the role of one individual involved in the Mexican Revolution. Then, using the provided questionnaire hand-out, students will move around the room interviewing classmates in order to appropriately answer all of the questions on the hand-out.

This activity can be used after a brief introduction to the Mexican Revolution. It does not require a great deal of background knowledge on the Revolution. Its purpose is to solidify knowledge and understanding of the individuals involved in the Mexican Revolution.

MATERIALS

- ☞ Scavenger hunt roles, cut up (one for each student in the class)
- ☞ Blank nametags (enough for every student in the class)
- ☞ Copies of “The Mexican Revolution Scavenger Hunt” hand-out for every student

PROCEDURE

4. Explain to students that they are going to do an activity about the Mexican Revolution. Distribute one nametag and one scavenger hunt role to each student in the class. There are only 16, so depending upon the number of students in the class, some students will be assigned the same historical character.
5. Have students fill out their nametags using the name of the individual they are assigned. Tell students that in this activity you would like each of them to attempt to become these people from history. Ask students to read their roles several times and to memorize as much of the information as possible. Encourage them to underline key points.
6. Distribute a copy of “The Mexican Revolution Scavenger Hunt” hand-out to each student. Explain their assignment: Students should circulate through the classroom, meeting other individuals from the Mexican Revolution. They should use the questions on the sheet as a guide to talk with others about the war and complete the questions as fully as possible. They must use a different individual to answer each of the 11 questions. Tell them that it’s not a race; the aim is for students to spend time hearing each other’s stories, not just hurriedly scribbling down answers to the different questions. It may be helpful to ask for a student volunteer to demonstrate with the teacher an encounter between two of the individuals, so that the rest of the class can sense the kind of interaction that is expected
7. Afterwards ask students to share some of their finding with the whole class. This needn’t be exhaustive, as students will learn a lot more about these issues throughout the rest of the unit.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

- ☞ What surprised you about this activity?
- ☞ Who found someone with an opinion very different from your character’s opinion?
- ☞ What were some of the different opinions you encountered on why individuals were fighting in the Revolution?
- ☞ What were the results of the Revolution?
- ☞ What questions does this activity leave you with?

EXTENSION: TIMELINE/FLOWCHART OF THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION

Save the cards used during the Scavenger Hunt. As students learn more about the events of Revolution, use the pictures to create a timeline or flowchart of the Revolution on a large piece of butcher paper or bulletin board. You may need to print out extra copies of some of the cards in order to mark all of the important events that particular figure was involved in. Various information can be displayed on the timeline: important events, changing alliances, and deaths of major leaders are a few examples.

THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION SCAVENGER HUNT

1. Find someone who was affected by the war. Who is this person? How was this person affected?
2. Find someone who supports the Mexican Revolution. Who is this person? Why do they support the revolution?
3. Find someone who is in opposition to the Mexican Revolution. Who is this person? Why do they support the revolution?
4. Find someone from Southern Mexico. What is their experience with the Revolution?
5. Find someone from Northern Mexico. What is their experience with the Revolution?
6. Find someone who saw things in the war that he or she found shocking. Who is this person? What shocked this person?
7. Find someone who fought in the revolution. Who did they fight for? Why did they join the Revolution?
8. Find one of the major leaders of the revolution. Why did they join the Revolution? What did they hope to accomplish through the Revolution?
9. Find someone from outside Mexico who has an opinion about the Revolution. Where are they from? Why are they in Mexico? What do they think about the Revolution?
10. Find someone who was a dictator of Mexico. Why did they take control of the country? What did they hope to accomplish?
11. Find someone who was killed fighting for the Revolution. How did they die?



**PEASANT
FROM MORELOS**



**WEALTHY LANDOWNER
FROM SONORA**



**LABORER
FROM VERACRUZ**



**U.S. AMBASSADOR
HENRY LANE WILSON**

WEALTHY LANDOWNER FROM SONORA

LOCATION: Sonora
BORN - DIED: 19th - 20th centuries
SOCIAL CLASS: Aristocrat / Haciendado
ALLEGIANCE: Porfiriato

I fully support Díaz in this war against the traitor, Madero. The state of Sonora has grown rich during the Porfiriato. Our mining industry thrives. We have eliminated the “Yaqui problem,” making excellent use of land that had too long sat stagnant. I hear dangerous talk from the small landholders that they will join Madero. Election clubs are forming all around me in support of the traitor. This is a mistake. I will personally take up arms to aid my government, which has blessed us with stability and order.

U.S. AMBASSADOR HENRY LANE WILSON

LOCATION: Mexico City / Washington, D.C.
BORN - DIED: 1857 - 1932
SOCIAL CLASS: Privileged
ALLEGIANCE: U.S. Department of State

I have done much work in Mexico in furtherance of U.S. interests. After enormous difficulties, I got General Huerta and Félix Díaz to agree that Huerta should be the Provisional President of the Republic... I expect no further trouble in the city, and I congratulate the Department of State upon the happy outcome of events, which have been directly or indirectly the result of its instructions.

PEASANT FROM MORELOS

LOCATION: Morelos
BORN - DIED: 19th - 20th centuries
SOCIAL CLASS: Indigenous / Peasantry
ALLEGIANCE: Zapatistas

My father's land now belongs to the hacendado. It is part of a massive sugar plantation—more land than any one man could ever need. I work this land as a slave, spending my entire wage on food at the company store. I am told that I am constantly in debt and must pay my debt by working long days in the fields. But how can this be? I buy nothing except what I need to survive. When Madero became president, we expected that our families' lands would be returned. That is apparently a lie. I am ready to join Emiliano Zapata and his army which is preparing to move north against the traitor Madero.

LABORER FROM VERACRUZ

LOCATION: Veracruz
BORN - DIED: 19th - 20th centuries
SOCIAL CLASS: Laborer
ALLEGIANCE: Unknown / Multiple

I work twelve hour days, seven days per week. I make a pittance for a wage. My two youngest sons were worked to death in the textile mills. Recently, workers lashed out, setting the tienda de raya aflame. The local jefe called in federal troops to punish all of us. Federales fired point-blank into crowds, killing women and children without distinction. The dictator, Díaz, always supports the oppressive mill owners. If the workers strike again, I am afraid that my wife and remaining children will be killed.



PANCHO VILLA



EMILIANO ZAPATA



GILDARDO MAGAÑA



ALVARO OBREGÓN

EMILIANO ZAPATA

LOCATION: Morelos / The South
BORN - DIED: 1879 - 1919
SOCIAL CLASS: Indigenous / Peasantry
ALLEGIANCE: Zapatistas

It never occurred to Carranza that the Revolution was fought for the benefit of the great masses, for the legions of the oppressed whom he motivated with his harangues. He has given or rented our haciendas to his favorites. The old landholdings have been taken over by new landlords, and the people are mocked in their hopes. I am the leader of the Southern armies that fight for agrarian reform. My nickname is Attila of the South.

ÁLVARO OBREGÓN

LOCATION: Sonora / The North / Mexico City
BORN - DIED: 1880 - 1928
SOCIAL CLASS: Indigenous / Peasantry
ALLEGIANCE: Obregónistas

I view land ownership as important to the dignity of the people. This is one thing I learned from the Zapatistas. Since I have become president of Mexico, I have begun distributing land, and in the process, buying future support against potential opponents. The goals of my presidency will include land reform, modernization, and expanded access to education. With these goals, I should be able to easily gain the support of the Zapatistas and bring stability back to Mexico.

PANCHO VILLA

LOCATION: Durango / The North
BORN - DIED: 1878 - 1923
SOCIAL CLASS: Peasantry
ALLEGIANCE: Villistas

My nickname is Centaur of the North. I will never be president of Mexico. I was born without wealth, in Durango. I never went to school a day in my life, and I am not educated enough for the post. My alphabet has been the sight and trigger of my rifle; my books have been the movements of the enemy. I can fight only for the liberation of my people. If the federales win they will have to fight us again, but if we win we will leave them in such shape that they will not be able to recuperate. My defeat at Ceyala was the beginning of the end.

GILDARDO MAGAÑA

LOCATION: Michoacán / Morelos
BORN - DIED: 1891-1939
SOCIAL CLASS: Merchant/Educated
ALLEGIANCE: Zapatistas/Obregónistas

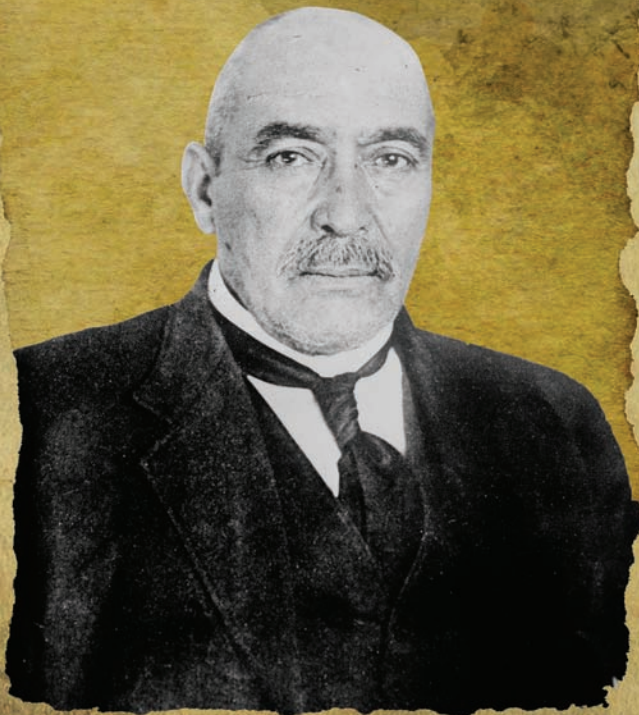
I am a Mexican, through and through, but I have been trained in economics in the U.S. With this background, I travelled south to join the Zapatistas. While other intellectuals were villainizing Zapata without reason, I recognized that his cause—land reform—was for the good of Mexico. When Zapata was assassinated by cowards, I was elected to lead his army. Though I will never fill his massive shoes with my tiny feet, I will do my best to try. In the interest of Mexico, I plan to pledge allegiance to Obregón, who has promised to return indigenous lands in exchange. The land we seek was nourished by the blood of those who died fighting for a liberated Mexico.



**VENUSTIANO
CARRANZA**



PORFIRIO DÍAZ



**VICTORIANO
HUERTA**



**AMERICAN
JOURNALIST**

PORFIRIO DÍAZ

LOCATION: Oaxaca / Mexico City / Europe
BORN - DIED: 1830 - 1915
SOCIAL CLASS: Working Class
ALLEGIANCE: Porfiriato

I have learned much from the great cities of Europe. I am using Paris and London as examples to modernize our economy and our transportation systems. I am building an international railroad from Texas to Durango! My científicos have brought Order, Liberty, and Progress to Mexico. It is true that the lower classes complain of brutal working conditions, poor diet and debilitating disease, but their lives too would improve if they would just stop drinking pulque and apply themselves to our great national project. Besides, if one complains too loudly, I will have him thrown in prison! My system of enforced peace is flawless.

AMERICAN JOURNALIST

LOCATION: U.S. / Veracruz
BORN - DIED: 19th - 20th centuries
SOCIAL CLASS: Privileged / Educated
ALLEGIANCE: None / Multiple

I am here during the American naval occupation of Veracruz. The occupation has given Veracruz a bull market in health, order, and business. Mexican paper money appreciated. Prices rose. Profits soared. Verily, the Veracruzans will long remember this being conquered by the Americans and yearn for the blissful day when the Americans will conquer them again. They would not mind thus being conquered to the end of time.

VENUSTIANO CARRANZA

LOCATION: Coahuila / The North
BORN - DIED: 1859 - 1920
SOCIAL CLASS: Privileged / Ranching
ALLEGIANCE: Carrancistas

I have restored the constitution of 1857 and ended the Huerta dictatorship. The revolution is over and the people of Mexico must begin rebuilding. I have heard that workers in Veracruz are striking again. I will not respond kindly to this. I have also heard that Zapata has called me a traitor to the revolution. I am devising a daring plot to kill this peasant from Morelos. One of my colonels will gain his trust, feign defection to his cause, accompany him to the Hacienda de Chinameca and assassinate him where he stands. With the labor movement and the Zapatistas finally quieted, Mexico will be rebuilt.

VICTORIANO HUERTA

LOCATION: Jalisco / Mexico City
BORN - DIED: 1850 - 1916
SOCIAL CLASS: Privileged / Military
ALLEGIANCE: Huerta

I am sick of these men of inaction. I have spent my life fighting against the Yaqui and Maya, and recently against the Zapatistas in Morelos. My president, Madero, could never do what I have done. He is weak. Let me tell you a secret: I have been working with the U.S. Ambassador to devise a plan for Mexico. He has reported to me that the soldiers are unhappy and that Don Porfirio's nephew, Félix, is staging a coup against Madero. I am seriously considering this opportunity to join these men and purge Mexico of its weakness.



**FRANCISCO I.
MADERO**



PASCUAL OROZCO



JOHN J. PERSHING



SOLDADERA

PASCUAL OROZCO

LOCATION: Chihuahua / The North
BORN - DIED: 1882 - 1915
SOCIAL CLASS: Middle Class
ALLEGIANCE: Huerta

Who am I, you ask? I am an experienced businessman, investor, and importer of U.S. weapons. I supplied and commanded Madero's forces against the tyranny of Díaz. When I defeated federal troops in battle after battle, I stripped their corpses of their uniforms and sent those rags to the dictator with a note that read: "Here are the wrappers, send me more tamales!" Thousands celebrated when my colonel, Villa, and I took Ciudad Juárez against all odds and guided Madero to the presidency. But Madero is not suited to rebuild Mexico. General Huerta and I will dispose of him shortly.

SOLDADERA

LOCATION: Durango / The North
BORN - DIED: 19th - 20th Centuries
SOCIAL CLASS: Indigenous / Peasantry
ALLEGIANCE: Villa

Many don't realize that women were an important part of the Mexican Revolution. We fought alongside our fathers, brothers, and husbands. We traveled on the tops of trains with our armies. I am one of those women, a coronela in Villa's army. I joined the army because Díaz had my father assassinated. While many say I could have been one of the most famous women of the Revolution, I left the fighting and returned home to Catarinas. I was too disillusioned with corruption of the Revolution.

FRANCISCO I. MADERO

LOCATION: Coahuila / Europe / The North / Mexico City
BORN - DIED: 1873 - 1913
SOCIAL CLASS: Extremely Privileged
ALLEGIANCE: Maderistas

Díaz's perpetual tyranny is intolerable. This violent and illegal system can no longer exist. The people designated me as their candidate in the 1910 election because I have the vigor of a patriot, ready to sacrifice myself, if necessary, to obtain liberty and to help the people free themselves! I declare the 1910 election illegal and I assume the provisional presidency of the republic. On Sunday, November 20, 1910, all the towns in the republic will rise in arms at 6 o'clock p.m. Viva la Revolucion!

JOHN J. PERSHING

LOCATION: Sonora / The North
BORN - DIED: 1860 - 1948
SOCIAL CLASS: Privileged / Military
ALLEGIANCE: U.S.

I am a fighter at heart. As a young man I was wounded fighting the Lakota at Wounded Knee. Pancho Villa, then, is nothing to me. I treated this man with respect when he met with me in 1914. And now he dares to invade U.S. territory and kill U.S. citizens? My troops will hunt down and rid the world of this common bandit.

References for Images

1. **Peasant from Morelos.** Image provided by Fototeca-INAH. Núm 4930 | “Revolucionario zapatista al parecer frente a un parque, reprografía”
2. **Wealthy landowner from Sonora.** Image provided by Fototeca-INAH. Núm 14566 | “Filiberto Villareal con ferrocarrileros durante la revolucion Delahuertista”
3. **Laborer from Veracruz.** Image provided by Fototeca-INAH. Núm 5070 | “Revolucionario zapatista al parecer frente a un parque, reprografía”
4. **U.S. Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson.** Image retrieved from <http://mexfiles.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/ambwilson-hires.jpg>
5. **Pancho Villa.** Image provided by Fototeca-INAH. Núm 5770 | “Francisco Villa en San Pedro de las Colonias, retrato”
6. **Emiliano Zapata.** Image provided by Fototeca-INAH. Núm 6341 | “Emiliano Zapata, general, retrato de tres cuartos de perfil”
7. **Gildardo Magaña.** Image provided by Fototeca-INAH. Núm 20658 | “Gildardo Magaña, general, vestido de traje, retrato”
8. **Alvaro Obregón.** Image provided by Fototeca-INAH. Núm 33320 | “Alvaro Obregon, general, retrato ”
9. **Venustiano Carranza.** Image provided by Fototeca-INAH. Núm 6356 | “Venustiano Carranza, retrato”
10. **Porfirio Díaz.** Image retrieved from <http://www.inehrm.gob.mx/imagenes/gmancera/11.jpg> // <http://www.inehrm.gob.mx/Portal/PtMain.php?pagina=exp-gabriel-mancera-galeria>
11. **Victoriano Huerta.** Image retrieved from http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Victoriano_Huerta.jpg
12. **American Journalist [Jack London].** Image retrieved from http://www.pencilrevolution.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/7-7-10_jack3.jpg
13. **Francisco I. Madero.** Image retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Francisco_I_Madero.jpg
14. **Pascual Orozco.** Image retrieved from http://img1.wikia.nocookie.net/__cb20130113203243/alhistory/es/images/4/47/Pascual_Orozco.png.
15. **John J. Pershing.** Image retrieved from http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:General_John_Joseph_Pershing_head_on_shoulders.jpg
16. **Soldadera.** Image provided by Fototeca-INAH. Núm 186519 | “Herculano de la Rodia y Clara Rodia de Peña, familia minera de Durango que se alzó en contra de la dictadura”

A BADA RETELLING OF THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION**

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

This activity is inspired by Ben Thompson's BadA** descriptions of important historical figures. His site can be found at <http://www.badassoftheweek.com/index.cgi>. We're particularly fond of his entry on Pancho Villa which can be found at <http://www.badassoftheweek.com/villa.html>. Please be aware: There is liberal use of profanity in Thompson's writing; it is not appropriate for all audiences and should be pre-screened before any part of it is used in a classroom setting or with students.

The purpose of this activity is to provide students a more detailed overview of the events and people of the Mexican Revolution through reading the provided hand-out "Bad** Retelling of the Mexican Revolution." This is a simplified version of the Mexican Revolution that has been written in a more 'teen-age friendly/reader-friendly' style. It can be used in conjunction with textbook readings or other materials written about the Mexican Revolution.

MATERIALS

- ☞ Copies of the Hand-out "Bada** Retelling of the Mexican Revolution" for each student
- ☞ Pens, pencils or highlighters
- ☞ Optional paper and markers for the timeline

PROCEDURE

1. Provide a copy of the "Bada** Retelling of the Mexican Revolution" to each student. In preparation for this activity, you may want to divide the document into sections or setting stopping points where the class can discuss what occurred in the reading and ask questions about the events of that specific section.
2. Ask students to read the "Bada** Retelling of the Mexican Revolution". Students can read this individually, in pairs, or small groups or it can be used as a read aloud activity. As students move through the reading, they should highlight or underline anything they think is important or significant.

EXTENSION

Once students have completed the reading, have them create a timeline of the major events of the Revolution. The reading purposefully doesn't focus on dates, but the description of people and events. The created timeline wouldn't have to include dates, the purpose would be to assess

student understanding of the major events of the Revolution. As a whole class, ask students to identify the major events of the Revolution in the order they occurred using the reading. Once a major event is correctly identified, designate a student to write that event on the provided paper and hang it up. Continue this until the timeline is complete. Leave the timeline up as a reference resource for students.

A BADA RETELLING OF THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION**

The Mexican Revolution, one of the most epic wars ever fought by guys with awesome moustaches, began in 1910 during the perennially crappy rule of one Porfirio Díaz, whose moustache was weak. Life during this period sucked equally for rural and city dwellers. Lands that traditionally belonged to indigenous peoples were taken by the state and transferred to a tiny group of Díaz's ridiculously wealthy friends and allies. City dwellers worked twelve hour days for next to nothing, while rural indigenous peasants were essentially slaves on their own land. These conditions pissed off a peasant from Morelos, rightfully so, named Emiliano Zapata and he began raising an army in southern Mexico. More on that later.

While Díaz had originally come to power in Mexico by running on a campaign of “no-reelection,” he stayed in power for decades and was re-elected president like a billion times. One day, an upper-class politician named Francisco I. Madero decided it would be a great idea to run against Díaz in the 1910 elections. Díaz soiled himself when he heard the news. He immediately had Madero arrested and thrown in jail, warning him beforehand that “snitches get stitches.” Madero was none too pleased. He orchestrated a jailbreak and fled to San Antonio, Texas, where he drafted the inexplicably named Plan of San Luis Potosí, which basically called Díaz a total jerk and set a date for the Revolution to begin.

It was on. Díaz mustered up his federal troops and began crushing Madero and his followers in battle after battle in northern Mexico. Madero, who apparently couldn't fight his way out of a paper bag, needed some serious help. Luckily, a bandit from Chihuahua by the name of Francisco “Pancho” Villa joined Madero's cause and started smoking federales left and right. Villa teamed up with an arms dealer named Pascual Orozco and together the two were unstoppable.

At this point, Díaz was tired of getting his a** kicked and decided that it was time to negotiate with Madero. The two agreed to meet. However, Villa and Orozco pretty much ignored the message that the a** kicking was on standby. They stormed into Ciudad Juárez, guns blazing, leaving a trail of death and destruction in their wake. The loss of Juárez was so bad that Díaz stepped down from the presidency and ran away to Europe where he would die uneventfully after a long life of ruining Mexico. Madero was now president.

Madero's first act as President of Mexico was to get overthrown and assassinated. It all started when he refused to return indigenous lands, which caused Zapata to issue his Plan of Ayala and lead his army into the federal district, kicking some serious tail. Meanwhile, as Madero concentrated on Zapata's uprising, the U.S. state department decided that it didn't like Madero. Am-

bassador Henry Lane Wilson started pulling some strings and organizing a coup that would put Madero's General Victoriano Huerta in power. With some instruction from Ambassador Wilson, Huerta arrested Madero, killed him on the way to the prison, and seized power for himself. The Huerta dictatorship was underway.

Needless to say, Huerta was the worst guy ever and everyone knew it. Zapata really didn't give a damn who was in power if indigenous people weren't getting their land back. When Huerta sent some "peace commissioners" to secure Zapata's allegiance, Zapata murdered them with his own hands. Without batting an eye, he prepared to wage his third war against a Mexican president. Meanwhile, in the north, Villa, who had recently picked up the appropriately cool nickname "Centaur of the North," formed a triple alliance with two other northerners: Álvaro Obregón and Venustiano Carranza. The three raised armies and marched toward Mexico City with their sights set on Huerta. It was about to get real.

While all of this was going on, some wayward U.S. sailors landed in Veracruz, got totally wasted, and stumbled on to a restricted dock. This was a serious affront to whatever bureaucrat was stationed at the dock, and he would not stand for it. The sailors were arrested and thrown in jail. U.S. President Woodrow Wilson was livid. He fired a hastily written text message to Huerta, which read "Oh hell no!," to which Huerta responded, "LMAO." This meant war.

The U.S. invaded Veracruz, killing a bunch of innocent people and making a bunch of snarky comments in American newspapers. Faced with the U.S. occupation, and fighting on two fronts against Zapata in the south and the triple alliance in the north, Huerta resigned in embarrassment.

The leaders of the revolution sent delegates to meet at Aguascalientes where they would set forth their plans for Mexico. As it turns out, these guys had nothing in common other than the shared fact that they all thought Huerta and Díaz totally sucked. They bickered for a while until Venustiano Carranza decided that he too could fail as president of Mexico. He stated his intentions in his Plan of Guadalupe, which curiously made no mention of land reform. Big mistake. When Zapata heard that another jackass was going to "bring liberty" to Mexico without a word about land, he prepared to wage his fourth war against a Mexican president.

This time, the stars aligned and the long awaited alliance between Villa and Zapata was finally formed. The two met at a school near the capital and had a raging party where the most bada** photo in Mexican history was taken. Obregón decided to remain allied to Carranza and the new battle lines were thus drawn. Zapata went back to southern Mexico and penned some open letters to Carranza, calling him a hater. Villa and Obregón went to war in the north and met on the field of battle in Celaya, where Obregón's strategically placed machinegun nests cut Villa's Division of the North to pieces.

Villa was PISSED OFF. Apparently the U.S. had pledged its support to Carranza and supplied Obregón with the previously mentioned machineguns. Villa loaded his trusty rifle, waxed the tips of his trusty moustache into fine points, and crossed the U.S. border with his remaining army to randomly attack Columbus, New Mexico, in the only land invasion against the United States in the twentieth century. Guy had some serious cajones.

In typical U.S. fashion, President Wilson sent a fleet of unmanned attack drones, commanded by General John Pershing, on an expedition into Mexico to hunt Villa down. Meanwhile, Carranza decided it was time to get rid of Zapata, who had recently acquired his own appropriately cool nickname, “Atilla of the South.” Carranza sent one of his colonels to Morelos to gain Zapata’s trust and assassinate him. The Zapatistas had been to too many rodeos to fall for this bush league tactic, and they forced Carranza’s colonel to kill a bunch of Carranza’s own soldiers before he would be trustworthy enough to set foot anywhere near Zapata. Unfortunately, the colonel executed this grisly task and was allowed to meet with Zapata at the Hacienda de Chinameca. There he assassinated Zapata in cold blood. As he lay dying, Zapata made some totally sweet quotes that can be read on T-shirts worldwide today.

In a final plot twist, Álvaro Obregón decided that it was his turn to be president of Mexico and he announced his Plan of Agua Prieta, switched sides, rode into Mexico City and chased that punk Zapata-killing Carranza out of town. In a shining example of pure Karma, Carranza was later killed in his sleep by some unknown assassin in a mystery that remains unsolved to this day (Obregón killed him).

It turns out that Obregón was pretty good at actually forming a political base and doing the things that presidents of countries are supposed to do. He signed a peace agreement with Villa—who was still on the lam from General Pershing—implemented some land reform, and gained the respect of Zapata’s followers. Obregón thus brought stability to Mexico and ended the decade-long Revolution that had been marked by backstabbing, assassinations every ten minutes, and the misguided aspirations of dozens of politicians who couldn’t seem to figure out that the war was about land.

CONVENTION OF **AGUASCALIENTES**

Note: This lesson plan is based on and adapted from Rethinking Schools’ “The NAFTA Role Play: Mexico-United States Free Trade Conference” in *The Line Between Us*; the biographical photos and descriptions of leaders shared as part of the Aguascalientes handouts on the following pages are reproduced from the PBS interactive website “Faces of the Revolution.”

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVE

Note: If using the Primary Source activity, you may prefer to incorporate that before this role play, although it can also be used after this activity is completed.

In 1914 after Huerta was forced out of office, it was suggested that the remaining revolutionary leaders convene to discuss who should be the provisional president of Mexico until national elections could be held. The convention took place in the neutral town of Aguascalientes. Carranza, Villa and Zapata did not attend themselves, but sent delegates in their place. Obregón was the only of the major four revolutionary leaders to attend. Ultimately, the convention was not very successful. Eualalio Gutierrez was chosen as the provisional president, which went against Carranza’s wishes. His followers soon withdrew from the convention, with Obregón among them. Villa and Zapata formed what would be a short-lived alliance, and their followers brought Gutierrez safely to the capital to be installed as president. In the end, the convention accomplished little other than ensuring the continued chaos of the Revolution.

This activity, while based on the Convention of Aguascalientes, takes some historical liberties for the sake of the lesson plan. While Obregón and Carranza were essentially functioning as one entity at Aguascalientes, here they are represented as two separate groups. While the actual delegates were to choose a provisional president that wasn’t necessarily one of the revolutionary leaders, in this activity, to simplify the amount of necessary background knowledge, students will choose one of the four represented revolutionary leaders (Carranza, Obregón, Villa or Zapata).

Students will be divided into four groups of delegates—one for each of the four revolutionary leaders represented at Aguascalientes. The purpose of this activity is for students to understand the driving forces and motivations behind the four leaders’ movements and why it was so difficult to build long-lasting alliances among the four.

MATERIALS

- ☞ Copies of roles for each of the four groups (one role per student in each group)
- ☞ Placards for each group in the role play
- ☞ Copies of “The Convention of Aguascalientes: Questions” for each student

PROCEDURE

1. Explain to the class that they’ll be doing a role play about the Convention of Aguascalientes. Be sure to clarify that while the activity is based upon an actual historical event, some liberties have been taken in turning it into a classroom activity. The class will be divided into four groups and each group will represent one of the major revolutionary leaders represented at the convention: Carranza, Obregón, Villa, and Zapata. The purpose of the convention is to elect a provisional president for Mexico from among the four leaders. Each delegation is responsible for presenting their leader’s platform to the rest of the convention. Once all four delegations have presented, delegates will talk with representatives from other delegations, working to create alliances so that a leader who best represents their political and social beliefs is elected. This may mean that their leader is not elected, but that they are in alliance with another leader who will support similar causes. A hand-out with questions will be provided to help students clarify their leader’s values and then which other leaders may be possible allies.
2. As a class, review the questions from the hand-out to make sure students understand the ideas and concepts they should be focusing on as they read about their own leader and then dialogue with other delegations.
3. Count the class off into 4 groups and distribute roles to each group. Ask students to read their roles carefully and to highlight parts that they think are important and give clues to how they may answer the questions from the hand-out.
4. Once students have finished reading their roles, ask them to complete the questions on the hand-out based on the information they’ve been given for their specific leader. Circulate and help students think through their various positions. Explain that it is important that everyone in the group understand the position of their leader because they will be going to other groups looking for allies. They will need to be able to explain their own position and judge who may be a good ally.
5. Ask students to choose half of their group to be “traveling negotiators.” These individuals will move around the room, talking to representatives of other delegations looking for potential allies. The other half of the group will stay to talk to the traveling negotiators from other delegations. While they should be open-minded to all delegations, they should discuss who the most likely allies will be and focus on how to approach them. The negotiation session will provide them the opportunity to get information from other delegates that they don’t have access to, so it’s an essential part of the convention.
6. Begin the negotiation session. Be sure to tell travelers that they may meet only with other

seated groups and not with other travelers. Travelers may circulate separately or together. If traveling negotiators find a delegation they believe would be good allies, they may need to move back and forth between their delegation and the potential allies in order to discuss the specifics of an agreement or deal.

7. After students have completed meeting other groups and building alliances they should return to their own group to prepare for the large-group convention. They should be prepared to explain why their leader or the leader of the delegation that they've allied with would make the best president. They should also be prepared to question the other delegates and the qualities of their leader in terms of a potential presidency. Students should think of these as somewhat informal presentations, but they should have ideas and content prepared to discuss.
8. Reconvene as a whole group with the class sitting in a circle, if possible, or the best arrangement that will encourage whole class engagement and participation. Each delegation should have the name of their revolutionary leader displayed on the provided placard.
9. Begin the convention, starting with Carranza's delegation since he called for the convention. Each delegation should be given the opportunity to present the main concerns of their own delegate, and to question the other delegations after they've presented.
10. Once all delegations have presented and been questioned, give the delegations a short period of time to finalize alliances and decide whom each delegate will vote for. Remind students that the entire delegation must vote for the same leader. For example, if the Villa delegation was divided, it would not be possible for half of them to vote for Villa and half of them to vote for Zapata. They must come to an agreement.
11. Count the votes and announce the winner. There may be no winner if each delegation voted for their own leader. While this provides no provisional president, in reality it isn't that different from the actual outcome of the Convention of Aguascalientes, where very little was accomplished in terms of bringing an end to the chaos that had erupted all over Mexico.
12. As a class discuss the assignment. What new information did they learn? What did they learn about the Mexican Revolution and its leaders? What were they surprised by? The Mexican Revolution is often described as complex, complicated and chaotic—do they have a better understanding of why that is now?

EXTENSION/ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY: WHOM WOULD YOU FOLLOW?

By this point students should have a good understanding of the major revolutionary leaders. Give them time to consider whom they would have supported had they been living in Mexico at the time of the Revolution. Ask students to write an essay explaining what revolutionary leader they would have supported and why. Follow your classroom procedure for writing, editing, and revising.

THE CONVENTION AT AGUASCALIENTES QUESTIONS

1. Why did you join the Revolution?
2. What do you hope the Revolution will accomplish? Do you want political change? Do you want social change?
3. What kind of country do you want Mexico to be?
4. What are you willing to sacrifice?
5. Whom might you be willing to ally with?
6. Whom would you never ally with?
7. What do you think is the most essential and immediate need for Mexico now?
8. What are your feelings about land reform?
9. Do you believe in quick change or slow, gradual reform?

THE CONVENTION AT AGUASCALIENTES



GENERAL FRANCISCO "PANCHO" VILLA (1872 - 1923)

General Francisco "Pancho" Villa was the most iconic and best-known personality of the Mexican revolution. Villa was born Doroteo Arango in the northern state of Durango, in 1878. As a young man he was a bandolero, a common bandit. The contacts he made during these early years would serve him well later, when he sought to put together a revolutionary army.

Uneducated, and considered by many to be coarse, Villa was nevertheless a military genius, and had a superb, instinctive understanding of the game of international politics. His ability to generate publicity and give it his own spin would rival many celebrities today. He loved being in the limelight.

Villa was inspired early on by the revolution of Francisco Madero, and his military career grew during the Maderista period (1910-1911). In fact, Villa, along with fellow general Pascual Orozco, attacked Ciudad Juárez against Madero's orders and won. This victory was instrumental in bringing Madero into power. Although Madero soon pushed Villa to the sidelines, Villa never lost his admiration for the man who took the first steps in the revolution.

In response to the coup by Victoriano Huerta, which overthrew Madero, Villa developed an extraordinary army, the División del Norte. During this time, Villa also became Provisional Gov-

ernor of his then-home state of Chihuahua, and brought the politics and economy of the state under his control. Villa was joined around this time by Felipe Ángeles, who would become his chief strategist. Angeles was an expert in artillery, and many attribute some of Villa's best decisions and most successful campaigns to Ángeles's influence.

Villa loved being photographed. The fact that he operated close to the United States meant that he was nearly always in the spotlight in the U.S. In 1913, Villa signed a contract with Hollywood's Mutual Film Company to film many of his battles. Sometimes battles were re-scheduled or re-staged for the convenience of the cameras. It was during this period that the United States supported Villa and provided him with weapons. Villa, in turn, remained sensitive to U.S. interests in Mexico.

Among his triumphs during this era, the battles of Zacatecas and Ojinaga stand out as particular highlights. At Ojinaga, Villa defeated Huerta's federal troops and forced them across the Rio Grande to Marfa, Texas. Late in the campaign to overthrow Huerta, Carranza tried to sabotage Villa's progress toward Mexico City by sending him to Saltillo, an insignificant target, rather than the more important town of Zacatecas. Ángeles convinced Villa to once again disobey orders, and Villa's triumph at Zacatecas, one of the bloodiest campaigns of the revolution, helped defeat Huerta once and for all. While he was a hero in the revolution, Villa was also known for his brutality in the face of betrayal. Both he and his "trigger-man," Rudolfo Fierro, were known for the particularly barbaric ways in which they would dispatch their enemies.

After taking power, Carranza tried to eliminate Villa. A turning point came in 1915, when Villa and his elite soldiers, the dorados, lost several battles to Carranza's general, Álvaro Obregón. The battle of Celaya was a brutal and unexpected defeat – one which sent the seemingly-invincible Villa reeling. In this battle, and in the battle of Agua Prieta, against Carrancista general Plutarco Elias Calles, Villa and his 19th-century-style cavalry came up against 20th century technology imported from the war in Europe (WWI) and employed by the Constitutionalists. Their use of barbed wire, sophisticated machine guns, and trench warfare resulted in a massacre of Villa's troops.

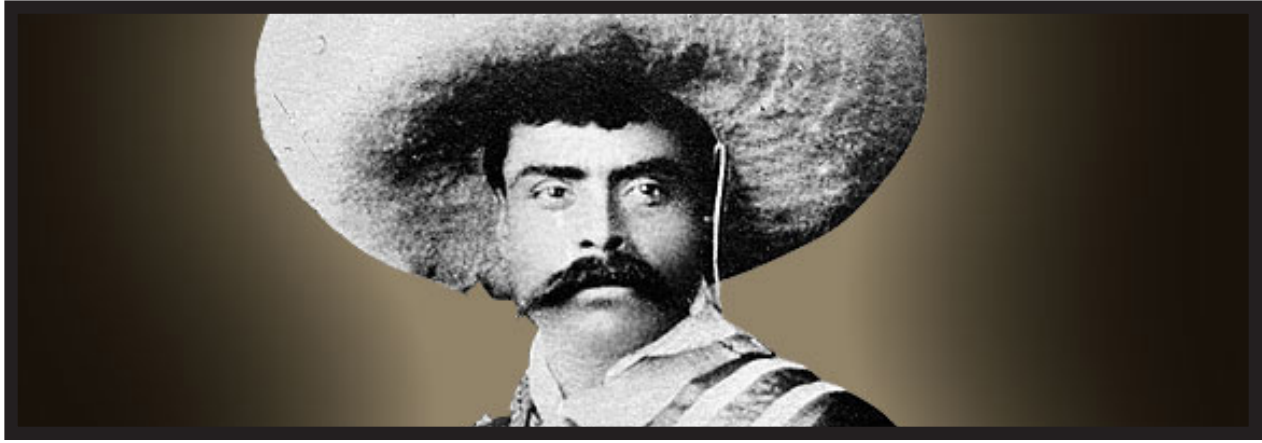
Partly because of these defeats, the U.S. withdrew their support of Villa in favor of recognition of Carranza. In 1916, angered by what he perceived as a betrayal by the United States, Villa attacked the border town of Columbus, New Mexico. Although Villista casualties far outweighed those of the Americans, the U.S. government was outraged and sent troops, led by General John J. "Blackjack" Pershing, into Mexican territory to rout out Villa and eliminate him. The search continued well into 1917 but Pershing's men never found him.

The effort of avoiding Pershing's forces took its toll on Villa. Although he won a number of skirmishes during the period 1917-1919, he was never the same as he had been at the height

of his power. In 1923, in an agreement with then-President Álvaro Obregón, Villa retired to a hacienda in Canutillo, near Parral, Chihuahua. He seemed to be living the quiet life of a rancher, surrounded by former comrades and friends, many of whom now served as his body guards. But Obregón, and his soon-to-be successor, Plutarco Elias Calles, wanted to take no chances that Villa might regain his strength. They established a conspiracy to assassinate him. On July 20, 1923, as Villa made his way back to his ranch from Parral, seven riflemen rained a fusillade of shots on his car. The “Centaur of the North” was no more.

In death, as in life, Villa remains a controversial figure. One hundred years later, he is loved by some and despised by others. Today, the specter of this rogue genius lives on in hundreds of photographs and thousands of feet of motion picture footage — images inspired by the daring bandit who became the one of the most famous generals of the Mexican revolution.

THE CONVENTION AT AGUASCALIENTES:



EMILIANO ZAPATA (1879 - 1919)

Emiliano Zapata was born in Anenecuilco, in the Mexican state of Morelos, just south of Mexico City. It was in this region that Zapata would spend his life. His career would be dedicated to the people of the region, and it was in Morelos that he would make the supreme sacrifice for his beliefs and for the people he so loved.

Zapata lost his father when he was 17 years old (in 1896), and thus his education was cut short. He took up work as a horse trainer to support his family, his mother and nine siblings. One of his brothers, Eulalio, would join him in the revolution. Zapata's main cause was the return of stolen land to its rightful owners, the peasants of Morelos. It is said that he kept the deeds of the peasant families in a tin box he had with him always. Over time, the Spanish deeds that proved peasant ownership of the lands had been ignored and even rescinded. The hacendados (hacienda owners) had taken over the land to build money-making haciendas, which used the labor of those who truly owned the land, to harvest and manufacture sugar cane and other crops for export. The sugar-producing haciendas of Morelos were notorious for bad working conditions and the workers were virtual slaves under the whips of the hacendados' foremen.

In 1909, around the time of his 30th birthday, Zapata was officially put in charge of the village council and was thus officially responsible for the welfare of the people of Anenecuilco. Zapata protected his village with the kind of care and attention to detail he would have given to protecting his own family.

Zapata initially supported the anti-reelectionist movement of Francisco I. Madero, and formed the Liberation Army of the South to fight for the Maderista revolt. But once Madero became president, Zapata quickly became disenchanted. He realized that Madero would not institute true agrarian reform. In fact, Madero was from a family of rich land-owners, and while in many ways his heart was in the right place, he was not about to expropriate the lands of members of his own class. Therefore, just around the time Madero was sworn in as president, Zapata and his men issued the Plan de Ayala (1911), in which Zapata broke with the president. Madero sent troops south to rout the Zapatistas. Zapata joined forces with another former Maderista, Pascual Orozco, who was based in the north. Orozco was a disgruntled former general who had fought for Madero alongside Francisco Villa. Orozco, with the support of Zapata, launched an uprising against Madero in March, 1912. It was soon put down by Madero's general, Victoriano Huerta.

Zapata was a hero to the families in his region, although he and his men continuously drew the wrath of the federal government down upon Morelos. The Zapatistas fought against a series of federal agents sent to destroy them, but none was more brutal than Juvencio Robles. When Madero was overthrown in a coup engineered by Victoriano Huerta (himself a brutal dictator), Zapata declared war against Huerta. Huerta responded by declaring every poor person in Morelos a Zapatista. He brought Juvencio Robles back to carry out a "slash and burn" policy to, in Huerta's words, "depopulate the state." It was tantamount to genocide.

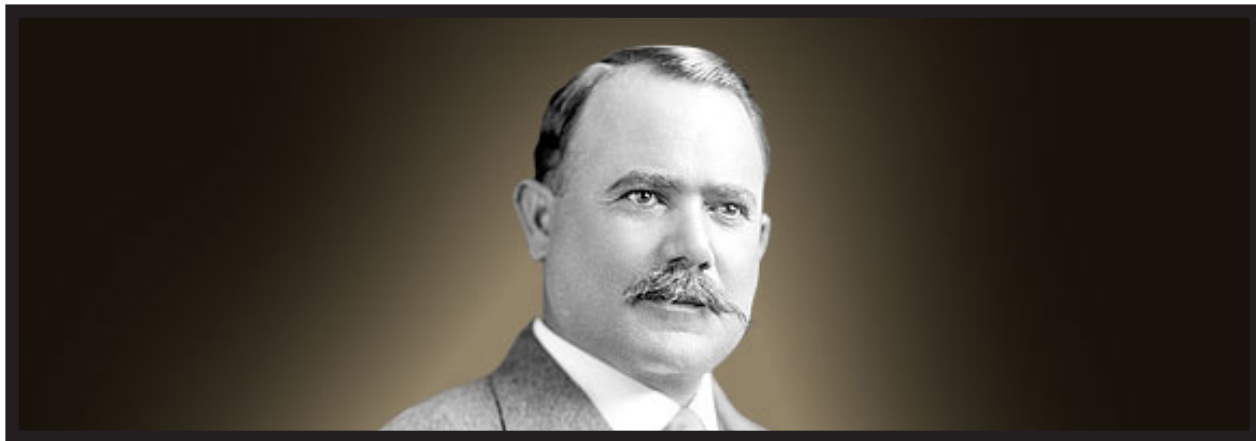
Once again, Zapata and his men defended their people at great cost, and rallied around Venustiano Carranza's Plan de Guadalupe (April, 1913) – which created the Constitutionalist rebellion, designed to defeat Huerta and strip him of power. But Carranza, too, would prove to be a disappointment. After Huerta's defeat, and Carranza's seizing of de facto power in Mexico (he would not officially become president until 1917), a convention was called among the various revolutionary factions. They met in October, 1914 in the town of Aguas Calientes, to determine what could be done about Carranza's lack of legitimacy. Although Zapata would not attend the meeting, he and Villa met that December, in the village of Xochimilco. The two generals, much loved by the common people, then rode with their troops into Mexico City, taking control over the capital and capturing the imagination of the masses. Unfortunately, unwilling to rule Mexico, they each soon returned home – Zapata south to Morelos and Villa north to Chihuahua. Carranza retained power.

As president, Carranza decided he had to eliminate Zapata as a threat. An intricate plot was devised by Carranza's right-hand man, Pablo Gonzalez, by which a federal general named Guajardo would pretend to defect to the Zapatistas. He would work methodically to prove himself anxious to leave Carranza's army and join Zapata. Guajardo staged a rout against other federal troops, sacrificing scores of men for what was essentially a "performance" to gain credibility with Zapata. Finally, a deal was sealed. Zapata and Guajardo were to meet to sign an agreement

to join forces at the hacienda of Chinameca. In the early afternoon of April 10, 1919, Zapata rode into the hacienda with just a handful of his men, indicating to the rest of them that they should wait some distance away. A bugle sounded four times, and when Guajardo's soldiers were to deliver a military salute to Zapata, they instead pointed their rifles at him and his small contingent. The men waiting for him heard the two volleys, and saw his now-riderless horse run toward them, covered in blood. They knew their leader had been slain.

Soon after, signs containing one of Zapata's mottos began appearing around Morelos, as both a memorial and an inspiration for his men to continue the fight: "It is better to die on your feet than to live on your knees."

THE CONVENTION AT AGUASCALIENTES:



ÁLVARO OBREGÓN (1880 - 1928)

Álvaro Obregón was a Mexican farmer-turned-general. Born in the State of Sonora in 1880, he would become president as the bloodiest years of the revolution came to an end. Obregón was a study in contradictions and ever-changing loyalties. He was one of the greatest generals of the revolution, but he never considered himself a military man. Although he admired President Francisco Madero, he did not choose to join the Maderista forces as they fought to end the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz. Instead, he joined the military later, in order to fight to keep Madero in office, against the rebellion staged by Pascual Orozco, a disenchanted former Maderista.

Thus, Obregón would begin his military career fighting under a man he would later oppose and work to overthrow, General Victoriano Huerta. Although Huerta was successful in staving off Orozco's rebellion, he would soon hatch a plot against President Madero. In February, 1913, Huerta staged a coup, supported by the U.S. Ambassador to Mexico, Henry Lane Wilson. Huerta overthrew Madero, arranging for him and his vice-president, Pino Suarez, to be executed. This coup would serve as a "wake up call," and like other federal generals, including Felipe Ángeles, Obregón switched sides, joining Venustiano Carranza's "Constitutionalists" to defeat Huerta and drive him from office. After a 17-month campaign, which also included decisive victories by General Francisco Villa, the Constitutionalists finally succeeded in overthrowing Huerta. In July, 1914, just weeks before World War I broke out in Europe, Carranza and Obregón rode into Mexico City, triumphant. While Carranza became the de facto president, Obregón maintained the military and strategic muscle to keep Carranza in power.

By the fall of 1914, Carranza had disappointed various important military factions. Zapata turned against him, as did Francisco Villa. In October, a summit of military leaders met in the town of Aguas Calientes to decide the future of Mexican politics. Carranza did not attend, but Obregón did. The convention at Aguas Calientes created a split between the Constitutionalist (whom Obregón represented in Carranza's absence), and the so-called Conventionalists, led by Villa. (Zapata did not attend but sent his emissaries).

It quickly became clear that the Conventionalists were the favorites of the Aguas Calientes participants. Although Obregón had comrades on both sides, he had to make a choice. He chose to remain loyal to Carranza. In December, 1914, Zapata and Villa met in Xochimilco, rode into Mexico City, and for a few months took control of the government, as Carranza escaped to Veracruz in order not to confront them.

As Carranza's top general, Obregón focused his energies on eliminating Francisco Villa. Carranza had long felt Villa was a crude, low-class annoyance. But Villa and his men were still strong and popular, in both Mexico and the U.S. In a series of battles throughout 1915, Obregón pursued Villa and his elite soldiers, the dorados. For the first time, Villa found himself on the losing side, as Obregón borrowed military techniques being developed in the war in Europe, including the use of barbed wire, entrenchments, and new-technology machine guns. Villa continued to fight using 19th century cavalry strategies – essentially men on horseback expecting face-to-face combat.

In four battles fought very close in time and geography, collectively known as the Battle of Celaya (April 1915), the Villistas charged Obregón's trenches again and again, but were massacred by machine guns, and impaled on barbed wire before they could ever reach Obregón's protected troops. It was one of the bloodiest battles in the history of Mexico. Villa narrowly escaped, but lost 4,000 men, while another 6,000 were taken prisoner by Obregón's forces. He also lost a tremendous amount of his armaments and horses, thus crippling his ability to fight. Obregón lost an arm. After the battle, Obregón attempted to commit suicide, only to be thwarted by a loyal soldier. Mexican history would have been very different if he had succeeded.

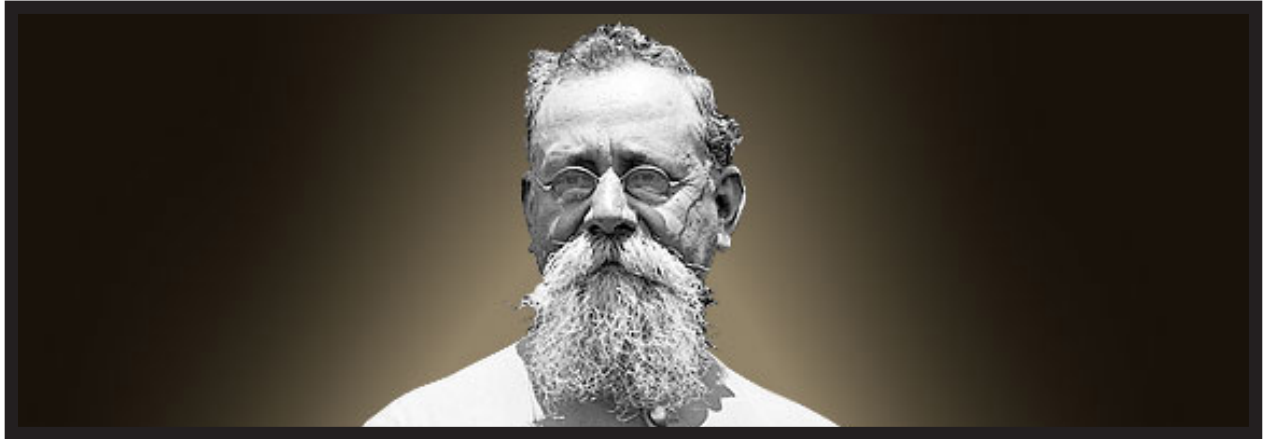
General Carranza called for a constitutional convention in 1917. But the constitution that was ultimately adopted was significantly more radical and more progressive than Carranza had hoped for. Although Carranza was disappointed with the outcome, Obregón sided with the radicals. This drove a wedge between Carranza, the conservative Constitutionalist, and Obregón, who believed in true reform. In 1917, Carranza was officially elected President of Mexico, and served for another three years. During that time, he engineered the assassinations of Emiliano Zapata and of Villa's compatriot, Felipe Ángeles. But soon it was Carranza's turn.

When Carranza was assassinated in 1920, Obregón saw his chance. He ran for president, and became one of the most popular candidates in all of Mexican history. With the support of the labor unions, as well as broad popular support, he easily won. Under his presidency, Mexicans began the task of putting the bloodshed behind them and rebuilding the country. Although he was one of the caudillos, the military generals who often abused their power, he had a true vision for the future of Mexico. Obregón moved toward fulfilling the precepts of the 1917 Constitution. One of Obregón's biggest contributions as president, one which would have a lasting effect, was that he created the Ministry of Public Education and appointed José Vasconcelos to run it. The Ministry of Public Education expanded literacy campaigns into the rural sections of Mexico, and used the arts as a way to help establish a Mexican cultural identity and re-establish Mexican pride. The Ministry's support of education, literature and the arts would have far-reaching effects, resulting in murals and paintings by such luminaries as Diego Rivera, Jose Clemente Orozco, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and Frieda Kahlo; music by Carlos Chavez and Silvestre Revueltas, and literature by Martín Luis Guzmán, Mariano Azuela, Nellie Campobello, and others.

Obregón served as president from 1920 to 1924. In 1923, finally seeing his chance to eliminate his old foe once and for all, he helped arrange for the assassination of Francisco Villa. In 1924, although still popular, Obregón was forced by constitutional law to cede power, and the presidency fell to his former compatriot on the battlefield, Plutarco Elias Calles. Although Calles continued Obregón's educational initiatives, and instituted some agrarian reform, he was not a friend of the common man. Obregón was easily re-elected in 1928.

But before he could take office, Obregón was assassinated at a banquet held in his honor. He was shot by a man posing as a caricaturist, reported in the press as a Cristero soldier disenchanted with Obregón's subjugation of the Catholic church.

THE CONVENTION AT AGUASCALIENTES:



**VENUSTIANO CARRANZA
(1859 - 1920)**

Sometimes derisively called “the billy goat” by his enemies because of his long flowing beard, Venustiano Carranza called himself the “Premier Jefe” (First Chief), because of his political ambitions. Carranza was born into the middle class at the end of 1859 in the northern state of Coahuila. He went to school at the Prepa (Preparatory school) in Mexico City just around the time the young Porfirio Díaz had proven himself a great military hero and was marching triumphantly into Mexico City.

After school, Carranza became a northern cattle rancher. He entered politics early when, along with his brother and other ranchers, he opposed Porfirio Díaz’s “reelection” in 1893. Thus, his actions anticipated the Maderista movement that came almost two decades later. Despite this, in 1904, the Governor of Coahuila recommended to Porfirio Díaz that Carranza would make a good senator. Although he didn’t like the científicos, Carranza did become a senator during Díaz’s administration. But when he tried to run for Governor of Coahuila, Díaz refused to support him, and he lost. From that point on, he disliked Díaz intensely.

Carranza came late to the revolution, but he did ultimately become a strong supporter of Francisco I. Madero and his anti-reelection movement, designed to remove Díaz from power. Madero made him Minister of War shortly before the Battle of Ciudad Juárez, and as a result, Carranza was part of the peace conference that led to the resignation and exile of Porfirio Díaz. Carranza was on the podium with Madero during Madero’s famous speech to the troops at the conclusion of that battle.

Carranza finally did become Governor of Coahuila, and in that role, watched as Madero's presidency faltered. Carranza advocated for Madero to be stronger and more ruthless as a politician. When Victoriano Huerta and his co-conspirators (including U.S. Ambassador to Mexico, Henry Lane Wilson) overthrew Madero, Carranza watched helplessly as Madero was executed and Huerta took power.

In response to Huerta's brutal dictatorship, Carranza issued his Plan de Guadalupe, calling for the restoration of the 1857 Constitution, and the elimination of Huerta. In 1913, the same year Huerta took power, Carranza developed what he called the Constitutionalist Army, to overthrow Huerta and establish what he imagined would be a constitutional democracy in Mexico. With his general, Álvaro Obregón, he developed a three-pronged military strategy to take Mexico City from the North – with Obregón coming down the western side of the country, Pablo González Garza coming down the eastern side, and Francisco Villa and his División del Norte cutting down the center.

The plan basically worked, and Huerta was defeated in mid-1914. He departed for Spain, and the Constitutionalist, specifically Obregón and Carranza, took over the government. Carranza pushed Villa, whom he had never liked, out of any position of power, just as Madero had done before him.

Carranza was not universally liked by the revolutionary leaders. They convened at the town of Aguas Calientes in October, 1914 to choose another leader. The result of this conference was that the joint armies of Villa and Emiliano Zapata rode into Mexico City, while Carranza fled to Veracruz to avoid the swell of popular support that surrounded the two iconic leaders.

The pattern of fleeing to Veracruz when things got rough in Mexico City was one that Carranza followed a few times, making him seem like a coward. But one thing that Carranza was able to do as leader of Mexico (in fact, a year before he officially became president), was to call for a convention to create a new constitution for Mexico. His idea was that the new constitution would be strongly based on the one from 1857 but would be moderately updated for the 20th century. Instead, more radical forces took political control of the convention's agenda, and as a result, the Constitution of 1917 became a model of democracy, calling for labor reform, repatriation of land back to the peasants, and far-reaching restrictions on foreign access to Mexico's natural resources.

But many forces were working against Carranza. The trauma of the revolution had left a country that was impoverished, with not enough food or clean water for its people. Illness was rampant. And when Carranza refused to begin instituting the reforms that the Constitution called for, both Villa and Zapata came to believe that Carranza needed to be overthrown.

When Villa attacked Columbus, New Mexico in 1916, Carranza gave the U.S. permission to send troops, led by General John J. Pershing, into Mexican territory to hunt him down. It was Carranza's hope that Pershing could eliminate the threat of Villa, but Pershing's troops were never able to locate the revolutionary leader. A closer threat to Carranza was Emiliano Zapata, who was based in Morelos, very close to Mexico City. Carranza developed a scheme to have Zapata eliminated. In April, 1919, the plot worked. A federal general pretended to defect to Zapata's side, and was thus able to engineer his assassination.

But only a year later, it was Carranza's turn. As he tried for a final time to flee Mexico City for Veracruz, conspirators working on behalf of his general, Álvaro Obregón, arranged to have Carranza's train sabotaged, and the Premier Jefe was murdered that night. Later that same year, Obregón became President of Mexico

LITERARY REPRESENTATIONS

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

The following section of activities is based upon three different literary representations of the Mexican Revolution, all of which are included in the appendix of this guide.

- ☞ *Los de Abajo/The Underdogs* by Mariano Azuela
- ☞ “The General’s Voice” and “Agustín García” from *Cartucho* by Nellie Campobello
- ☞ “Death of an Assassin” from *Walking Stars: Stories of Magic and Power* by Victor Villaseñor

Through these readings students will learn more about the Revolution and how it was portrayed in literature. All three readings can be used, or a selection of the three. If time is an issue, we recommend reading one of the shorter selections: “The General’s Voice,” “Agustín García,” and “Death of an Assassin.”

MATERIALS

- ☞ Copies of the reading selections for each student

PROCEDURE

These readings can be done as a read aloud, in pairs, in small groups, or individually. As reading processes can vary a great deal from class to class, specific procedures have not been included here. The selections can be used in whatever manner best meets the needs of the students.

REPRESENTATIONS:

LOS DE ABAJO

BY MARIANO AZUELA

INTRODUCTION

The following is an Educator’s Guide to accompany the novel *Los de Abajo/The Underdogs*. Written by Mariano Azuela, it is one of the most famous novels of the Mexican Revolution and recognized by many as the first. The novel itself is readily available in both English and Spanish and can be found in its entirety online for free, which makes it accessible for most classrooms and students. Copies of the English and Spanish versions of the book are included in the appendix of this guide.

The Educator’s Guide includes:

- ↻ Background information on the author and the context of the novel.
- ↻ Guided reading questions organized by parts of the book and extended response writing prompts. These questions have been written to support the types of reading and critical thinking skills required in standardized reading comprehension tests.

In addition to the lesson plans and activities included here, lecture notes including an interactive visual that breaks down important themes in the novel, are available from the University of Cambridge through the following links:

- ↻ [Charting Revolution: Mariano Azuela, Los de abajo, 1915](#)
- ↻ [In-depth Essay Questions](#)

SUMMARY¹⁵

Ten years after its publication in a small El Paso paper, *Los de Abajo/The Underdogs* achieved worldwide renown as the greatest novel of the Mexican Revolution. It tells the story of Demetrio Macías, a modest, peace-loving Indian who is forced to side with the rebels to save his family. In the course of battle, he becomes a compulsive militarist almost despite himself, and his courage leads to a generalship in Pancho Villa’s army. But as the rebels suffer defeat after defeat, Macías loses prestige and moral purpose at the hands of turncoats, camp followers, and the peasants who once loved him. The social conscience and bitter irony of Azuela’s classic novel have earned him comparisons to Chekhov and Gorky. As Mexico continues to celebrate and struggle with the consequences of its great revolution, *Los de Abajo/The Underdogs* remains a powerful and insightful portrait of social upheaval.

6 Compiled from publisher’s information found at <http://www.amazon.com> and <http://www.goodreads.com>.

In this deeply moving picture of the turmoil of the first great revolution of the twentieth century—the Mexican Revolution of 1910—Azuela depicts the anarchy and the idealism, the base human passions and the valor and nobility of the simple folk, and, most striking of all, the fascination of revolt—that peculiar love of revolution for revolution’s sake that has characterized most of the social upheavals of the twentieth century. *Los de Abajo/The Underdogs* is considered “the only novel of the Revolution” and has been published in several languages and more than twenty-seven editions. Azuela’s writing is sometimes racy and virile, sometimes poetic and subdued, but always in perfect accord with the mood and character of the story.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mariano Azuela was born in Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco, Mexico in 1873. Studying medicine, he received his M.D. in 1899 and returned to Lagos in 1909 to continue his practice medicine. His writing career began in 1896 when he was published in a weekly newspaper. His first novel was published in 1911. Throughout the Revolution, Azuela wrote about the war and its impact on Mexico. Under President Francisco I. Madero he served as chief of political affairs in his hometown, Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco. After Madero’s assassination, Azuela joined the Constitutionalist cause. He served as a field medic traveling with military leader Julián Medina who was one of Pancho Villa’s followers. His experiences during this time provided the material for *Los de Abajo* (The Underdogs). In 1915 during Huerta’s short period of triumph, Azuela was forced to emigrate to El Paso, Texas where he wrote *Los de Abajo*. It was first published in a small El Paso newspaper. Within ten years of this first publication, the novel achieved worldwide fame, often considered the greatest novel of the Mexican Revolution.

Azuela was fundamentally a moralist, and his disappointment with the Revolution soon began to manifest itself. He had fought for a better Mexico; but he saw that while the Revolution had corrected certain injustices, it had given rise to others equally deplorable. When he saw the self-servers and the unprincipled turning his hopes for the redemption of the underprivileged of his country into a ladder to serve their own ends, his disillusionment was deep and often bitter. His later novels are marred at times by a savage sarcasm.

During his later years, and until his death in 1952, he lived in Mexico City writing and practicing his profession among the poor. In 1917 Azuela returned to Mexico City where he continued writing and working as a doctor until his death in 1952.

CONTEXT OF LOS DE ABAJO/THE UNDERDOGS

It’s important to note the context of *Los de Abajo/The Underdogs*. The Mexican Revolution took place across the country and over a ten year time period, but the novel is set specifically in five states of Central Mexico (Jalisco, Zacatecas, Aguas Caliente, Durango, and Nayarit) from 1913-

1915. As with all literary works, the point of view of the author is significant. Through his own experiences with the Revolution, Azuela came to be quite frustrated, disillusioned, and ultimately disappointed with it. His novel reflects this. Many have argued that his novel points to the hopelessness and pointlessness of the Revolution. One way Azuela does this is through conveying a lack of progress or circular movement of the soldiers. Demetrio and his men end the story fighting in the same place the novel began. His novel also communicates the disconnect between the overarching politics of the Revolution and the individual reasons many soldiers joined to fight under a specific leader such as Villa, Zapata, Obregón or Carranza. While his novel demonstrates an important part of the Revolution, it is just that it one piece, one man's reflection of his experiences. It cannot be used to interpret the whole of the Revolution.

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

These questions have been divided by the parts and Roman numeral chapters of the novel. Page numbers have not been provided due to the various editions of the novel, and the different pagination of the online versions of the novel.

Part One

I

1. Describe the house Demetrio and his family live in.
2. How does Azuela describe Demetrio? Search the images provided at <http://fototeca.inah.gob.mx/fototeca/>. Do you see other men who would fit this description? What do the soldiers in these photos look like?
3. What do the arriving men do to Palomo, the Macias' dog? Why do you think they do this?
4. How does Azuela portray the Federales, Huerta's troops? Are these men you would want to be associated with? Why or why not?
5. Do you think Demetrio should have killed the men? Why doesn't he?
6. Did the Federales return? What did they do to the Macias' home?

II

1. How does Demetrio signal to his men?

III

1. Approximately how many Federales will Demetrio's men have to fight? Are they outnumbered?
2. How do Demetrio's men attack the Federales at the beginning of the battle? Is it effective?
3. Why does Demetrio want his men "shoot the ones below"? Do they listen? What happens?

IV

1. How many men does Demetrio lose in the battle? Where and how do they find these men?
2. What do the serranos say about the government soldiers (Federales)?

V

1. Who is Luis Cervantes? Where has he come from?
2. What does Demetrio decide to do with him?

VI

1. What difference did Luis Cervantes fail to appreciate? How is actually fighting in the revolution different from merely writing about it as a journalist?

VII

1. How does Demetrio plan to get Luis Cervantes to tell him the truth about his intentions?
2. How does Luis Cervantes describe the cause of the revolution? How does Pancraccio respond? Do you think that the men fighting with Demetrio would describe their reasons for fighting in the same way that Luis Cervantes would?

VIII

1. Camila echoes the thoughts of the Federales that talked with Luis, saying that she'd heard about the revolutionaries who were "splendidly armed and mounted men, who get paid in pure silver pesos minted by Villa in Chihuahua." Who do you think started this rumor? To whose benefit does it work?
2. Why does Camila think the revolutionaries, even if they're bandits or "louse-ridden wretches" will defeat Huerta? Where does she get her information? Do you think this is a reliable way to get information? Think about the period of the revolution—is there any other way to get information?

IX

1. What remedy does Sena Pachita use on Demetrio?
2. Do the men pay much attention to Sena Fortunata's story?

X

1. How does Luis Cervantes help Demetrio? How does this change Demetrio's attitude toward Luis Cervantes?
2. What is the nickname the men give Luis Cervantes? What do you think it means?
3. How does Luis Cervantes smooth things over with Venancio?

XI

1. How do you think Camila feels about Luis Cervantes? Why? Do you think he returns

these feelings? Explain.

2. Why do you think Luis Cervantes encourages Camila to be happy about Demetrio's feelings for her? Why do you think this upsets Camila?

XII

1. How does Anastasio attempt to distinguish himself from the other men fighting for Demetrio? What stories does he tell Luis Cervantes?

2. What news of the revolution do the men get from the travelers?

3. Who do the revolutionaries need to defeat at Zacatecas?

XIII.

1. Why does Demetrio join the revolution and become an insurgent? How is this different from Luis Cervantes' reasons? What does Luis Cervantes appeal to when he speaks of the potential of the revolution? Think about whether he is appealing individual gain, or a gain for the whole country. Now, compare this to the reasons that Demetrio and his men are fighting.

2. What point is Luis Cervantes making about the revolution when he convinces Demetrio that they should join Natera before they fight Huerta's forces?

XIV

1. How would you describe the way that Luis Cervantes treats Camila? Based on this treatment and the advice he gives her, do you think he respects her? Explain.

XV

1. How does Camila's mother, Sena Agapita, deal with Camila's tears?

2. Compare how Camila feels the day the men leave with how Demetrio feels that day.

3. What was life like for the men before they began fighting? Think about what is revealed by the series of questions asked in this section.

4. Who do they come upon on the highway? What does this man tell them?

XVI

1. What suggestions does Luis Cervantes make to ensure that the attack is successful? What does he fear about the old man they met the day before? Does Demetrio heed any of the warnings or suggestions?

2. Are there more Federales than they expected? What happens when Demetrio and his men enter the small plaza?

3. Does the head of the Federales think the revolutionaries are much of a threat? How do you know? Think about the letter he drafts to his superior about the battle before it's even been fought.

XVII

1. Who is the old sergeant? Where did the revolutionaries meet him before?
2. The man who leads them through town has a brother who has been forced to fight for the Federales. The man wants to save his brother before the fighting begins. What happens to his brother?
3. Who wins the battle?

XVIII

1. How does Luis Cervantes help Demetrio in his meeting of General Natero?
2. How do the other men, including Natero and Demetrio, respond to Luis Cervantes toast? Why do you think this is? What is different about Luis Cervantes and his reasons for fighting that set him apart from the rest of the men?
3. When Luis Cervantes meets his old acquaintance Solis, how have Solis' opinions about the revolution change.
4. What do you think Solis means by the following: "The revolution is a hurricane, and the man who gives himself to her is not a man anymore, he is a miserable dry leaf swept by the wind."

XIX

1. Despite the fact that the revolutionaries' assault on Zacatecas had failed, why are all the men in such a good mood? What did they do on their way? How did they acquire so many of the objects they brought with them?

XX

1. How do the men talk about Pancho Villa? What kind of image or myth has developed around him based on the stories the men tell?
2. How do the descriptions of Villa's Northern troops differ from the state of the Southern troops?

XXI

1. How does Demetrio fight when they attack Zacatecas? What reputation does he earn in this battle?
2. What happens to Luis Cervantes' friend, Solis?
3. What does Solis' mean when he says, "My friend, what a disappointment, if we who offered all our enthusiasm, our very lives to overthrow a miserable assassin, instead turn out to be the builders of an enormous pedestal so that a hundred or two hundred thousand monsters of the same species can rise themselves. . . .A nation without ideals, a nation of tyrants! . . .All that blood spilled, and all in vain!"

Part Two

I

1. What kind of reputation does Demetrio have after Zacatecas?

2. What kind of person do you think Guero Margarito is? Why? Think about how he treats the waiter.
3. How do Demetrio and Montanes tell time, even though they have a watch?

II.

1. Where do Demetrio and his men intend to stay? Where does Pintada tell them they should stay? What is her reasoning? Think about what the Federales do when they go through a town. Does this make the revolutionaries any different?
2. What does Luis Cervantes hide in his pocket? Do you think his actions are in contradictions to the things he has said about the purpose of the revolution? Luis Cervantes says that the actions of the men in destroying the house discredits the revolution—do you think his stealing does as well? Why?

III.

1. Why do you think that Luis Cervantes is satisfied when he sees that Demetrio is attracted to his fiancé?
2. What do you think it is that Pintada wants most from the revolutionaries? Think about her actions? What do they accomplish?

IV.

1. What happened at the end of the party for Demetrio? Why does Luis Cervantes wake up bloody?
2. What did Pintada do for Luis Cervantes fiancé? Do you think she did it to help the fiancé, or because she has feelings for Demetrio?
3. Who stole the key to get into the girl's room?

V.

1. Why does Demetrio want to visit Don Monico? Think about the story that Demetrio tells Luis Cervantes about why he started fighting in the revolution.
2. Does Demetrio believe the women when they say they are alone and have no real weapons or money? What does he order his men to do? Who do they find?
3. Does Demetrio let anyone loot the cacique's house? What does he order them to do to the house? Why does he order this?

VI.

1. What does Luis Cervantes try to give Demetrio as his commission? Does Demetrio want it? How does Luis Cervantes try and get Demetrio to accept it.
2. What does Demetrio say he needs to be a happy man? What do you think Luis Cervantes wants?
3. Who does Luis Cervantes agree to bring to Demetrio?

VII.

1. What did Luis Cervantes do to get Camila to come with him? How does Camila respond when she realizes what has happened?
2. Who comes up with a plan to get Camila home?

VIII.

1. Who are the men ordered to fight now? What is their reaction?
2. What does Camila decide to do? How does Pintada respond?

IX.

1. What is Guero Margarito dragging behind him? Describe his treatment of the prisoner. What does this say about his character?
2. Why does Pintada threaten Camila?

X.

1. What does Demetrio realize as he watches the man who works for Pifanio?
2. Why do you think Demetrio becomes so sad during this visit?
3. What does Pintada do to try and upset Camila?

XI.

1. Where is it that the men long to go?
2. Why do you think Luis Cervantes wants to buy everything from Codorniz?
3. What do the soldiers do when they reach Tepatitlán?
4. Who intervenes for the old man who has had everything taken from him?

XII

1. What did Guero Margarito do to the old man when he came to request the bags of corn that Demetrio said he could have?
2. What message does Demetrio receive on the way to Cuquío? Where is he supposed to go? What is he supposed to do with his soldiers?
3. What does Demetrio ask Pintada to do? How does she respond? What do you think of the fact that they allow Guero Margarito to stay, despite his behavior, but they tell Pintada she must leave? Why do you think the two are treated differently?

XIII.

1. What does Demetrio ask Luis Cervantes about Aguascalientes? Do you think that Demetrio understands the politics of the revolution? Think in terms of the contrast between the bigger political picture and the individual reasons many of the soldiers are fighting.
2. Why do you think the townspeople run from the soldiers? What stories do you think

they've heard about these men?

3. What does Guero Margarito do when they enter "La Cosmopolita"? What happens to the waiter? Does Guero pay the bill? What kind of reputation do you think these men give the revolution?

XIV

1. What distinction do the men make about stealing and killing after hearing the woman begging on the train? What is the irony in Demetrio's men talking about stealing? What have they done in each town they went to?

2. Who does Demetrio go to in order to get advice?

3. What advice does Natero give Demetrio? How does he explain the current state of the revolution? Who is now fighting who?

4. Who is Demetrio going to fight for? Do you get the sense that it's really important to him?

Part Three

I.

1. What year is at the beginning of Part 3? How do you know this?

2. Where is Luis Cervantes now? What does Venancio ask him for?

3. What bothers the men still fighting? Have they beaten the Federales? Why are they still fighting?

4. What do the soldiers find when they come upon the serranos?

II.

1. What has happened to Villa at Celaya? Can Demetrio's soldiers believe this?

2. Who defeated Villa?

3. How does the following statement from Valderrama describe the Revolution from the point of the soldiers he fights with? "I love the Revolution like I love an erupting volcano! The volcano because it's a volcano, and the Revolution because it's the Revolution! . . . But what do I are what stones wind up on top or on the bottom after the cataclysm?" Think about this in terms of how many times the person Demetrio's soldiers are fighting for and against changes.

III.

1. Why do you think that Demetrio is sad? What can we infer from his request for the song "The Gravedigger"?

IV.

1. Who are most of Demetrio's soldiers now? Why are the men who have been with Demetrio since the beginning getting frustrated by the men who now fill the ranks of the revolutionary armies?

V.

1. How is the soldiers' arrival in Juchipila different this time from at the beginning of the novel? Why do you think the townspeople no longer love any of the revolutionaries?
2. What has happened to all of the villages over the past year?

VI

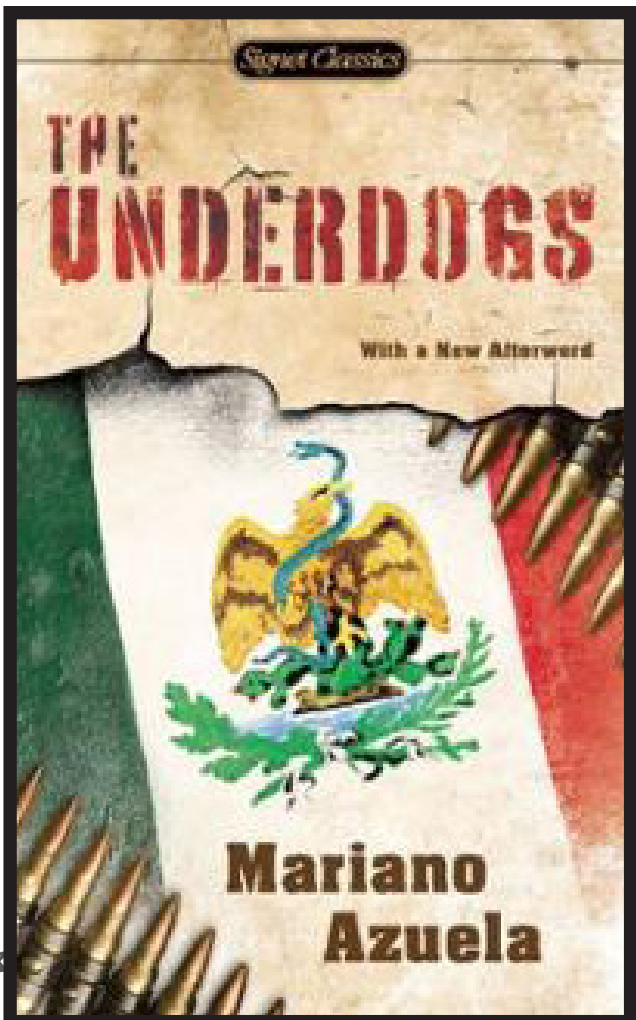
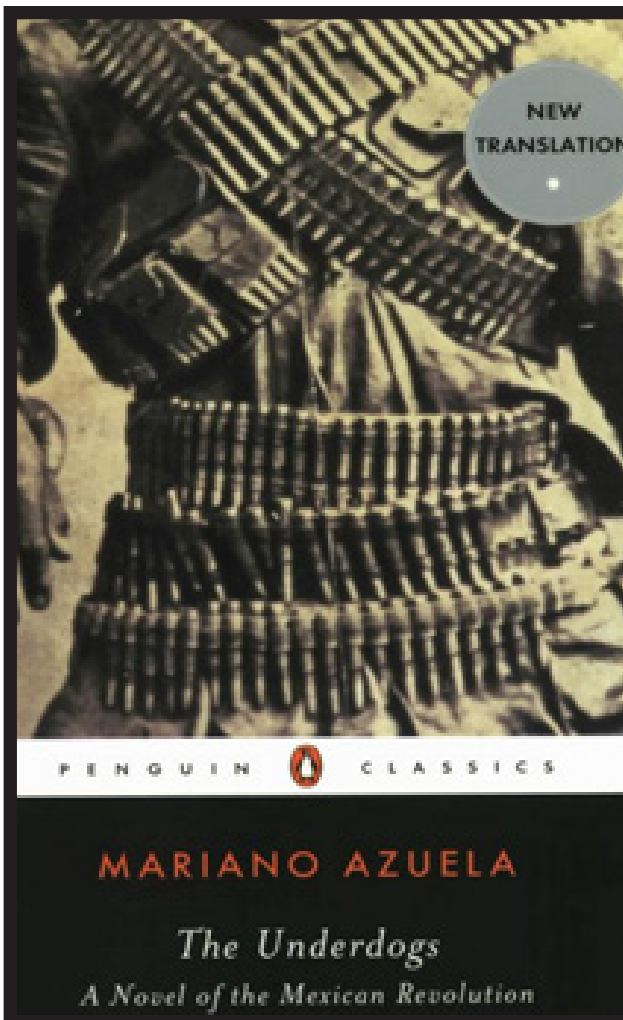
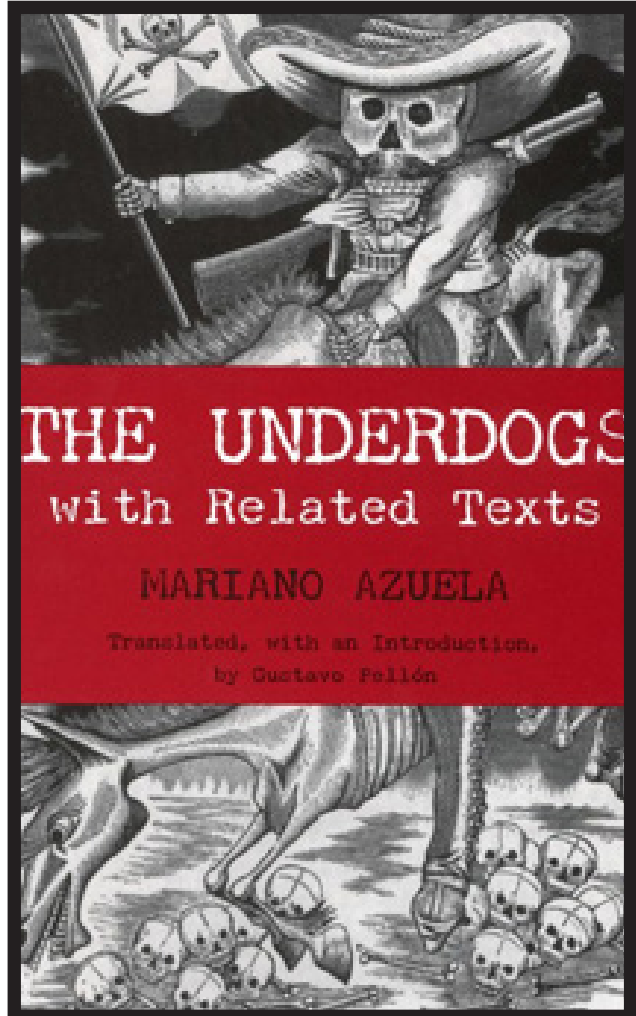
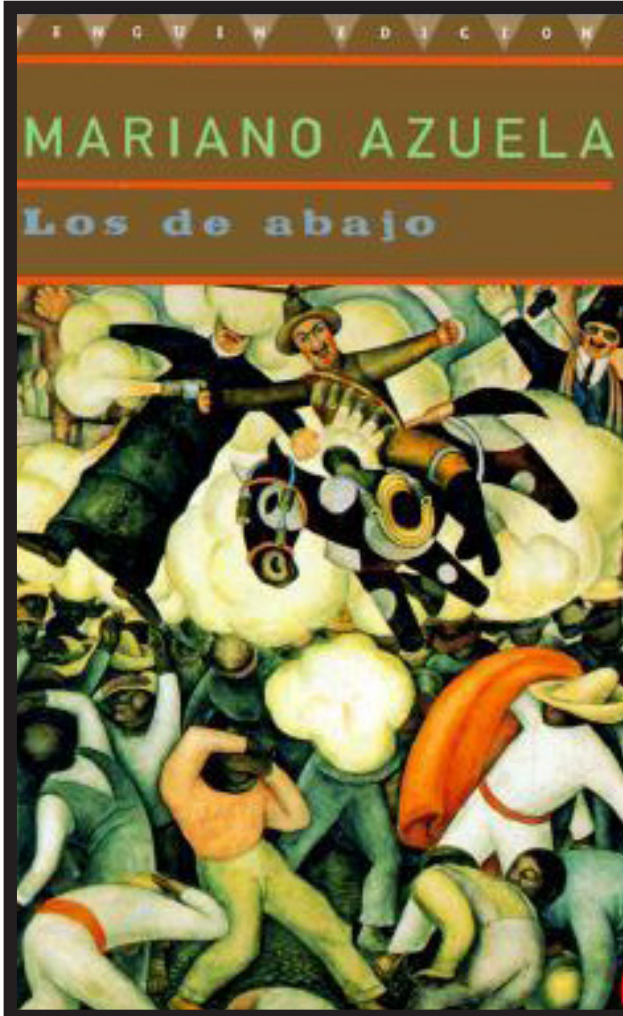
1. Who does Demetrio finally see again? How has she changed?
2. How does Demetrio respond when his wife asks him why he keeps fighting? What do you think this means?

VII.

1. What is the irony of the last battle? Think about the battle at the beginning of the story where Demetrio's men defeat the Federales?
2. What do you think happens to Demetrio at the end of the story? Do you think he survives the battle?

REFLECTIVE WRITING QUESTIONS

1. Compare and contrast Demetrio Macias with Luis Cervantes. What do the two men have in common? How are they different? Who do you think was more loyal to the Revolution? Why?
2. What do you think of the end of *Los de Abajo/The Underdogs*? What do you think the end means? What point was Azuela making about the Revolution? Do you agree with him? How would you have ended the novel?
3. How is violence depicted in the novel? What role do you think violence plays, or what is the purpose of the portrayal of violence for Azuela? What point do you think he is trying to make in regards to violence and the Revolution?
4. How does Azuela portray class differences in the novel? Do you think this is significant?
5. Consider the various book covers provided on the follow page. Now that you have completed the novel, which cover do you think is the most appropriate for the story? Explain your choice.



REPRESENTATIONS: **CARTUCHO BY NELLIE** **CAMPOBELLO**

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

While the entire country of Mexico was drawn into and forever changed by the Mexican Revolution, one must grasp the differing roles of the North and the South in order to understand the dynamics of the Revolution. Demetrio and his men are loyal Villistas in *Los de Abajo/The Underdogs*, yet they are from Central Mexico (Jalisco, Zacatecas, Aguas Caliente, Durango, and Nayarit). In the novel, Demetrio's soldiers distinguish themselves from Villa's northern troops, particularly in how they describe the wealth of the Villa's troops. Not mentioned in *Los de Abajo/The Underdogs*, many of Zapata's troops came from Morelos and its surrounding areas in southern Mexico. While Azuela offers us a picture of the Revolution through the eyes of those Villistas from Central Mexico, other sources provide accounts from other areas.

Cartucho: Tales of the Struggle in Northern Mexico by Nellie Campobello is an autobiographical account of her experiences of the Revolution in northern Mexico. Her novel is divided into three sections: Men of the North, The Executed, and Underfire, with each section made up of very short stories or descriptions of specific events or people. Originally written in Spanish, English translations are available.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nellie Campobello, whose full and original name is Ernestina Moya Francisca Luna (1890-1986), is generally said to be the only female writer who contributed to the literature of the Mexican Revolution during the 1920s and 1930s. According to the publisher, she was "a prominent Mexican writer and 'novelist of the Revolution,' played an important role in Mexico's cultural renaissance in the 1920s and early 1930s, along with such writers as Rafael Muñoz and Gregorio López y Fuentes and artists Diego Rivera, Orozco, and others.

Her two novellas, *Cartucho* (first published in 1931) and *My Mother's Hands* (first published as *Las manos de Mamá* in 1938), are autobiographical evocations of a childhood spent amidst the violence and turmoil of the Revolution in Mexico. Campobello's memories of the Revolution in the north of Mexico, where Pancho Villa was a popular hero and a personal friend of her family, show not only the stark realism of *Cartucho* but also the tender lyricism of *My Mother's Hands*. They are noteworthy, too, as a first-person account of the female experience in the early years of the Mexican Revolution and unique in their presentation of events from a child's perspective."

PROCEDURE

Using the excerpts included on the following pages, ask students to read Campobello's writing. As they read, ask students to note anything they learn that may help them understand what it was like to live through the Revolution, or anything about specific events or figures already discussed. If students read *Los de Abajo/The Underdogs*, ask them to compare and contrast Campobello's portrayal of the Revolution with Azuela's. Questions are provided at the end of each excerpt as well.

THE GENERAL'S VOICE FROM CARTUCHO BY NELLIE CAMPOBELLO (PAGE 71):

Metallic and far ranging. His shouts, loud, clear, sometimes one after the other and vibrating. You could hear his voice from a great distance. His lungs seemed made of steel. Severo told me about it:

It happened in San Alberto, very near Parral. Severo had left Parral during a period of combat to pay a visit to his girlfriend, but being a civilian, he ran the risk of being taken for a spy. This was on his mind as he headed toward San Alberto, where General Villa also happened to be, accompanied by about five hundred men. When Severo got to his girlfriend's house, her family told him that, to avoid suspicion, he should start splitting wood in the patio. But Villa himself recognized that the young man was not from that town. After watching him for a time, he slowly walked up to him and said, "Hey, son, what's the latest news from Parral? You've just gotten here, haven't you?" Severo, quite surprised, answered quickly, "Yes, General, I've just come from Parral where the Villistas were fighting in the trenches. I got out as best I could, but it wasn't easy, because the firing was very heavy and the boys were in a bad way."

Villa's soldiers in San Alberto were under orders by the general not to approach the doors of the houses under any conditions, not even to ask for water. Almost all of them were camped around a field near town. They had already lit their fires and begun roasting meat for dinner.

When Villa heard what Severo said, he immediately let out a shout to his men. One of those shouts he would use in battle—vibrant, clear and moving, "We must go to the aid of our boys! The Changos have pinned them down, and they need us! Let's go!"

Severo said that when all those men heard the General's voice, they stood up as one, leaving everything behind, without even touching the food. They ran straight to their horses, and before you could blink an eye, they rode off in a cloud of dust.

"The Villistas were one single man. Villa's voice could unite them all. One shout from him was enough to mount his calvary." That's what Severo said, with the echo of the General's voice still ringing in his ears.

QUESTIONS

- 1.** In what ways does this excerpt support the mythical version of Villa?
- 2.** How would you characterize Villa based on this short story?
- 3.** Is this version the same or different as the one portrayed by Azuela's soldiers in *Los de Abajo/The Underdogs*?

**"AGUSTÍN GARCÍA"
FROM CARTUCHO BY
NELLIE CAMPOBELLO
(PAGES 11-12):**

Agustín García was tall and light skinned, with a short mustache, fine features, and a sweet expression. He wore leather pants and fur chaps. Slow moving, he didn't seem like a Villista general. When Mama saw him for the first time, she said, "That man is dangerous." He didn't know how to laugh, he spoke very little, and he saw a great deal. He was a friend of Elías Acosta; they drank coffee together. Elías used to laugh and talk, but Agustín García wouldn't say anything. That's how they were different.

One day Mama asked him how Villa's ambush of the Carranzista general, Murguía, had gone. He said they had used hardly any ammunition. "There were lots of changos, and we threw them over the embankments alive." Mama didn't reply. One of those who had died was a boy from our street of Segunda del Rayo.

The general said good-bye, as on other occasions.

At night you could hear a serenade and a voice that seemed familiar singing, "Lovely torrents are the currents that flow from the heart." And later, "I secretly love you. If only you knew." Something startled Mama, who couldn't rest easy after that. Two nights later Mama's fourteen-year-old niece, Irene, showed up at the house very upset. From outside came the noise of a crowd of men. Anxiously, Mama ordered Irene to climb into a fireplace and try to get up to the roof, from where she could get to the house of Doña Rosita, a friend of Mama's who had red hair. They were already circling the house. Mama began to sing in a loud voice. In came a man dragging his supurs, then another and another. "We have orders." They searched all over. Mama said, "Make yourselves at home." They walked in and out. Mama was calm, smoking a cigarette. García entered, tall, very tall, scuffing his feet. In his hand he carried a whip. Everything about him was relaxed. He tapped the whip against his right leg and looked attentively at Mama.

"These are your men," she said.

"They're not mine. I was just passing by and was surprised to see a number of horses here, so I came in."

“He sat down, crossed his legs, and began to roll a cigarette. The men saw him, said nothing, and started to leave one by one, without looking back.

“Nothing serious, I hope,” he said, laughing.

“Not really,” Mama answered calmly, “just soldiers games.”

General Agustín García had intended to carry Irene off, but instead he picked up the guitar and began to sing: “Proud dark-haired girl, I’ll not see your face again.” And, one foot swinging in the air he finished a cigarette and a cup of coffee.

QUESTIONS

- 1.** What kind of leader is Agustín García?
- 2.** How is Agustín García like the leaders and soldiers in *Los de Abajo*? How is he different?
- 3.** What do you think would have happened to Irene if she had not been able to hide from Agustín García?
- 4.** How would you describe Mama? Is she brave? Explain.

REPRESENTATIONS:

"DEATH OF AN ASSASSIN"

BY VICTOR VILLASEÑOR

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION¹⁶

Best-selling novelist Victor Villaseñor grew up with the stories of magic and wonder that are contained within *Walking Stars: Stories of Magic and Power*. Within its pages is a cast of dogs and horses and wild, lovable children and teenagers whose perseverance take them to stardom, but not the stardom found on television and the popular media. This is the brilliance of becoming strong, confident walking stars, humans who are able to bring positive, magical change to society against all odds.

The tales, set to the backdrop of the Mexican Revolution and his family's immigration to the United States, all involve young people overcoming physical, emotional, and psychological barriers during times of extreme stress. The over-riding message of Villaseñor's exciting narrations is that we can all be heroes. Especially young people, who have the power to create their own futures, can find within themselves the power to achieve great feats of skill and courage.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born in the barrio of Carlsbad, California, in 1940, Victor Villaseñor was raised on a ranch four miles north in Oceanside. Since his parents were born in Mexico, Villaseñor spoke only Spanish when he started school. After years of facing language and cultural barriers, heavy discrimination and a reading problem, later diagnosed as dyslexia, Victor dropped out of high school his junior year and moved to Mexico. There he discovered a wealth of Mexican art, literature, music, that helped him recapture and understand the dignity and richness of his heritage.

Victor returned to the U.S. at the age of 20. He began to feel the old frustration and anger return as he once again witnessed the disregard toward poor and uneducated people and especially toward the Mexicans. Then a chance encounter with James Joyce's *Portrait Of An Artist As A Young Man*, changed Victor's life. It awakened a desire to confront through literature the problems associated with his cultural heritage that continued to plague him.

After producing 9 novels, 65 short stories, and receiving 265 rejections, Villaseñor sold his first novel, *Macho!*, which the Los Angeles Times compared to the best of John Steinbeck. This began a

16 Reprinted, in part, from the author's website at <http://victorvillasenor.com>.

journey that would eventually lead to the publication of the national bestseller *Rain of Gold*. Used by thousands of teachers and school systems across the nation as required reading, *Rain of Gold* tells the story of Victor's family, taking the reader from war-torn Mexico during the Revolution of 1910 to the present day.

PROCESS

Using the excerpt included in the following pages, ask students to read Villaseñor's writing. As they read, ask students to note anything they learn that may help them understand what it was like to live through the Revolution, or anything about specific events or figures already discussed. If students read *Los de Abajo/The Underdogs* or Campobello's *Cartucho* excerpts, ask them to compare and contrast Villaseñor's portrayal of the Revolution with those provided by Azuela and Campobello.

See the appendix of this guide for a PDF of "Death of an Assassin," one of the stories from *Walking Stars: Stories of Magic and Power*. The story is set at the beginning of the Mexican Revolution when Villa's forces were still fighting the Federales. Because the story is told from the point of view of two young boys, students will experience through their eyes what it was like to live during the Revolution.

Once students have read the excerpt, discuss what they thought of it. Use the following questions to guide the conversation:

1. Did they learn anything new about the Revolution?
2. Which revolutionary leaders were portrayed in the story?
3. How were they portrayed?
4. Were the descriptions of the Revolution or its leaders different than in the other reading selections?
5. How did Villaseñor's description of the Federales compare to Azuela's?
6. What kind of men were the Federales according to Villaseñor?
7. What was it like to live as a townspeople (someone not fighting as a soldier) during the Revolution?
8. Would you have wanted to be alive in Mexico during this time period?

PRIMARY DOCUMENTS

OF THE MEXICAN

REVOLUTION¹⁷

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Primary sources are the raw materials of history — original documents and objects which were created at the time under study. They are different from secondary sources, accounts or interpretations of events created by someone without firsthand experience. Examining primary sources gives students a powerful sense of history and the complexity of the past. Helping students analyze primary sources can also guide them toward higher-order thinking and better critical thinking and analysis skills.

In this exercise, students will consider one or more primary documents from the Mexican Revolution: Plan of San Luis of Potosí, Plan of Alaya, and Plan of Guadalupe. Using these materials students will analyze primary source documents of the Mexican Revolution. Through this activity they will see how three different revolutionary leaders communicated their thoughts and beliefs about the political and/or social changes necessary for Mexico.

You may choose to have students read all three documents, just one document, or divide the class into three groups and assign a different document to each group. The students can read the documents individually, with a partner, in a small group, or as a whole class.

A brief overview of each document is provided below for reference. For more information concerning each document's context, please see the background information provided earlier in this guide. Each primary source document is provided in the appendix of this guide.

Plan of San Luis of Potosí

Author: Francisco I. Madero

Date proclaimed: October 5, 1910

Description: When the dictator Porfirio stole the Mexican presidency in the 1910 elections, he had his opponent, Madero, arrested and imprisoned. Upon escaping from capture, Madero fled to San Antonio, Texas, where he joined forces with Venustiano Carranza (who later became his provisional governor and commander-in-chief) and issued the Plan of San Luis Potosí. The document called for the election results to be nullified and urged the Mexican populace to take up arms against its fraudulent government. For many, the document's issue date marks the beginning of

¹⁷ The introduction and extension activities provided in this unit are compiled and adapted from teaching resources provided by PBS' "History Detectives" resource; U.S. National Archive's "Teaching with Documents" resource; and the U.S. Library of Congress' "Teaching with Primary Sources" program.

the Mexican Revolution.

Note: We have been unable to locate a complete English version of this document; the English version does not contain the articles of the plan.

Plan of Ayala¹⁸

Author: Otilio Montaño (1877 - 1917) and Emiliano Zapata (1879 - 1919)

Date proclaimed: November 28, 1911

Description: According to John Womack, a historian of the Mexican Revolution, the Plan of Ayala was the “sacred scripture” of the Zapatistas. The plan, written by Emiliano Zapata and Otilio Montaño (a local school teacher who allied with him), was signed on November 25, 2011, and publicly issued shortly thereafter on November 28. As its name implies, it was proclaimed in Ayala, Morelos. According to the World Digital Library, “It became the blueprint for the Zapatista rebellion after its break with the initiator of the Mexican Revolution, Francisco I. Madero. Besides condemning the “treason” of the more conciliatory Madero, the Plan of Ayala puts forward the demands of the Zapatista agrarian rebellion: restitution of lands taken from villages during the Porfiriato, and agrarian redistribution of the larger haciendas, with compensation. Zapatista peasants, based in the southern state of Morelos, would claim these rights by arms, continuing the rebellion started, but not completed, by Madero.”

Plan of Guadalupe¹⁹

Author: Venustiano Carranza

Date proclaimed: March 26, 1913

Description: According to PBS’ “The Storm that Swept Mexico,” “Carranza issued his Plan de Guadalupe [in response to Huerta’s brutal dictatorship], calling for the restoration of the 1857 Constitution, and the elimination of Huerta. In 1913, the same year Huerta took power, Carranza developed what he called the Constitutionalist Army, to overthrow Huerta and establish what he imagined would be a constitutional democracy in Mexico.”

MATERIALS

- ☞ Copy of primary source analysis document(s) for each student

Note: This document was originally designed and developed by the education staff at the National Archives and Records Administration; it is reprinted here for easy reference.

- ☞ Copy of primary source document(s) for each student

18 Reprinted from <http://www.wdl.org/en/item/2970/>.

19 Reprinted from <http://www.latinamericanstudies.org/mexican-revolution/guadalupe-plan.htm>.

PROCEDURE: BECOMING HISTORIANS

1. Select one of the primary source documents to use with your students. The complete documents are reproduced in English and Spanish in the appendix of this guide. Print copies for each student to read and mark upon. You may also want to project the document on a common screen for all of the students to reference together. If you want to emphasize the historical nature of the document in question, you may want to project a visual of the original document; this method is available at least for the Plan of Ayala, which the World Digital Library has fully digitized and made publicly available online at <http://www.wdl.org/en/item/2970/>.
2. As you engage with the content of the document, encourage your students to adopt an historian's perspective and think critically about its source. Explain to them that history is a dynamic subject open to interpretation. Discuss how historians and other scholars use primary source material to try to understand the messy, multiple realities that comprise our ideas about the past.
3. Encourage students to become historians themselves and to closely observe each primary source. Guiding questions you might use include:
 - Who created this primary source?
 - When was it created?
 - Where was it created?
 - What was happening during this time period?
 - What was the creator's purpose in making this primary source?
 - What does the creator do to get his or her point across?
 - What was this primary source's audience?
 - What biases or stereotypes do you see?
4. Encourage students to apply their critical thinking, inquiry, and analysis skills. Guiding questions you might use include:
 - Are there other primary or secondary sources that offer support or contradiction for what they've learned from this primary document?
 - What are the reasons or specific evidence they can use to support their conclusions?
 - How might they further investigate the source and context of this document?

EXTENSION: BECOMING DETECTIVES

1. Select one of the primary source documents to use with your students. The complete documents are reproduced in English and Spanish in the appendix of this guide. Print copies for each student to read and mark upon. You may also want to project the document on a common screen for all of the students to reference together. If you want to emphasize the historical nature of the document in question, you may want to project a visual of the original document; this method is available at least for the Plan of Ayala, which the World Digital Library has fully digitized and made publicly available online at <http://www.wdl.org/en/item/2970/>.

2. An alternative process (versus the previous “Becoming Historians” described above) would be to invite your students to become detectives. This process encourages students to think more about the context of the document rather than follow close textual analysis.
3. Encourage your students to consider the following questions. A graphic organizer (created by PBS’ History Detectives) is provided on the following pages to help them organize and present their thoughts.
 - What do you see? (What topic does it address? What details do you notice in this source? What is interesting? Is there something you don’t understand?)
 - What other information do you need to understand this source? (What questions do you have for further research?)
 - What are some guesses you can make about this document? (Who do you think made it? When? Why did they make it? Is it neutral or biased?)

WRITTEN DOCUMENT ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

1. TYPE OF DOCUMENT (Check one):

Newspaper

Map

Advertisement

Letter

Telegram

Congressional Record

Patent

Press Release

Census Report

Memorandum

Report

Other

2. UNIQUE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DOCUMENT (Check one or more):

Interesting Letterhead

Notation

Handwritten

“RECEIVED” Stamp

Typed

Other

Seals

3. DATE(S) OF DOCUMENT:

4. AUTHOR (OR CREATOR) OF THE DOCUMENT:

POSITION(TITLE):

5. FOR WHAT AUDIENCE WAS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN?

6. DOCUMENT INFORMATION (There are many possible ways to answer A-E):

A. List three things the author said that you think are important:

B. Why do you think this document was written?

C. What evidence in the document helps you know why it was written? Quote from the document.

D. List two things the document tells you about life in the United States at the time it was written.

E. Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document.

ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES

DIRECTIONS: Use the following graphic organizer to organize your thoughts as you study the primary source.

DOCUMENT NAME: _____

EXAMINE: WHAT DO YOU SEE?

What topic does it address? What details do you notice in this source? What is interesting? Is there something you don't understand?



QUESTION: WHAT OTHER INFORMATION DO YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND THIS SOURCE?

What questions do you have for further research?

THINK: WHAT ARE SOME GUESSES YOU CAN MAKE ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT?

Who do you think made it? When? Why did they make it? Is it neutral or biased?



WOMEN OF THE REVOLUTION: **SOLDADERAS**

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

The following activities are based upon excerpts from Elena Poinatowska's *Soldaderas: Women of the Mexican Revolution*, Nellie Campobello's "Nacha Ceniceros" found in *Cartucho*, and lesson plans created by PBS for their education module: Revolutionary Women. The five-minute video clip and lesson plans can be found at: <http://www.pbs.org/itvs/storm-that-swept-mexico/classroom/revolutionary-women/>.

MATERIALS

- ☞ Copy of excerpt from Elena Poinatowska's *Soldaderas: Women of the Mexican Revolution* and Nellie Campobello's "Nacha Ceniceros" for each student (provided below)
Note: The book in its entirety gives a much more complete picture of the complex nature of the role of women in the Revolution. The short excerpts are provided to give snapshots of the soldadera experience.
- ☞ Internet Access
- ☞ Computer, LCD projector, and/or Smartboard to project video film for class
- ☞ PBS film module: *The Storm that Swept Mexico: Revolutionary Women* (this is available online for free at the PBS website indicated above)
- ☞ Copy of PBS Student handouts for each student (this is available online for free at the PBS website indicated above)
- ☞ One copy of PBS Teacher handouts for instructor (this is available online for free at the PBS website indicated above)
- ☞ Post-it Notes (6 colors)
- ☞ Pens, Markers

PROCEDURE

1. Follow "Activity One: The Seeds of Revolution" from the PBS lesson plans on "Women of the Revolution," engaging students in a discussion of the various roles in U.S. society and then in the specific state of women's civil rights in Mexico during the Porfiriato. You may then choose to move into Activity 2 if students need an overview of the people and events of the Revolution. This activity does require internet access for each student.

2. As a class, view the film module “Women of the Revolution.” Discuss what students learned from the film about the roles of women before, during and after the Revolution.
3. Read the excerpts from Elena Poniatowska’s *Soldaderas: Women of the Mexican Revolution* and Nellie Campobello’s “Nacha Cenicerros.” Ask students to think about how these excerpts discuss the role of women during the Revolution. What was it like to be a woman during the Revolution?
4. Follow the “Post-Screening Activities” provided in the PBS lesson plans. Here students will complete group research projects on various women of the revolution. Students will need access to a library or the internet to complete the research, or you will need to obtain information on the specific revolutionary women ahead of time. Essay questions are also provided that could serve as an assessment.

WOMEN IN THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION: ELENA PONIATOWSKA'S SOLDADERAS:

The following are excerpts from Elena Poniatowska's book *Soldaderas: Women of the Mexican Revolution* (El Paso: Cinco Punto Press, 1999).

PANCHO VILLA'S 1916 MASSACRE OF SOLDADERAS

[excerpt from *Soldaderas*; italicized sections denote quotes from Muñoz included in Poniatowska's book.]

According to the novelist [Rafael F. Muñoz], in 1916 Villa's Dorados captured the train station from the Carrancistas in Santo Rosalia, Camargo, Chihuahua. Sixty soldaderas with their sons were taken prisoners. Someone from the group of women fired a shot that managed to nip the Centaur of the North's [Pancho Villa] hat.

Rafael F. Munoz described Villa's voice like a rumbling, his eyes like fire. "*Ladies, who fired that shot?*" The storyteller Muñoz tells how the group of women drew in even closer together. The shot had come from their direction. Villa pulled out his gun and aimed it at the level of their heads. "*Ladies, who fired that shot?*" *An old woman with a pockmarked face raise her arm and yelled: "All of us did. We all would like to kill you!" The rebel chief drew back. "All of you? Then all of you will die before I do." The infantry men began to die them down, four, five or six in each ring. They tied the ropes tightly, bruising their flesh. In little time, the sixty women were tied up into ten or twelve bundles of human flesh, some standing up, others lying on the floor like stacks of firewood or barrels. The soldaderas screamed, not out of pain, but out of rage. There were no moans coming from the women's mouths, only insults. They didn't plead for mercy, instead they threatened an impossible revenge. The most blunt, vile and violent insults were heard coming from those piles of women pressed tightly against each other by the ropes. Sixty mouths cursing at once, sixty hatreds aimed at a single target. . .*

Because the wood was dry and the wind blew, the human pyres burst into flame quickly. First, the women's petticoats and their hair caught fire. Then the smell of burnt flesh. Yet the women never stopped cursing Villa. . ."

There are several other accounts that confirm the massacre of the soldaderas. . . Villa asked the women to point out the guilty party. Nobody answered. Then

he gave out the following orders: “Execute them, one by one, until they say who it was.” Nobody moved. They preferred to die than denounce anyone. . . Colonel José María Jaurrieta, the Centaur of the North’s loyal secretary, wrote that this massacre made him think of Dante’s *Inferno*. The horror of those ninety women massacred by Villista bullets stayed in his memory forever” (p. 10-11).

EMILIANO ZAPATA AND THE SOLDADERAS:

[excerpt from *Soldaderas*]

If Villa, in the north, was the scourge of women, Zapata on the other hand, never humiliated them, as John Womack relates in his book *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution*: “In Puente de Ixtla, Morelos, the widows, wives, daughters, sisters of the rebels formed their own battalion to ‘seek vengeance for the dead.’ Under the command of a stocky former tortilla-maker by the name of China, they carried out savage incursions throughout the Tetecala district. Some dressed in rags, others in elegant stolen clothes. . . these women became the terror of the region. Josefina Bórquez, in her account *Hasta no verte Jesús mío*, states that Emiliano Zapata treated women very well. To back it up, she describes how she and four married women were detained in Guerrero—a Zapatista nest—between Agua del Perro and Tierra Colorado.

The Zapatistas came out to meet them. They took them to General Zapata himself. . . Zapata put her at ease: “Well, you’re going to stay here with us until the detachment arrives.” They remained in the camp for fifteen days and were treated well. . . The women ate a lot better than they did with the Carrancistas.

When General Zapata found out that the Carrancistas were in Chilpancingo, he told the women that he would take them himself. He took off his general’s uniform, put on cotton trousers and escorted them unarmed. (p. 14)

THE REALITY OF A SOLDADERA

[excerpt from *Soldaderas*]

In the photographs of Agustín Casasola, the women. . . don’t look at all like the coarse, foul-mouthed beasts that are usually depicted by the authors of the Mexican Revolution. On the contrary, although they’re always present, they remain in the background, never defiant. Wrapped in shawls, they carry both the children and the ammunition. . . On the bare ground, or sitting on top of the train cars (the horses are transported inside), the soldaderas are small bundles of misery exposed

to all the severities of both man and nature. . . Casasola shows us again and again, slight, thin women patiently devoted to their tasks like worker ants—hauling in water and making toritillas over a lit fire, the mortar and pestle always in hand. . . And at the end of the day, there's the hungry baby to feed.

Without the soldaderas, there is no Mexican Revolution—they kept it alive and fertile, like the earth. They would be sent ahead of the rest to gather firewood and to light the fire. They kept it stoked during the long years of war. Without the soldaderas, the drafted soldiers would have deserted. . . The soldaderas crop up everywhere in the photographs—anonymous multitudes, superfluous, apparently not much more than a backdrop, merely there to swell the ranks, yet without them the soldiers would not have eaten, slept or fought. The horses were treated better than the women. (p. 15-16)

WOMEN IN THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION: NELLIE CAMPOBELLO'S "NACHA CENICEROS"

The following is "Nacha Cenicerros," an excerpt from Nellie Campobello's book *Cartucho* (Austin: University of Austin Press, 1988). The excerpt tells the story of Nacha Cenicerros, one of the Mexican Revolution's soldaderas.

NACHA CENICEROS

A large Villista encampment at station X near Chihuahua. All was quiet and Nacha was crying. She was in love with a young colonel from Durango by the name of Gallardo. Nacha was a coronela who carried a pistol and wore braids. She had been crying after an old woman gave her advice. She went to her tent where she was busily cleaning her pistol when, all of a sudden it went off.

In the next tent was Gallardo, sitting at a table and talking to a woman. The bullet that escaped from Nacha's gun struck Gallardo in the head and he fell dead.

"Gallardita has been killed, General." Shocked, Villa replied, "Execute the man who did it." "It was a woman, General." "Execute her." "Nacha Cenicerros." "Execute her."

She wept for her lover, put her arms over her head, with her black braids hanging down, and met the firing squad's volley.

She made a handsome figure, unforgettable for everyone who saw the execution. Today there is an anthill where they say she was buried.

This was the version that was told for many years in the North of Mexico. The truth came out some time later. Nacha Cenicerros was still alive. She had gone back to her home in Catarinas, undoubtedly disillusioned by the attitude of those few who tried to divide among themselves the triumphs of the majority.

Nacha Cenicerros tamed ponies and rode horses better than many men. She was what's called a country girl, but in the mountain style. With her incredible skill, she could do anything a man could with his masculine strength. She joined the revolution because Porfirio Diaz's henchmen had assassinated her father. If she

had wanted to, she could have married one of the most prominent Villista generals. She could have been one of the most famous women of the revolution. But Nacha Ceniceros returned quietly to her ravaged home and began to rebuild the walls and fill in the openings through which thousands of bullets had been fired against the murderous Carranzistas.

The curtain of lies against General Villa, spread by organized groups of slanderers and propagators of the black legend, will fall, just as will the bronze statues that have been erected with their contributions. Now I say—and I say it with the voice of someone who has known how to unravel lies, Viva Nacha Ceniceros, Coronela de la revolución (p. 21)

MUSIC OF THE REVOLUTION: CORRIDOS

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES²⁰

The corridos are the Mexican offsprings of the Spanish romance. They express feelings and ideas, triumphs and defeats, pains and happiness which are so overflowing to constitute a collective importance for the Mexican folk. The corrido is the language of the people. At one time it played the role of the press: the news used to spread all over the countryside in songs, rather than in newspapers which were no important sources of information in an overwhelmingly illiterate country. Only the most important events or the great personalities deserved to be sung about in a corrido, but they sometimes also immortalize scenes of the everyday life of the internal parts of the country.

The corrido is characterized by spontaneity, and by a simple language and melody. It uses few poetic tools, but it is very concise, and gives more importance to the rhythm than to the form. Its classical form is the quatrain 8a 8b 8a 8b which also permits more than one poems to be sung with the same melody. This is why they can also easily be modified and actualized, so that one corrido lives on in several versions.

According to the man of letters, politician, speaker and poet of native Mexican blood Andrés Henestrosa, the circumstances favorable to the birth of the corrido were provided by the formation of national feeling and identity. It was born together with the Independence, but it reached its climax during the Revolution, with the collective rejection of “Porfirism” that took its name from the Mexican dictator Porfirio Díaz (1876-1911) and of forced Europization (Díaz was one of the great promoters of French culture among the Mexican high society). This was the longest and most supported phase of national rebirth, the one with the deepest roots in Mexican reality, and therefore the most popular one.

Students will read and listen to popular corridos related to the Mexican Revolution. They will use the corridos to examine how popular culture conveys historical memory as much, at times more so, than formal, primary documents.

CORRIDO EXAMPLES: LA RIELERA, ADELITA, AND EL MAYOR DE LOS DORADOS

La Rielera. The rielera – the railwaywoman – worked for the railways, in this case for the central railways connecting the city of México with the North. Lerdo, Gómez and Torreón are cities in the northern states (Durango and Coahuila) which at that time were important mining regions, espe-

²⁰ The descriptive background information concerning corridos is reprinted from the website Poemas del Rio Wang. <http://riowang.blogspot.com/2008/07/mexican-corrido.html>

cially Torreón. This song is from the period when the Revolution was splitting into factions, when the Carrancistas (of Venustiano Carranza) fought against the Villistas (of Francisco Villa). AUDIO FILE: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8_Sd-eLpbyA

La Adelita. This is one of the most famous Mexican corridos. The Revolution was not only the case of the soldiers. The troops were also accompanied by women who fought alongside the soldiers, or cared for them, healing their ill and their wounded, etc. AUDIO FILE: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LwpJecXurLI>

El Mayor de los Dorados. The dorados (“gilded ones”) were the “elite forces” of Pancho Villa. This corrido is about the splitting of the Revolution in factions. AUDIO FILE: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Wh8VOeM-DE>

MATERIALS

Note: The following handouts are adapted respectively from the website Poems de Rio Wang, the Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies’ “Corridos sin Fronteras: A New World Ballad Tradition,” the latter of which can be found in its entirety online at <http://corridos.org/>, and the Kennedy Center ArtsEdge teaching resources related to corridos.

- ☞ Copy of handout of English and Spanish versions of the corridos La Rielera (the railway woman), La Adelita, and/or El Mayor de los Dorados.
- ☞ Copy of handout about distinguishing features of corridos
- ☞ Internet access
- ☞ Speakers
- ☞ Computer, LCD projector, and/or Smartboard to project short films and audio files for class

PROCEDURE

Note: The following process guidelines are adapted from the Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies’ “Corridos sin Fronteras: A New World Ballad Tradition.”

1. Explain to students that you are going to discuss the Mexican Revolution by listening to and analyzing a corrido from the time period.
2. Contextualize corridos as a part of “pop culture.” Write “pop culture.”
3. Divide the students into small groups and ask them to brainstorm definitions of pop culture and examples of current pop culture. One definition may be “common or commercial culture based on popular taste.”
4. Reconvene the class and spend several minutes hearing from each group. This activity should be brief.
5. As a whole class, return to the topic of corridos. Distribute the handout about distinguish

features of corridos and review the characteristics with the class. Allow five to ten minutes for the students to review the worksheet.

6. Next, distribute the handout of the English and Spanish version of the selected corrido. Once students have their individual copies, play the audio version and encourage the students to follow along.
7. After you are done, divide the class again into small groups and encourage them to work together to complete the analysis worksheet and discuss the corrido can tell them about the Mexican Revolution.
8. Reconvene the whole class, ask one member from each group to share their responses, and write the answers on the board.
9. Now that the group has reviewed the corrido(s) and learned about how pop culture, particularly music, can inform our understanding of current events, tell them that they will each now become corridistas (composers of corridos).
10. As time permits, allow students the opportunity to research a current event of their choice. According to the writing processes for your particular classroom, have each student write their own version of a corrido concerning the Mexican Revolution. They may choose to write it about a particular figure (Villa or Zapata, for instance) or about the plight of the workers, women, etc. These stories do not need to be shared with the whole class, though may be interesting and engaging if time allows to do so.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Kennedy Center ArtsEdge resources on “Corridos About the Mexican Revolution” (found at http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-9-12/Corridos_About_the_Mexican_Revolution.aspx#Overview) offer expansive and substantial suggestions for how to discuss corridos in the classroom.

For an interactive introduction to corridos, see the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service, “Corridos Sin Fronteras,” at <http://www.corridos.org/Default.asp?Language=E>.

Additional corridos can be heard here:

- YouTube video of corrido de Emiliano Zapata: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQLfLebzgEc>
- Lyrics and audio for corridos sobre Emiliano Zapata y los Zapatistas: <http://www.bibliotecas.tv/zapata/corridos/>
- YouTube video of corrido of Pancho Villa: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oRlxQW4y7Bs>

CORRIDO: LA RIELERA

I'm a railwaywoman and I love Juan
he's my life and I'm his delight;
when they say the train is leaving,
adiós, my railwaywoman, your Juan is leaving.

When the engine-driver says
that the train is leaving for San Juan,
I already bring his basket
with which he's going to refine.

I have a pair of pistols
with an ivory head
to defend myself, if necessary,
against those of the railway.

I have a pair of pistols
with a precise aiming
with one shot for my lover
and another for my enemy.

Adiós, boys of Lerdo,
of Gómez and of Torreón
the maintainers are already leaving
the turn is over forever.

I have a pair of horses
for the Revolution
one is called Robin
and the other Sparrow.

They say the Carrancistas
are like scorpion
when the Villistas are coming
they run away with lifted tail.

I know that as you see me in uniform
you believe I come to ask of you
although I come to you, brown girl,
to look for your favors.

As you see me in boots
you believe me to be a soldier
although I'm only a poor railwayman
at the Central Railways.

Yo soy rielera y tengo mi Juan,
él es mi vida yo soy su querer;
cuando me dicen que ya se va el tren,
adiós mi rielera ya se va tu Juan.

Cuando dice el conductor,
va salir para San Juan,
le llevo su canastita
con la que va a refinar.

Tengo mi par de pistolas,
con sus cachas de marfil,
para darme de balazos
con los del ferrocarril.

Tengo mi par de pistolas
con su parque muy cabal,
una para mi querida
y otra para mi rival.

Adiós muchachos de Lerdo,
de Gómez y de Torreón,
ya se van los garroteros,
ya se acabo la función.

Tengo mi par de caballos
para la Revolución,
uno se llama el Jilguero
y otro de llama el Gorrión.

Dicen que los carrancistas
parecen un alacrán,
cuando ven a los villistas
alzan la cola y se van.

So porque me ves de traje
crees que te voy a pedir,
solo quiero prieta chula
tus favores conseguir.

Si porque me ves con botas
piensas que soy melitar, [militar]
soy un pobre rielero
del Ferrocarril Central

CORRIDO: LA ADELITA

On the top of the rocky mountain
there was an army camped
and a courageous women followed them
fallen in love with the sergeant.

Everyone appreciated Adelita
who loved the sergeant
as she was courageous and beautiful
even the colonel estimated her.

And they heard that it was told
by him who loved her so much:

If Adelita wanted to be mine
if Adelita wanted to be my wife
I'd buy her a silk garment
to take her to dance in the caserm.

And if Adelita went with another
I'd follow her over land and sea
with a battleship on the sea
and with a military train on land.

And as the cruel battle was over
and the army retired to the camp
the sobbing of a woman was heard
her crying filling the whole camp.

The sergeant heard it, and fearing
to loose his adored forever
concealing his pain in himself
he sang like this to his lover:

And they heard that it was told
by him who was dying so much:

And if I died in the battle
and my body was buried there
Adelita, I ask you for God
to come there and cry over me.

En lo alto de una abrupta serranía,
acampado se encontraba un regimiento,
y una joven que valiente lo seguía,
locamente enamorada del sargento.

Popular entre la tropa era Adelita,
las mujer que el sargento idolatraba,
que además de ser valiente era bonita,
que hasta el mismo coronel la respetaba.

Y se oía, que decía,
aquel que tanto la quería:

Y si Adelita quisiera ser mi esposa,
si Adelita fuera mi mujer,
le compraría un vestido de seda
para llevarle a bailar al cuartel.

Y si Adelita se fuera con otro,
la seguiría por tierra y por mar,
si por mar en un buque de guerra,
si por tierra en un tren militar.

Y después que termino la cruel batalla
y la tropa regresó a su campamento,
se oye la voz de una mujer que sollozaba,
su plegaria se escucho en el campamento.

Al oírla el sargento temeroso,
de perder para siempre a su adorada,
ocultando su dolor bajo el esbozo
a su amada le cantó de esta manera:

Y se oía, que decía,
aquel que tanto se moría:

Y si acaso yo muero en campaña,
y mi cadáver lo van a sepultar,
Adelita por Dios te lo ruego,
que con tus ojos me vayas a llorar.

CORRIDO: EL MAYOR DE LOS DORADOS

I was the soldier of Francisco Villa
of the world famous general
who, even if sitting on a simple chair
did not envy that of the President.

Now I live on the seashore
remembering those immortal times
Ay... Ay...
Now I live on the seashore
remembering Parral and Villa.

I was one of the dorados
made a Major by chance
and made crippled by the war
while defending the country and honor.

I remember of times past
how we fought against the invader
today I recall the times past
the dorados of whom I was a Major.

My horse, ridden so many times by me
died under me in Jiménez
a bullet intended to me
run across his body.

While dying, he neighed of pain
and gave his life for the country
Ay... Ay...
while dying, he neighed of pain
how much I cried when he died!

Pancho Villa, I keep you
in my memories and in my heart
even if sometimes we were beaten
by the troops of Álvaro Obregón.

I was always your loyal soldier
until the end of the Revolution
Ay... Ay...
I was always your loyal soldier
fighting always in front of the cannons.

Fui soldado de Francisco Villa
de aquel hombre de fama mundial,
que aunque estuvo sentado en la silla
no envidiaba la presidencial.

Ahora vivo allá por la orilla
recordando aquel tiempo inmortal.
Ay... Ay...
Ahora vivo allá por la orilla
recordando a Villa allá por Parral.

Yo fui uno de aquellos Dorados
que por suerte llegó a ser Mayor,
por la lucha quedamos lisiados
defendiendo la patria y honor.

Hoy recuerdo los tiempos pasados
que peleamos contra el invasor,
hoy recuerdo los tiempos pasados
de aquellos Dorados que yo fui Mayor.

Mi caballo que tanto montara
en Jiménez la muerte encontró,
una bala que a mí me tocaba
a su cuerpo se le atravesó.

Al morir de dolor relinchaba
por la patria la vida entregó
Ay... Ay...
Al morir de dolor relinchaba
cómo le llorara cuando se murió.

Pancho Villa te llevo grabado
en mi mente y en mi corazón
y aunque a veces me vi derrotado
por las fuerzas de Álvaro Obregón.

Siempre anduve como fiel soldado
hasta el fin de la revolución
Ay... Ay...
Siempre anduve como fiel soldado
que siempre ha luchado al pié del cañón.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF CORRIDOS

Corridos are distinguished by a narrative structure that includes—

- ❧ Singer's initial address to the audience
- ❧ Location, time, name of main character
- ❧ Importance of main character
- ❧ Message
- ❧ Main character's farewell
- ❧ Composer's farewell

Most corridos share the following thematic and structural elements. The subject matter of corridos includes, but is not limited to: gun fights, social justice issues, betrayed romance, wars, and horse races. A main character is usually featured who may be heroic, tragic, villainous, or conflicted. The narrative discourse features shaping corridos are as follows:

- ❧ Fate (anticipation, omen, chance)
- ❧ Pursuit (plans, coercion, chase, escape)
- ❧ Challenge (ridicule, offense, defiance, provocation)
- ❧ Confrontation (duel, battle, attack)
- ❧ Defeat (capture, imprisonment, sentence, execution, death)
- ❧ Judgment (reflection, deduction, advice, experience, lamentation)
- ❧ Farewell (memory, nostalgia, reputation)



Image: Provided by Fototeca-INAH. Núm. 4234 | " Tropas zapatistas a su paso frente al Mesón de Santa Clara "

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

FICTION

Azuela, Mariano. *The Underdogs: Pictures and Scenes from the Present Revolution*. Translated by Gustavo Pellon. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2006

Campobello, Nellie. *Cartucho/My Mother's Hands*. Translated by Doris Meyer and Irene Matthews. Austin: University of Austin Press, 1988.

Villasenor, Victor. *Walking Stars: Stories of Magic and Power*. Houston: Pinata Books, 1994.

NON-FICTION

Poniatowska, Elena. *Las Soldaderas: Women of the Mexican Revolution*. El Paso: Cinco Punto Press, 1999.

Sosa, Lionel (ed.) *The Children of the Revolution: How the Mexican Revolution Changed America*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012.

FILM

The Mexican Revolution. Produced by the Mexican Federal Government. 2010. Available for free online at: http://english.bicentenario.gob.mx/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=108&Itemid=83

The Storm that Swept Mexico. Produced by PBS. 2012. Certain sections or modules available for free online, along with accompanying lesson plans and interactive resources at: <http://www.pbs>.

org/itvs/storm-that-swept-mexico/

Revolución. Directed by Carlos Reygadas, Gael García Bernal, Mariana Chenillo, Patricia Riggen, Fernando Eimbcke, Amat Escalante, Rodrigo García, Diego Luna, Gerardo Naranjo, Rodrigo Pla. 2010. Mexico. This is a portmanteau film in which ten different directors consider contemporary perceptions of the Mexican Revolution.

WEBSITES

Mexico: From Empire to Revolution

http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/guides_bibliographies/mexico/flash/english/

Corridos sin Fronteras

www.corridos.org

EDSITEment: The Mexican Revolution: November 20, 1910

<http://edsitement.neh.gov/feature/mexican-revolution-november-20th-1910>

The Kennedy Center ArtsEdge: Five Artists of the Mexican Revolution

http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-9-12/Five_Artists_of_the_Mexican_Revolution.aspx

The Kennedy Center ArtsEdge: Form and Theme in the Traditional Mexican Corrido

http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-9-12/Form_and_Theme_Mexican_Corrido.aspx

The Kennedy Center ArtsEdge: Corridos About the Mexican Revolution

http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-9-12/Corridos_About_the_Mexican_Revolution.aspx

Diego Rivera: Agrarian Leader Zapata

<http://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/2011/rivera/content/mural/agrarian/detail.php>

Emiliano Zapata: University Library Guide

<http://libguides.depauw.edu/content.php?pid=50487&sid=387851>

Mexico: Photographs, Manuscripts, and Imprints

<http://digitalcollections.smu.edu/all/cul/mex/>

FOTETECA: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia

<http://fototeca.inah.gob.mx/fototeca/>

LESSON PLANS AND CURRICULAR MATERIALS

University of Texas at El Paso's Center for Teaching & Learning:
Resources for Teaching About the Mexican Revolution

<http://academics.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=62602> Lesson Plan: The Mexican Revolution and the Borderlands

- ❧ Lesson Plan: Why Was There a Revolution in Mexico?
- ❧ Lesson Plan: Pershing, Pancho, and the Photographs
- ❧ Lesson Plan: Mexican Labor in the 1920s

Public Broadcasting Service (PBS): The Storm that Swept Mexico
<http://www.pbs.org/itvs/storm-that-swept-mexico/classroom/>

- ❧ Lesson Plans: Revolutionary Women
- ❧ Lesson Plans: Revolutionary Art
- ❧ Lesson Plans: Revolutionary Leaders

Alma de la Raza Project

<http://etls.dpsk12.org/documents/Alma/units/ImpactMexicanRevolution.pdf>

- ❧ The Impact of the Mexican Revolution on the United States

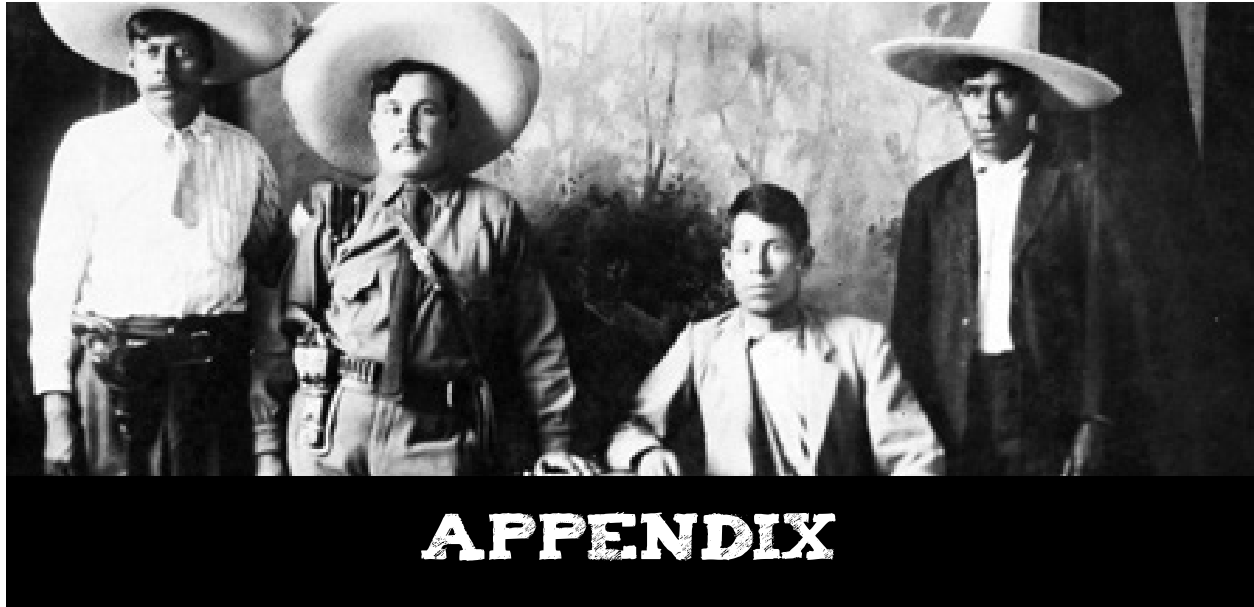


Image: Provided by Fototeca-INAH. Núm. 423401 " Alberto Salazar con miembros de su Estado Mayor, reproducción fotográfica "

Note regarding the appendix: Given the length of the educator's guide and its accompanying appendix, we have elected to separate the two documents. Please see the LAII website (<http://laih.unm.edu/outreach/lesson.php>) to access the appendix.

Slideshow of Images

Literature: Los de Abajo (Spanish & English)

Literature: "Death of an Assassin"

Primary Documents: Plan of San Luis Potosí (English & Spanish)

Primary Documents: Plan of Ayala (English & Spanish)

Primary Documents: Plan of Guadalupe (English & Spanish)