

Pre-Screening Activity: Comparing Maps

For this pre-screening activity you will project two maps onto the screen. You can either do split screen, or show one map first, followed by the second map.

The exercise is to have students interact with the maps, describe what they see, make sense of the maps and compare the two, as context for the documentary La Vocera, which features multiple indigenous communities throughout the state of Mexico. You can find the map of recognized indigenous land: [here](#). In contrast with this map [here](#).

Objective: Have students locate the indigenous nations that will be talked about in the film. Have students make sense of the maps and be able to compare the maps. Establish an understanding that maps can represent different things, and different perspectives. Improve students' knowledge of Mexico's geography by looking at different maps to provide richer understanding of indigenous nations.

Project the Atlas of the Indigenous Pueblos of Mexico. Have students find where Nahua, Maya, Yaqui, and Wixárika people are identified on this map. Ask students to describe what they see on the map, how the map is marked (by provinces of Mexico). Next ask students to answer the following questions.

What are the maps representing?

Who is publishing/producing the maps?

Why do you think this map was made?

Next project the <https://native-land.ca/> map and input the indigenous nations that student found on the previous map (Yaqui, Nahua, Wixárika, Maya). You will most likely need to zoom out to contextualize the map. Ask students to describe what they see on the map, how is the map marked (by indigenous communities/indigenous claim to the land, not by the state of Mexico's provinces). Next have students answer the following series of questions.

Who is publishing/producing the maps?

Why do you think this map was made?

What differences do they notice between the maps? What similarities do you notice between the maps?

What's missing from each of the maps?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Persuasive Strategies of Documentary Films Handout

What is a documentary?

Persuasive Strategies in Documentary Films

1) Powerful Images

2) Expression of People's Faces

3) Color vs Black and White Film

4) Use of Celebrities

5) Use of Regular People

6) A Clear Call to Action

Watch the trailer of *La Vocera* and identify the persuasive documentary strategies used. Make sure to provide an example from the trailer to back up your findings.

Based on what you saw in the trailer, make an educated guess about what you think will happen in the documentary.

Lesson Plan Walkthrough for this handout:

Ask students if they know what a documentary is, take several answers before providing the Webster definition of a documentary for the class to write down on their worksheet. If time allows come up with a class definition of a documentary.

Webster Dictionary definition of a documentary: (noun) presentation (such as a film or novel) expressing or dealing with factual events.

Next ask students if they can guess at what each persuasive film strategy accomplishes, take one answer for each persuasive strategy in the interest of time. Alternatively, you could provide the definitions and have students take turns reading them out loud to the class. Below are the provided definitions and what they accomplish.

1) Powerful Images

Powerful images include a variety of factors such as resolution (the intensity and detail) of the film, and the ability to capture different types of light including shadows. Improved quality of images is more likely to evoke a sense of emotion in the viewer.

2) Expression of People's Faces

"The close up of a person's face personifies drama" and "helps the viewer to understand the actual consequences of a devastating occurrence". In short, the expression of people's faces humanizes a situation through the shared condition of our humanity, and likely having experienced an emotion akin to the person on the screen.

3) Color vs Black and White Film

Color, or the absence of it, can be used to express a time period. Black and white scenes can be used to communicate a flashback. Color film could present a more dynamic and captivating scene. Creating a documentary in color or black and white is the artistic/creative choice of the filmmaker.

4) Use of Celebrities

"Celebrity endorsement helps people to remember the documentary" Celebrities therefore aid in the recall of information about the documentary and may persuade viewers to watch based on the likeability of the celebrity.

5) Use of Non-celebrity People

The use of everyday people contributes to a sense of honesty and truth in the documentary. Non-celebrity people are more likely to represent the experiences of everyday life, and thus there is a greater likelihood of relatability between the people in the documentary and the viewer.

6) A Clear Call to Action

A clear call to action presents the honesty of the documentary's purpose and prompts the viewer to take action typically in line with the topic of the documentary, connecting a global to local approach or vice-versa.

Once students have filled out the definitions on their handouts, explain that they will now watch the documentary [trailer](#) and will be tasked with identifying some of the persuasive film strategies used in the trailer. Students will then share some of their findings with the class. Afterwards, as a group, students will make predictions about what will occur in La Vocera and write it down on their handout.

“La Vocera” Discussion Questions

Vocabulary

Mediero – Share cropper
word)

Milpa – Cornfield/land (nahua

Despojo – loot

Gasoducto – Gas pipeline

When Marichuy says development and progress for who, what do you think she is getting at? Who do you think those ideas have historically served or excluded

Who does Marichuy represent when she runs for president of Mexico?

How do some of these indigenous self-determination movements relate to climate justice work?

What is the Congreso Nacional Indígena?

Who is financing Marichuy’s run for presidency?

What does Yamili Chan Dzul say about taking care of the earth? (Min 55) What does she say about food sovereignty?

What are some challenges that the indigenous communities as a collective face in La Vocera?

Although Marichuy didn't end up on the ballot what did her collective campaign accomplish?

This activity is adapted from the *This Land* documentary curriculum guide: [here](#).

Objective:

Students will read an article about environmental activism and then create their own infographic to convey part of the message of the article to the class based on their own creative tastes. They will then share their infographic with the class.

First, students will review these three Instagram accounts: @intersectionalenvironmentalist, @climateincolour, @greendreamerkamea. Have students pay attention to the design of the posts and their message (tips include noticing how much text to include, what does the post convey, what about the infographic caught your eye).

Discussion Questions:

What is an infographic?

Why are or aren't infographics an effective way of communicating information?

Next students will select to read one of the articles below in class. This list of sources is optional, you may select a list of articles for students based on your own discretion.

1. The article, "[The Land Battle Behind the Fires in the Amazon](#)" by Shannon Sims for The Atlantic (August 27, 2019)
3. The article, "[As Students Clamor for More on Climate Change, Portland heeds the Call](#)" by Mike Seely for the New York Times (June 9th, 2019)
4. The article, "[Want to know how to save nature? Ask Indigenous scientists](#)" by Sarah Sax For Vox (January 9th, 2022). (Newsela.com is a free tool)
5. The article, "[Meet the young activists of color who are leading the charge against climate disaster](#)" by Nylah Burton for Vox (October 11, 2019)

Break students out into small groups based on the articles they selected and have them discuss the messages of the article. Additionally, have students discuss something new they learned from the reading that they would want someone else to know (10-15 minutes).

Homework:

Students will re-review the accounts and specifically the posts they liked from class earlier. They will then create a visually appealing infographic to relay a message of the article to the class based on some of the groupthink and synthesis they did earlier. Students could create a poster(s), a Google slide, act out their Instagram post, or use [Canva](#) (there are more options to create an infographic, feel free to use your discretion). The goal is to expose students to nuanced topics, while practicing critical reading and thinking strategies to increase comprehension. (Students should spend no more than 45-1hr on the infographic for homework)

At the start of the following class students will share their creative infographic.