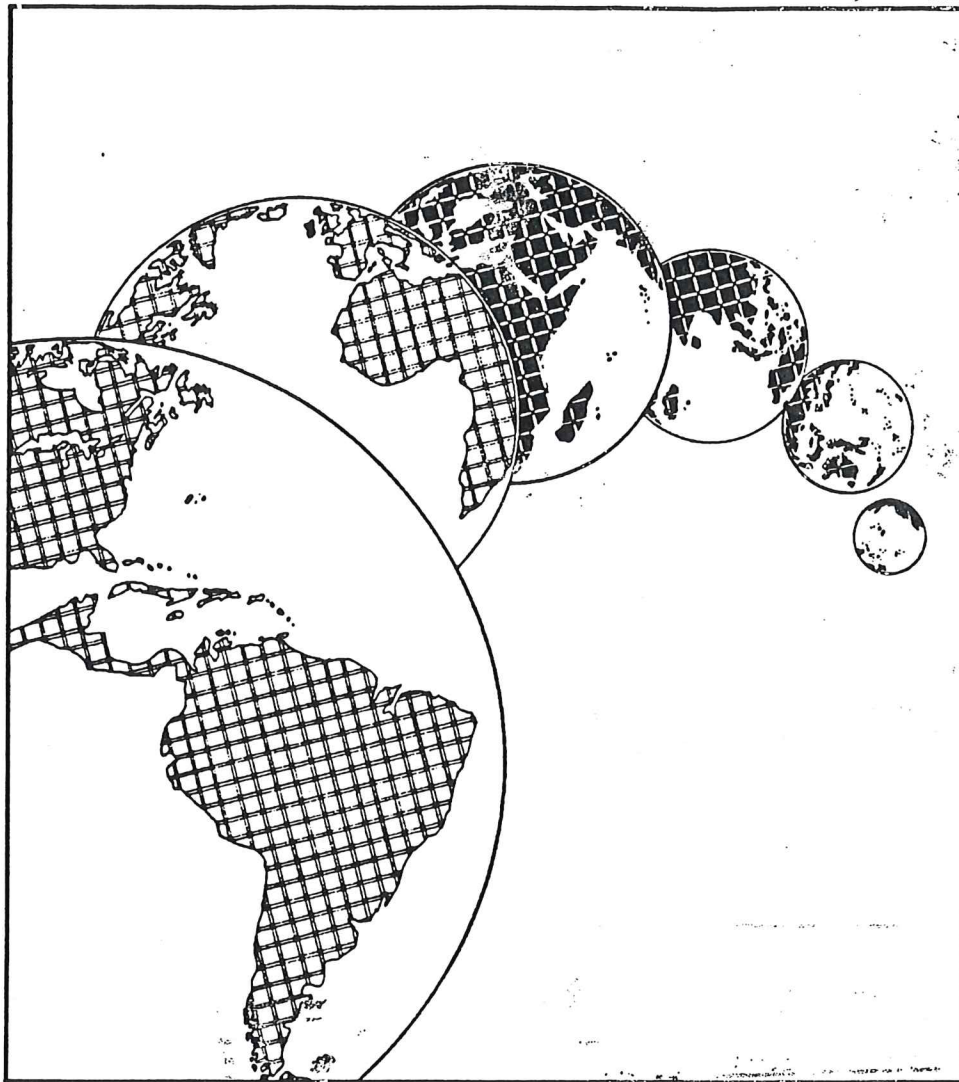


Latin America and the Caribbean from a Global Perspective



A Resource Guide for Teachers

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(Originals in gray loose-leaf binder)

CONTENTS

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

Knowledge of Global Dynamics

"COMUNISTA!"

Rationale

South Florida is home to almost one million Hispanics. To a large extent, the hispanization of the region has been the result of a broader global phenomenon known as migration. Many of the recently arrived immigrants have fled serious political and economic hardships in their home countries. Cubans, Haitians, and Nicaraguans, in particular, have come to South Florida to flee political oppression. The rapidly changing and increasingly Latin makeup of South Florida has often generated emotional and, occasionally, violent conflicts between its citizens regarding American foreign policy in the region. This lesson illustrates one of the ways in which issues and developments in Latin America influence relations between citizens in the United States.

Objectives

The student will:

1. understand the relationship between majority rule and individual rights as it is reflected in our legal and governmental system;
2. understand the relationship between American political traditions and the American way of life;
3. review some of the national and international documents that identify some of the basic civil and political rights that make up the broader field of human rights;
4. discuss some of the consequences of interdependence and transnationalism as they relate to American relations with Latin America.

Key Concepts

Migration, communism, democracy, Bill of Rights, First Amendment, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, patriotism, nationalism, 14th Amendment, transnationalism, interdependence, political oppression

Infusion Area

American government

(Originals in gray loose-leaf binder)

Materials Needed

"The Incident"
"Important Documents"
"The Incident II"
"The Incident II" (reading guide)

Suggested Time

Three class periods

Learning Activities

Suggested Activities for Day 1:

1. Distribute copies of "The Incident" and ask students to read the article (you may want to assign reading as homework the night before the lesson). After it is clear that every student has finished reading the story, conduct the following discussion:
 - a. What happened in this story?
 - b. What is the first word or idea that comes to mind that expresses your feelings about what happened in the story? (Write student responses on the board.)
 - c. What observations might we make about the way the class has reacted to what happened in this story?
 - d. How would you feel if you were in Arturo's shoes?
 - e. What makes the incident difficult to accept? What's wrong with what happened here? (It is important that students go beyond the obvious and superficial and stumble upon the "big idea" of the fundamental rights in question and that apparently, the society in which the incident takes place does not allow/respect these rights.)
 - f. Why isn't it likely that the incident in the story would happen in the United States?
 - g. Can you think of some of the ways in which people's rights are protected in the United States?

Suggested Activities for Day 2:

1. Distribute "Important Documents" and ask students to review its content (you may want to do this as an oral reading exercise with the class). Discuss the origin and significance of each of the items with the class. You might want to point out the relationship that exists between the Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment in terms of holding the state governments accountable for violation of the provisions of the Bill of Rights. Point out the significance of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in defining and recognizing these rights internationally. Conclude this activity by asking students the following questions:
 - a. Which specific items included in the "Important Documents" related directly to Arturo's situation in the story? Why?
 - b. Do you agree with/support the rights included in these documents? Why/why not?
 - c. Can you cite any examples from American history where people have been denied some of these rights (you might want to consider Native Americans, women, Japanese-Americans, etc.)? Can you cite any current examples? What does this suggest about how civil and political rights develop/evolve in society?
2. Distribute "The Incident II" and its accompanying reading guide, "The Incident II: Reading Guide." Ask students to read the article and answer the questions in writing for the following day.

Suggested Activities for Day 3:

1. Conduct a general discussion based on student responses to the questions from "The Incident II: Reading Guide."

Discussion questions:

 - a. What happened in this story?
 - b. How would you have felt if you had been David? How might Arturo react to this incident?
 - c. What similarities do you see between the two incidents in question? What differences do you see?
 - d. How does this incident relate to specific rights accorded in the 1st Amendment? In what specific ways did the mob deny David and the other demonstrators these rights?
 - e. What responsibilities might go along with the rights guaranteed citizens under the 1st Amendment?
 - f. Can you think of reasons that might explain the behavior of the individuals who attacked David in the story? Do you feel these reasons justify the behavior? If allowed to occur, how might this type of behavior threaten democracy?
 - g. Is there anything ironic about the behavior of some of the individuals in the story?

2. At this time, introduce students to the concepts transnationalism and interdependence. Point out that, despite the fact that the world is made up of sovereign nation-states, peoples' lives throughout the world today are affected by transnationalism. This is a process that involves the flow of people, goods and services, ideas, and information across national borders. During the past several decades this process has intensified as a result of dramatic improvements in transportation and communications. These intensified transnational flows have produced complex and intricate webs of political, economic, and cultural interdependence. In an interdependent world, the lives of people in one nation become closely intertwined with the lives of people in other parts of the world. Conclude lesson with a discussion of the following questions:
 - a. The conflict described in "The Incident II" took place in the City of Miami, Florida. Which transnational forces might have contributed to conflict between citizens of Miami?
 - b. How does this incident reflect interdependence between the United States and Latin America? Why do you think citizens in Miami feel so strongly about conditions and developments in Central America?

Assessment

Ask students to conduct a search of newsprint and/or television media for other examples and/or consequences of interdependence between the United States and Latin American countries. Have students present their findings in writing and/or orally to the class.

Additional Activities

Have students conduct investigations of transnational events that have had political, economic, and/or cultural effects on the United States throughout its history--immigration, wars, international trade, communication, etc.

The Incident

Arturo had second thoughts about participating in this demonstration. Although discussion about it had not ceased during the past several weeks and his friends at the university seemed to be convinced that it would turn out a success, he feared that the local authorities would be under a lot of pressure to keep any sign of discontent from view of the many international visitors that had come to take part in this major sporting event. Despite his strong discontent with the general quality of life and the lack of job opportunities for young people, he felt proud of the fact that his country had been chosen as the site for this prestigious athletic competition that would bring so many of his socialist brothers and sisters from all over the world.

They had worked so hard to make the signs that would proclaim the key reforms necessary to bring the revolution back on the right path --the path that would assure a better future for the young people of the country. They had maintained absolute secrecy during the months of preparations so that no one would find out and ruin their plans for this surprise, peaceful demonstration. He remembered studying about the important role that young people had played during the cultural revolution in China and the support that it had received from high-ranking officials of the government, even Chairman Mao himself. This is what

assured him and his friends that this show of patriotism would be well received by the political leadership.

As they blended into the huge crowds that had gathered near the Plaza de la Libertad, they could see the waves of athletes that were passing before the grandstand carrying the different flags of the countries they represented. All were young people like himself: full of energy, full of hope for the future. At the signal from their friends across the street, they stepped out into the parade boldly waving their signs in the morning air.

Suddenly, seemingly from nowhere, men who moments before had been part of the crowd, lunged at them violently as if trying to put out a brush fire in a dry forest. Arturo heard someone yell behind him and as he turned around, someone struck him right in the face, hit him again, while someone else tore at his now bloodied shirt. Arturo tried to break free from the confusion but was thrown into a car that seemed to have materialized from nowhere. As he was sped away in the car, a deep fear crept over him--a fear that transformed itself into a profound feeling of despair and helplessness.

Important Documents

U.S. Constitution

Amendment I (1791)

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Amendment XIV (1868)

Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the States wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

(Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI) of 16 December 1966)

Entry into force: 23 March 1976, in accordance with article 49.

Article 9

1. Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention. No one shall be deprived of his liberty except on such grounds and in accordance with such procedure as are established by law.

Article 17

1. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his honor and reputation.

Article 18

1. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Article 19

1. Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference.
2. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.

Article 21

The right of peaceful assembly shall be recognized.

The Incident II

On Saturday, David Camp went to hear a speech at the Torch of Friendship. The speech was to be given by state Senator Jack Gordon. The subject was U.S. aid to Nicaragua.

Camp and his fiancée arrived late. As they crossed the boulevard they heard shouting, then saw the riot squad. A policeman told Camp to get away, but it was too late.

"All of a sudden people started shouting, 'Comunista! Comunista!' I turned around and somebody hit me right in the face, hit me again, then he started kicking me."

Camp and his girlfriend ran for their car, but were cut off by a band of pro-contra demonstrators. On foot David raced down Northeast Second Street, yelling for somebody to please get the police. When he turned around, he saw a mob of 15 to 20 men running after him. Camp could not believe his eyes: one of the men had a noose.

The gang cornered them in the doorway of a shoe store. "It's a mistake, a mistake!" Camp cried. "I'm not a Communist."

A middle-aged man demanded to see David's identification. The man examined it, then handed it to another man who did something that terrified David Camp: he took a photograph of the young man's driver's license.

Camp talked frantically, trying to calm the crowd. He couldn't take his eyes off the guy with the noose. Finally the mob oozed back toward Biscayne Boulevard.

"I had no conception they were going to start beating on me, coming after me with a noose," Camp says. "The picture of my ID is what scares me. It's a form of terrorism, isn't it?"

For the record, David Camp is not a Communist or a radical. He is a carpenter and stagehand who was born here, and has always considered himself patriotic. Now he considers himself lucky to have escaped Bayfront Park with only bruises and a bloodied face.

"This is America," he says. "I feel I have the right to say and think whatever I want. These people came from another country and I welcomed them--I think America should welcome all repressed peoples... but they are trying to stop anyone who disagrees with them.

"I was so surprised when I was being hit, I didn't understand. They call themselves freedom fighters--this is freedom?"

Adapted from Carl Hiaasen, "Goons Who Hit Man at Rally Aren't Patriots," *The Miami Herald*, March 26, 1986.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

PERIOD: _____

The Incident II: Reading Guide

Directions: The following questions are intended to help you read and better understand the article, *The Incident II*. Answer each of the questions below, in writing, and be prepared to discuss your answers in class.

1. What happened in this story?
2. How would you have felt if you had been David? How might Arturo react to this incident?
3. How does this incident relate to specific rights accorded in the First Amendment? In what specific ways did the mob deny David and the other demonstrators these rights?
4. What responsibilities might go along with the rights guaranteed citizens under the First Amendment?
5. Can you think of reasons that might explain the behavior of the individuals who attacked David in the story? Do you feel these reasons justify the behavior? If allowed to occur, how might this type of behavior threaten democracy?
6. Is there anything ironic about the behavior of some of the individuals in the story?

