

**MURALS: Historic Walls  
LESSON**

**SECONDARY**

**Arizona State Standard:** Proficiency (grades 9-12)

**Writing and Literature**

**Reading:** R-P1:PO1, PO2, PO3, PO4, PO5

**Writing:** W-P1: PO1, PO2, PO3, PO4, PO5  
W-P4: PO1,PO2, PO3, PO4

**Listening and Speaking:** all benchmarks apply.

**Viewing and Presenting:** all benchmarks apply.

**Social Studies**

**History:** 1SS-P1: PO1, PO2  
ISS-P2: PO1,PO2 (painter as opposed to author), PO4  
ISS-P3:PO1,PO2, PO3  
ISS-P10:P05 (The Mexican Revolution)  
ISS-P17: PO4\* (If including Chicano Studies)

**Geography:** 3SS-P2: PO4

**Art:** 1AV-P3: PO1, PO2, PO3  
2AV-P1: PO1, PO2  
2AV-P2: PO1, PO2, P03  
2AV-P5: P01, P02, P03

**Goals &**

**Objectives:** (1) Students will analyze and investigate a Mexican Murals. (2) Students will synthesize this information to learn about Mexican History. (3) Students will become familiar with important Mexican artists.

**Length of lesson:** 3-5 periods

**Materials &** Research materials about Mexican Muralists and

**Preparation:**  
sources

Mexican history-using internet and/ or library

**LESSON:**

**First Period:**

Latin American artists often express themselves in the form of murals. Many artists were hired by the Mexican government to teach the Mexican people about their history and to help instill patriotism among its citizens. Many famous artists such as Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, Jose Orozco and others painted the walls of important buildings throughout the country of Mexico.

Explain to students that instead of examining the history of Mexico through a traditional textbook, or to compliment a textbook, they are going to learn about Mexico history through murals.

**Second-Fourth Period:**

Have students work in pairs and research a Mexican mural that they would like to analyze. The objective is to understand the mural and why it is an important part of Mexican history.

Using a variety of sources, they must find many perspectives of the mural, showing close-ups and complete perspectives.

Find out where the mural is located, and who commissioned it to be painted there. Find out the identity of the individuals in the painting. Are there any famous people? Important people? Are there any symbols? What are the people doing? Why?

After locating these people and elements, have them research those individuals and symbols, helping them to analyze and relate this mural to history.

**Fifth Period:**

Have students do presentations about their murals.

**Closure:**

Have students write an essay using just the information they learned from the presentations about the history of Mexico. Challenge them to synthesize the information chronologically, trying to put together the different elements they learned about into an ordered historical essay.

**Evaluation:** (1) Students are able to explain details of a Mexican mural. (2) Students writing shows an understanding of Mexican history (3) Students begin to recognize Mexican Muralists by name and artistic elements.

**Extensions:**

**#1**

This activity can be done for almost any country and subject. Have students research murals that exist in a region, and from those murals they can begin investigating the country or regions history.

**#2**

Have students investigate the mural that Diego Rivera was painting in the RCA Building in New York City in 1933. Have them find out what happened to it and why. Have students discuss if the mural should have been destroyed or not.

**#3**

Investigate the lives of the muralists who created these pieces of art. Are their personal elements in their paintings? Are they making political statements?

Were the Mexican Muralist friends with each other or was there too much competition between them?

**#4**

After learning about Mexican history, have a scavenger hunt. Make a list of important people, places, events, and symbols. See if students can locate them in murals.

**#5**

Tour your community to find local murals. Research the history behind their creation. Invite local muralists to discuss their work with your class.