

# Welcome!



We'll get started in a few minutes. In the meantime, please sign in at: <http://bit.ly/3roGXk2>

# **LAI Afro-Latinidad Teacher Workshop Series: Afro-Latinidad in Mexico**

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LATIN AMERICAN  
& IBERIAN INSTITUTE

# Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Workshop: Afro-Latinidad in Mexico:
  - Gaspar Yanga
  - Costa Chica and Veracruz
  - The Mexican Census
- Educator Feedback & Check-In
- Upcoming Events & Opportunities

# Introductions

- Name
- Where do you teach? What subject and grade level do you teach?
- What attracted you to this workshop? What are you hoping to get out of it?

Afro-Latinidad describes members of the African diaspora who were brought to Latin America and have since immigrated all over the world, bringing their culture with them. There are many culturally distinct practices characteristic of Afro-Latinidad, each region having a diverse and rich manifestation of this cross-cultural identity. African cultural traditions have permeated Latin America for hundreds of years, some are obvious and others are subtle. Only recently have many countries even began to start the process of officially recognizing Latin Americans of African descent. Teaching about Afro-Latinidad is essential when teaching about Latin America.

# Gaspar Yanga

**Discussion:** What do you know about Afro-Mexican culture? Have you heard of Gaspar Yanga? If so, what have you heard?

Gaspar Yanga was a slave brought to Mexico from Africa. He is known as the “first liberator of the Americas” because he led a slave revolt, escaping the plantation and establishing a community of former slaves in the highlands of Veracruz. There he fought Spanish aggressions and maintained autonomy for many years eventually being legally awarded the land by the government. The town of Yanga is known for its large population of Afro-Mexicans. Yanga’s legacy lives on as a beacon of freedom and a cultural symbol for Mexico’s often invisible or forgotten African heritage.



# Activity for Grades 3-4

- Common Core Standards Addressed:
  - **Reading Standards for Informational Text K-5:** 4. Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text. 1. Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
  - **Speaking and Listening Standards K-5:** 1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion. b. Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles. c. Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others. d. Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion. 2. Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. 4. Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

# Heroes of Color Episode 2: Gaspar Yanga



**Video and Comic Activity:** Students will first listen to the video without watching. Educators will stop the video at the designated times so that students can fill in their comic strip, illustrating what they hear.

1. (:28)	2. (:37)	3. (:53)
4. (1:08)	5. (1:37)	6. (2:34)

- Now watch the video. How does your comic compare to the illustrations of David Heredia?
- Discuss the following questions as a class. Write down some of the main points you have or hear.
  - 1. Who was Gaspar Yanga?
  - 2. What was Yanga's life like before he escaped the sugar plantation?
  - 3. How did Yanga and his people survive after they escaped?
  - 4. What are some important ways that Yanga and his followers' lives changed after they escaped slavery?
  - 5. What was the most important thing Yanga accomplished?

# Activity for Grades 9-10

## Common Core Standards Addressed:

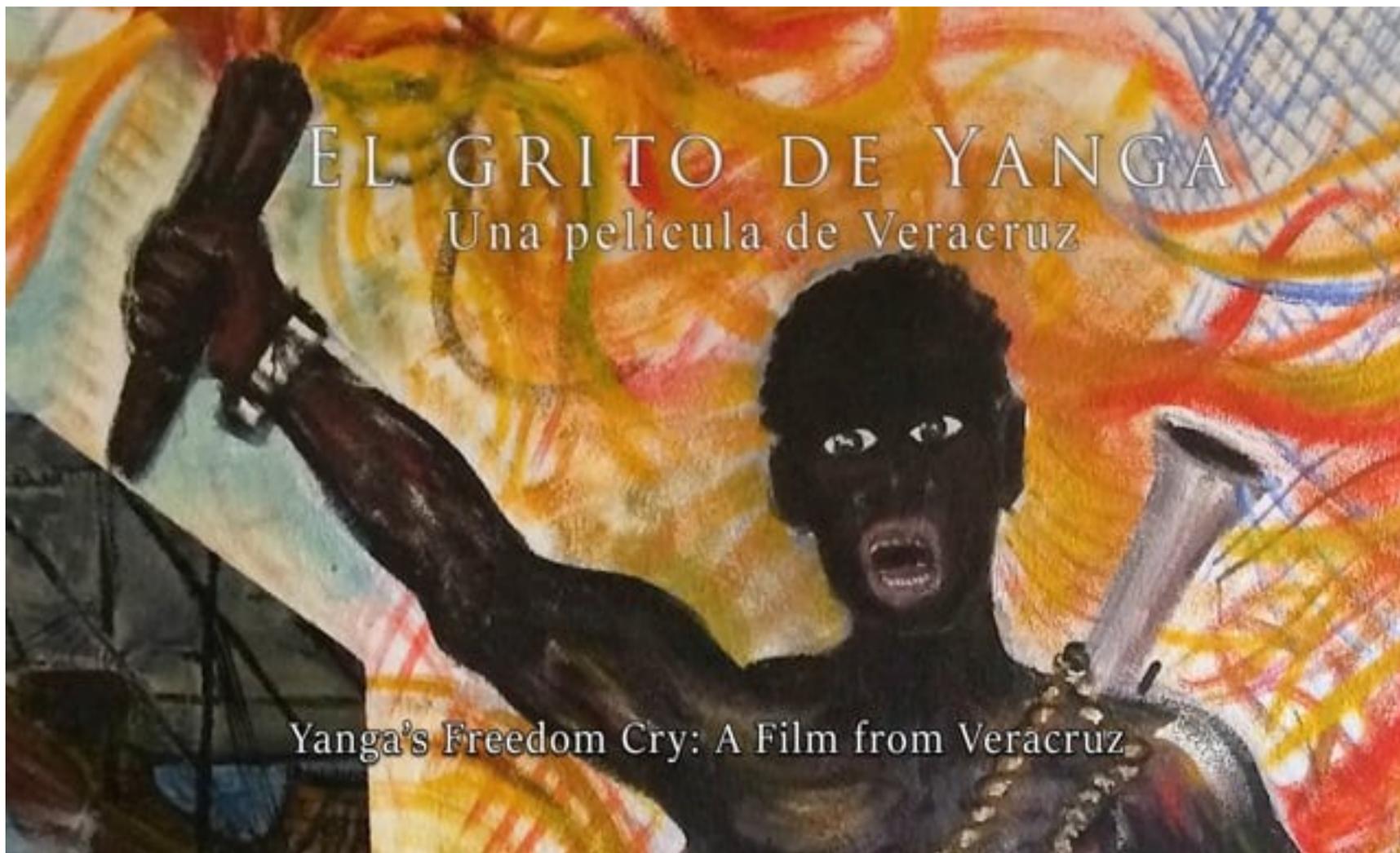
- **Speaking and Listening Standards 9-10:** Comprehension and Collaboration 1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas. c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions. d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented. 2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.
- **Language Standards 9-10:** Vocabulary Acquisition and Use 4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 9-10 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, or its etymology. d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
- **Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 9-10:** 4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social studies.

# El grito de Yanga (Yanga's Freedom Cry) Documentary

"In the mountains of Veracruz from 1570 to 1609, a young African-born Gaspar Yanga led resistance against the Spanish and forced recognition of his group's freedom, self-governance, and rights to the land. In the film "Imagine Freedom: Sounding Yanga's Cry across Gulf Shores" Dolores Flores-Silva and Keith Cartwright address the legacy of this Maroon community and its founder through interviews with residents of Yanga, Veracruz, and adjacent towns. The film pays homage to the Africans who won their freedom and examines how Yanga's triumph and Afro-Mexican legacies still challenge us in spaces shaped by racial legacies across the Gulf."

-By [Rebecca Lauck Cleary](#) on April 8th, 2020

<https://southernstudies.olemiss.edu/film-about-gaspar-yanga-now-available-online/>



EL GRITO DE YANGA  
Una película de Veracruz

Yanga's Freedom Cry: A Film from Veracruz

Watch 2:41-4:53

# Comprehension Check

1. Is Luis Martinez proud to be from Yanga? Why or why not?
2. How does he describe the town of Yanga to people who have never been there? Why is it important to him?
3. Where did the first slaves arrive in Mexico?
4. From what years did the slaves arrive?
5. Where was Yanga originally enslaved according to Antonio Carrera?

# Long answer post-watch questions:

1. Consider the opening scenes of the documentary when the narrator is describing liberty. How would you describe liberty? What does it mean to you?
2. Why are Yanga and Cordoba similar and/or connected and how are they different? Could one survive without the other?
3. Why is Yanga depicted as a hero of Mexican independence in Jose Cadillo's mural in Mexico City? Why is this significant?
4. What do you think Yanga's message to Mexico and the world is?

# Costa Chica



<https://www.mexconnect.com/articles/1937-mexico-s-black-heritage-the-costa-chica-of-guerrero-and-oaxaca/>

The Costa Chica or "Short Coast" has the largest Afro-Mexican population in Mexico. It occupies the coasts of both the state of Guerrero and Oaxaca.

# Grade 7-8 Activity:

## Common Core Standards Addressed:

- **Reading Standards for Informational Text Grade 8:** 1. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. 4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
- **Writing Standards Grade 8:** 3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.
- **Speaking and Listening Standards Grade 8:** 1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. 2. Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

# “Así somos: African Identities on the Coast”

“The Coast of the Mexican states of Oaxaca and Guerrero have the highest population of afro-descendants in the entire country. This documentary was created because the people from the coast of Oaxaca requested that I film our talks on identity and blackness. The recordings take place in the towns of Charco Redondo and Chacahua, both in Oaxaca. This is something I put together last minute because I had no intention of making a documentary. I wish only to give the people from the Coast representation as invisibilization of the Black race in Mexico is common. Rarely does someone think about Mexico when they think of the African diaspora, but more enslaved Africans went to Mexico and Perú combined than the United States. This documentary is intended to bring awareness of the African diaspora in Mexico and to help begin conversations on identity and blackness.”

**Read** the above description of the documentary “Así somos: Afro Identities in the Coast.” As you read think about the main themes and content that the documentary might cover.

**Class discussion:** Talk about what the class predicts the documentary will be about. Why did the creator make the video? Why is it important? What does the creator mean by “invisibilization of the Black race in Mexico is common?” What is the African diaspora?



Watch 4:06-7:22, 10:24-12:52, and 15:27-19:03

# Comprehension Questions:

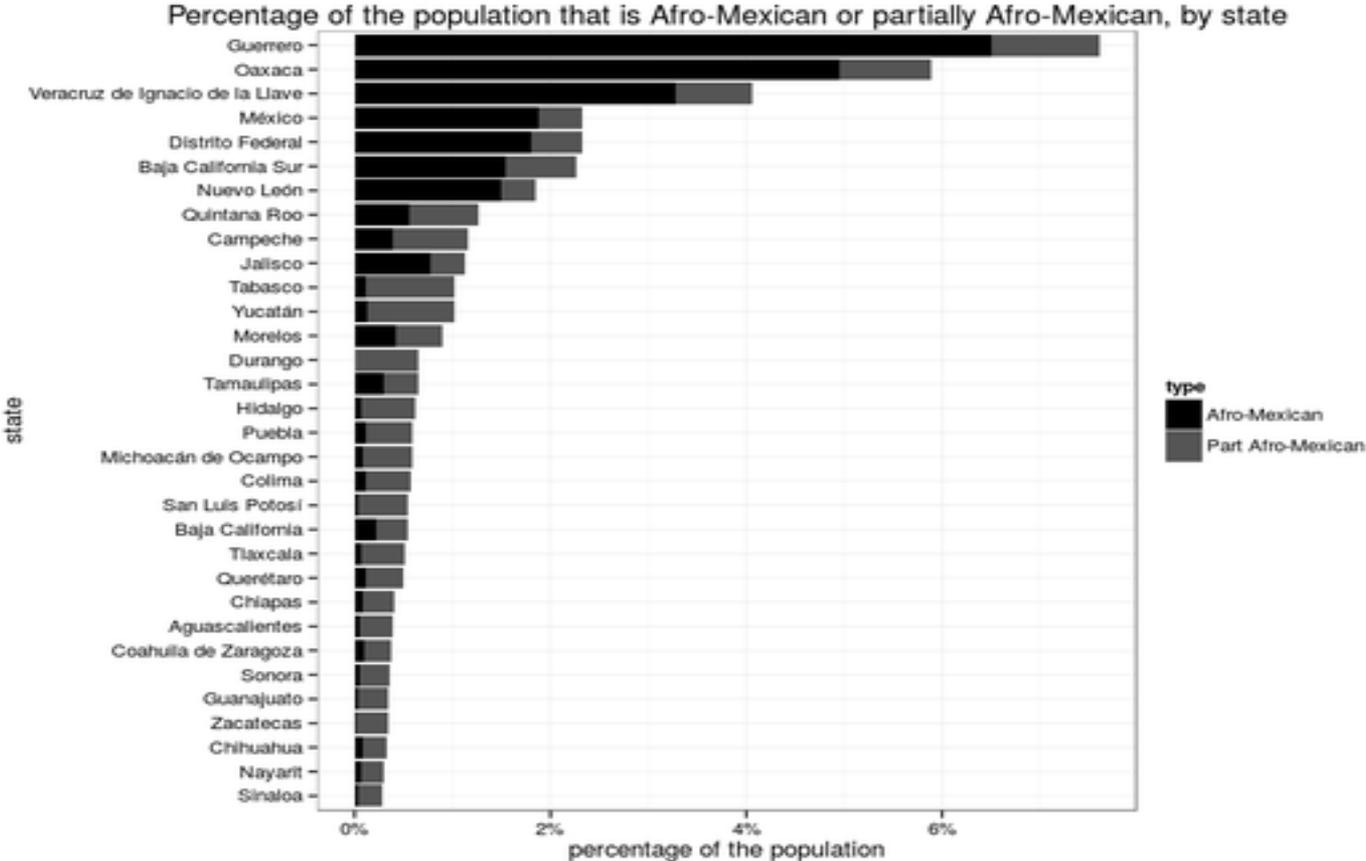
- What does the narrator say about the way Black people of the coast speak?
- Write down some of the examples of words used by the Black people of the coast that the woman being interviewed talks about. What do they mean?
- Describe the story she tells about her childhood neighbor who went to Mexico City. What happened there?
- Why does the man being interviewed say white people think they are better? What reason does he give?
- Describe the narrator's personal experience with racism on public transportation.
- What did the guards ask the Black passengers to do to prove they were Mexican?

# Discussion Questions for Breakout Groups

Based on the experiences shared by the people interviewed in the documentary, how are Black people treated in Mexico? Were there similarities in their experiences? What stuck out to you?

Why would certain people prefer the term Afro-Mexican over Black? Why do some prefer to be called Black? Why do you think this is? What did the woman share about her feelings about the two terms?

# Additional Activity:



<https://blog.diegovalle.net/2016/01/afro-mexicans.html>

**Use** the chart to label the top 8 Mexican states with the largest Afro-Mexican or partially Afro-Mexican populations on the map. You may need to consult an atlas or other source to locate each state.



Great interactive site with infographics on Mexican demographics and geography:

<https://blog.diegovalle.net/2016/01/afro-mexicans.html>

# Questions or Comments?

How would you adapt these lessons to your  
classroom?



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# Son jarocho - Veracruz, Mexico

The term *jarocho* refers to people and all things from Veracruz, Mexico, including their fast-paced song and dance style, which combines musical elements of the Spanish colonists, indigenous groups, and Africans. Son jarocho is associated with jaranas or fandangos, events where the music is played and danced on tarimas, raised wooden platforms that act as resonators for the zapateado, improvised footwork that adds to the music's characteristic percussive and rhythmic elements.



# La Bamba

- “La bamba” is a traditional son jarocho wedding song originating in the Mexican state of Veracruz. Famously adapted by Ritchie Valens in 1958, it was the first Spanish song to reach No. 1 on the American charts, and the only non-English song to be included in Rolling Stones “500 Greatest Songs of All Time.”
- The earliest recording of “La bamba” currently available was recorded by Alvaro Hernández Ortiz, credited as El Jarocho, in 1939.



# Grade 6-7 Activity

- **Reading Standards for Informational Text** 1. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. 4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
- **Writing Standards** : 3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences. a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters. c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another and show the relationships among experiences and events.
- **Speaking and Listening Standards** : 1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. 2. Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

# Son Jarocho

- *From Veracruz to East L.A.: The Evolution of Son Jarocho*
  - [Article from KCET \(Southern California\)](#)
  - Explains the origins of Son Jarocho and how its influence has migrated to Southern California
  - Vocab/Reading Comprehension Activity
- *Son Jarocho, The Sound Of Veracruz*
  - [NPR Music interview \(transcript available\)](#)
  - Betto Arcos is the host of Global Village, a world music show on KPFK in Los Angeles, and a native of Xalapa, capital city of the Mexican state of Veracruz. He recently spoke with Guy Raz, host of weekends on All Things Considered, about son jarocho — a style of music played mostly in the south of his home state. He says the music is so vibrant because it comes from the Caribbean side of Mexico and has all the influences of that region: African, indigenous and Spanish.
  - Listening Activity

# Afro-Mexicans and the 2020 Census



**PART 1 :**  
**Afro-Mexicans, Here we are!**

Discussion: Why do you think it is important that Afro-Mexicans be counted in the national census?

# Afro-Mexicans and the 2020 Census

In March 2020, for the first time in the country's history, Afro-Mexicans were recognized in the national census. In the past, people of African descent in Mexico were counted among the Indigenous populations.

Until recently, Mexico was one of the few countries in Latin America that did not recognize its African-descendant population in its Federal Constitution, as have Guatemala, Costa Rica, Honduras, Panama, Ecuador, Argentina, Columbia, and Brazil. In 2019, via a movement led by the Mexico Negro, A.C. (civic association) and other civic, institutional, and human rights groups, Afro-descendants organized to demand Constitutional recognition, equal rights, equitable representation in government, public policy reform, access to education and health services, and business and economic development programs for their communities.

The Constitutional Resolution was passed and resulted in the inclusion of the choice of “Afro-Mexican” on the national census.

# Grade 11-12 Activity

1. Speaking and Listening Standards: Comprehension and Collaboration: 1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well reasoned exchange of ideas. b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed. c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives. d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task. 2. Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

# Afro-Mexicans and the 2020 Census

- *'We exist. We're here': Afro-Mexicans make the census after long struggle for recognition*
  - [The Guardian Article](#)
  - Reading Comprehension Activity
- *Now Counted By Their Country, Afro-Mexicans Grab Unprecedented Spotlight*
  - [NPR All Things Considered](#)
  - Listening Activity

# Questions or Comments?

How would you adapt these lessons to your  
classroom?



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# Additional Resources:

- [Minority Rights Webpage about Afro-Mexicans](#)
- [Short Video: Afro-Mexicans: Dancing Their Way Back To Their Roots](#)
- [Black in Latin America E03, Mexico and Peru: The Black Grandma in the Closet, PBS documentary](#)
- [Remezcla article about "Asi Somos" documentary](#)

# Upcoming Opportunities

Join the Albuquerque Museum and The University of New Mexico Latin American & Iberian Institute for a series of free professional development workshops focused on the exhibit [\*Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera, and Mexican Modernism\*](#), opening on February 6. The works of art in this exhibition epitomize the vitality and expressiveness of modern Mexican art. They were produced in a pivotal period in Mexican history, when the nation sought to redefine itself through political, social, and cultural reforms.

## **The Women of Mexican Modernism**

Friday, February 19 • 3:30 p.m. MST

Register at: <http://bit.ly/3iul0N5>

## **Identity and Representation Through the Lens of Mexican Modernism**

Friday, March 5 • 3:30 p.m. MST

Register at: <http://bit.ly/38Y1Wnf>

# Stay in Touch!

- Marleen Linares-Gonzalez - Communication & Outreach Specialist ([mlinares@unm.edu](mailto:mlinares@unm.edu))
- LAll's Website
  - <https://lall.unm.edu/info/k-12-educators/index.html>
  - Subscribe to our listserv: <https://lall.unm.edu/connect-now.html>
  - Digital copies of today's materials: <http://bit.ly/LAllWinter>
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