Summary

The purpose of this study guide is to immerse the young Latino men in culturally rich curriculum that will build a sense of self identity and self-value. Because this study guide will correlate to the authentic works of other Latino men and boys, there will be an accurate connection to the message revealed in the works. This reflective book displays the cultural and characteristics of huge Latino spectrum that will enhance a rigor curriculum that will not only challenge the students following it, it will help them build 21st Century skills needed to build their academic future. This study guide will include critical thinking activities, and reading strategies and protocols. The middle school Texas Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) will be the guide to the curriculum. It will build vocabulary skills and higher order questioning that help prepare the students in developing academic success. So many boys in the Latino community are faced with the cycle of hardship and crime, they must see how many important, educated people of their own culture stand and succeed. It is through expression, and cultural connection that may rise hope and tear the cycle of hardship. Using curriculum through rich cultural expression can cause the Latino boys to become engaged in reading. With this powerful book of essays and poems, Latino boys have a chance to participate in academic work they may find of immense power.

Teaching Background

**Lorena Cárdenas** is a teacher at Drs. Reed and Mock Elementary which is located in San Juan, Texas. The population at her school is one hundred percent Latino, and more then eighty percent are labeled at-risk. Lorena is a certified bilingual teacher and has dedicated her teaching career by working with students who are majority economically disadvantage. She is currently on her twentieth year teaching, and is on her last year for receiving a Masters in the Reading Program at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. She has taught for sixteen years, and for the last four years trains and models for teachers as an instructional coach. Lorena, has writing curriculum for the Bilingual Gifted & Talented students in her district from grades second through fifth grade. Although her background consists of elementary, her current study in the Reading Program consist of all levels from kinder through 12th grade. Lorena’s goal is to continue training teachers and students in literacy by immersing as many Latino authors into the curriculum.

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills-State Standards

§110.20. English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 8, Beginning with School Year 2009-2010.

(a)  Introduction.

(1)  The English Language Arts and Reading Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are organized into the following strands: Reading, where students read and understand a wide variety of literary and informational texts; Writing, where students compose a variety of written texts with a clear controlling idea, coherent organization, and sufficient detail; Research, where students are expected to know how to locate a range of relevant sources and evaluate, synthesize, and present ideas and information; Listening and Speaking, where students listen and respond to the ideas of others while contributing their own ideas in conversations and in groups; and Oral and Written Conventions, where students learn how to use the oral and written conventions of the English language in speaking and writing. The standards are cumulative--students will continue to address earlier standards as needed while they attend to standards for their grade. In eighth grade, students will engage in activities that build on their prior knowledge and skills in order to strengthen their reading, writing, and oral language skills. Students should read and write on a daily basis.

(2)  For students whose first language is not English, the students' native language serves as a foundation for English language acquisition.

(A)  English language learners (ELLs) are acquiring English, learning content in English, and learning to read simultaneously. For this reason, it is imperative that reading instruction should be comprehensive and that students receive instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, and word attack skills while simultaneously being taught academic vocabulary and comprehension skills and strategies. Reading instruction that enhances ELL's ability to decode unfamiliar words and to make sense of those words in context will expedite their ability to make sense of what they read and learn from reading. Additionally, developing fluency, spelling, and grammatical conventions of academic language must be done in meaningful contexts and not in isolation.

(B)  For ELLs, comprehension of texts requires additional scaffolds to support comprehensible input. ELL students should use the knowledge of their first language (e.g., cognates) to further vocabulary development. Vocabulary needs to be taught in the context of connected discourse so that language is meaningful. ELLs must learn how rhetorical devices in English differ from those in their native language. At the same time English learners are learning in English, the focus is on academic English, concepts, and the language structures specific to the content.

(C)  During initial stages of English development, ELLs are expected to meet standards in a second language that many monolingual English speakers find difficult to meet in their native language. However, English language learners' abilities to meet these standards will be influenced by their proficiency in English. While English language learners can analyze, synthesize, and evaluate, their level of English proficiency may impede their ability to demonstrate this knowledge during the initial stages of English language acquisition. It is also critical to understand that ELLs with no previous or with interrupted schooling will require explicit and strategic support as they acquire English and learn to learn in English simultaneously.

(3)  To meet Public Education Goal 1 of the Texas Education Code, §4.002, which states, "The students in the public education system will demonstrate exemplary performance in the reading and writing of the English language," students will accomplish the essential knowledge, skills, and student expectations at Grade 8 as described in subsection (b) of this section.

(4)  To meet Texas Education Code, §28.002(h), which states, "... each school district shall foster the continuation of the tradition of teaching United States and Texas history and the free enterprise system in regular subject matter and in reading courses and in the adoption of textbooks," students will be provided oral and written narratives as well as other informational texts that can help them to become thoughtful, active citizens who appreciate the basic democratic values of our state and nation.

(b)  Knowledge and skills.

(1)  Reading/Fluency. Students read grade-level text with fluency and comprehension. Students are expected to adjust fluency when reading aloud grade-level text based on the reading purpose and the nature of the text.

(2)  Reading/Vocabulary Development. Students understand new vocabulary and use it when reading and writing. Students are expected to:

(A)  determine the meaning of grade-level academic English words derived from Latin, Greek, or other linguistic roots and affixes;

(B)  use context (within a sentence and in larger sections of text) to determine or clarify the meaning of unfamiliar or ambiguous words or words with novel meanings;

(C)  complete analogies that describe a function or its description (e.g., pen:paper as chalk: \_\_\_\_\_\_ or soft:kitten as hard: \_\_\_\_\_\_);

(D)  identify common words or word parts from other languages that are used in written English (e.g., phenomenon, charisma, chorus, passé, flora, fauna); and

(E)  use a dictionary, a glossary, or a thesaurus (printed or electronic) to determine the meanings, syllabication, pronunciations, alternate word choices, and parts of speech of words.

(3)  Comprehension of Literary Text/Theme and Genre. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. Students are expected to:

(A)  analyze literary works that share similar themes across cultures;

(B)  compare and contrast the similarities and differences in mythologies from various cultures (e.g., ideas of afterlife, roles and characteristics of deities, purposes of myths); and

(C)  explain how the values and beliefs of particular characters are affected by the historical and cultural setting of the literary work.

(4)  Comprehension of Literary Text/Poetry. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of poetry and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to compare and contrast the relationship between the purpose and characteristics of different poetic forms (e.g., epic poetry, lyric poetry).

(5)  Comprehension of Literary Text/Drama. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of drama and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to analyze how different playwrights characterize their protagonists and antagonists through the dialogue and staging of their plays.

(6)  Comprehension of Literary Text/Fiction. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to:

(A)  analyze linear plot developments (e.g., conflict, rising action, falling action, resolution, subplots) to determine whether and how conflicts are resolved;

(B)  analyze how the central characters' qualities influence the theme of a fictional work and resolution of the central conflict; and

(C)  analyze different forms of point of view, including limited versus omniscient, subjective versus objective.

(7)  Comprehension of Literary Text/Literary Nonfiction. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the varied structural patterns and features of literary nonfiction and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to analyze passages in well-known speeches for the author's use of literary devices and word and phrase choice (e.g., aphorisms, epigraphs) to appeal to the audience.

(8)  Comprehension of Literary Text/Sensory Language. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about how an author's sensory language creates imagery in literary text and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to explain the effect of similes and extended metaphors in literary text.

(9)  Comprehension of Informational Text/Culture and History. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about the author's purpose in cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding. Students are expected to analyze works written on the same topic and compare how the authors achieved similar or different purposes.

(10)  Comprehension of Informational Text/Expository Text. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about expository text and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to:

(A)  summarize the main ideas, supporting details, and relationships among ideas in text succinctly in ways that maintain meaning and logical order;

(B)  distinguish factual claims from commonplace assertions and opinions and evaluate inferences from their logic in text;

(C)  make subtle inferences and draw complex conclusions about the ideas in text and their organizational patterns; and

(D)  synthesize and make logical connections between ideas within a text and across two or three texts representing similar or different genres and support those findings with textual evidence.

(11)  Comprehension of Informational Text/Persuasive Text. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about persuasive text and provide evidence from text to support their analysis. Students are expected to:

(A)  compare and contrast persuasive texts that reached different conclusions about the same issue and explain how the authors reached their conclusions through analyzing the evidence each presents; and

(B)  analyze the use of such rhetorical and logical fallacies as loaded terms, caricatures, leading questions, false assumptions, and incorrect premises in persuasive texts.

(12)  Comprehension of Informational Text/Procedural Texts. Students understand how to glean and use information in procedural texts and documents. Students are expected to:

(A)  analyze text for missing or extraneous information in multi-step directions or legends for diagrams; and

(B)  evaluate graphics for their clarity in communicating meaning or achieving a specific purpose.

(13)  Reading/Media Literacy. Students use comprehension skills to analyze how words, images, graphics, and sounds work together in various forms to impact meaning. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater depth in increasingly more complex texts. Students are expected to:

(A)  evaluate the role of media in focusing attention on events and informing opinion on issues;

(B)  interpret how visual and sound techniques (e.g., special effects, camera angles, lighting, music) influence the message;

(C)  evaluate various techniques used to create a point of view in media and the impact on audience; and

(D)  assess the correct level of formality and tone for successful participation in various digital media.

(14)  Writing/Writing Process. Students use elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text. Students are expected to:

(A)  plan a first draft by selecting a genre appropriate for conveying the intended meaning to an audience, determining appropriate topics through a range of strategies (e.g., discussion, background reading, personal interests, interviews), and developing a thesis or controlling idea;

(B)  develop drafts by choosing an appropriate organizational strategy (e.g., sequence of events, cause-effect, compare-contrast) and building on ideas to create a focused, organized, and coherent piece of writing;

(C)  revise drafts to ensure precise word choice and vivid images; consistent point of view; use of simple, compound, and complex sentences; internal and external coherence; and the use of effective transitions after rethinking how well questions of purpose, audience, and genre have been addressed;

(D)  edit drafts for grammar, mechanics, and spelling; and

(E)  revise final draft in response to feedback from peers and teacher and publish written work for appropriate audiences.

(15)  Writing/Literary Texts. Students write literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas. Students are expected to:

(A)  write an imaginative story that:

(i)  sustains reader interest;

(ii)  includes well-paced action and an engaging story line;

(iii)  creates a specific, believable setting through the use of sensory details;

(iv)  develops interesting characters; and

(v)  uses a range of literary strategies and devices to enhance the style and tone; and

(B)  write a poem using:

(i)  poetic techniques (e.g., rhyme scheme, meter);

(ii)  figurative language (e.g., personification, idioms, hyperbole); and

(iii)  graphic elements (e.g., word position).

(16)  Writing. Students write about their own experiences. Students are expected to write a personal narrative that has a clearly defined focus and includes reflections on decisions, actions, and/or consequences.

(17)  Writing/Expository and Procedural Texts. Students write expository and procedural or work-related texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes. Students are expected to:

(A)  write a multi-paragraph essay to convey information about a topic that:

(i)  presents effective introductions and concluding paragraphs;

(ii)  contains a clearly stated purpose or controlling idea;

(iii)  is logically organized with appropriate facts and details and includes no extraneous information or inconsistencies;

(iv)  accurately synthesizes ideas from several sources; and

(v)  uses a variety of sentence structures, rhetorical devices, and transitions to link paragraphs;

(B)  write a letter that reflects an opinion, registers a complaint, or requests information in a business or friendly context;

(C)  write responses to literary or expository texts that demonstrate the use of writing skills for a multi-paragraph essay and provide sustained evidence from the text using quotations when appropriate; and

(D)  produce a multimedia presentation involving text, graphics, images, and sound using available technology.

(18)  Writing/Persuasive Texts. Students write persuasive texts to influence the attitudes or actions of a specific audience on specific issues. Students are expected to write a persuasive essay to the appropriate audience that:

(A)  establishes a clear thesis or position;

(B)  considers and responds to the views of others and anticipates and answers reader concerns and counter-arguments; and

(C)  includes evidence that is logically organized to support the author's viewpoint and that differentiates between fact and opinion.

(19)  Oral and Written Conventions/Conventions. Students understand the function of and use the conventions of academic language when speaking and writing. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to:

(A)  use and understand the function of the following parts of speech in the context of reading, writing, and speaking:

(i)  verbs (perfect and progressive tenses) and participles;

(ii)  appositive phrases;

(iii)  adverbial and adjectival phrases and clauses;

(iv)  relative pronouns (e.g., whose, that, which); and

(v)  subordinating conjunctions (e.g., because, since);

(B)  write complex sentences and differentiate between main versus subordinate clauses; and

(C)  use a variety of complete sentences (e.g., simple, compound, complex) that include properly placed modifiers, correctly identified antecedents, parallel structures, and consistent tenses.

(20)  Writing/Conventions of Language/Handwriting. Students write legibly and use appropriate capitalization and punctuation conventions in their compositions. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to:

(A)  use conventions of capitalization; and

(B)  use correct punctuation marks, including:

(i)  commas after introductory structures and dependent adverbial clauses, and correct punctuation of complex sentences; and

(ii)  semicolons, colons, hyphens, parentheses, brackets, and ellipses.

(21)  Oral and Written Conventions/Spelling. Students spell correctly. Students are expected to spell correctly, including using various resources to determine and check correct spellings.

(22)  Research/Research Plan. Students ask open-ended research questions and develop a plan for answering them. Students are expected to:

(A)  brainstorm, consult with others, decide upon a topic, and formulate a major research question to address the major research topic; and

(B)  apply steps for obtaining and evaluating information from a wide variety of sources and create a written plan after preliminary research in reference works and additional text searches.

(23)  Research/Gathering Sources. Students determine, locate, and explore the full range of relevant sources addressing a research question and systematically record the information they gather. Students are expected to:

(A)  follow the research plan to gather information from a range of relevant print and electronic sources using advanced search strategies;

(B)  categorize information thematically in order to see the larger constructs inherent in the information;

(C)  record bibliographic information (e.g., author, title, page number) for all notes and sources according to a standard format; and

(D)  differentiate between paraphrasing and plagiarism and identify the importance of using valid and reliable sources.

(24)  Research/Synthesizing Information. Students clarify research questions and evaluate and synthesize collected information. Students are expected to:

(A)  narrow or broaden the major research question, if necessary, based on further research and investigation; and

(B)  utilize elements that demonstrate the reliability and validity of the sources used (e.g., publication date, coverage, language, point of view) and explain why one source is more useful and relevant than another.

(25)  Research/Organizing and Presenting Ideas. Students organize and present their ideas and information according to the purpose of the research and their audience. Students are expected to synthesize the research into a written or an oral presentation that:

(A)  draws conclusions and summarizes or paraphrases the findings in a systematic way;

(B)  marshals evidence to explain the topic and gives relevant reasons for conclusions;

(C)  presents the findings in a meaningful format; and

(D)  follows accepted formats for integrating quotations and citations into the written text to maintain a flow of ideas.

(26)  Listening and Speaking/Listening. Students will use comprehension skills to listen attentively to others in formal and informal settings. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to:

(A)  listen to and interpret a speaker's purpose by explaining the content, evaluating the delivery of the presentation, and asking questions or making comments about the evidence that supports a speaker's claims;

(B)  follow and give complex oral instructions to perform specific tasks, answer questions, or solve problems; and

(C)  summarize formal and informal presentations, distinguish between facts and opinions, and determine the effectiveness of rhetorical devices.

(27)  Listening and Speaking/Speaking. Students speak clearly and to the point, using the conventions of language. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to advocate a position using anecdotes, analogies, and/or illustrations, and use eye contact, speaking rate, volume, enunciation, a variety of natural gestures, and conventions of language to communicate ideas effectively.

(28)  Listening and Speaking/Teamwork. Students work productively with others in teams. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater complexity. Students are expected to participate productively in discussions, plan agendas with clear goals and deadlines, set time limits for speakers, take notes, and vote on key issues.

Source: The provisions of this §110.20 adopted to be effective September 4, 2008, 33 TexReg 7162.

Figure 19 TAC

Reading/Comprehension Skills. Students use a flexible range of metacognitive reading skills in both assigned and independent reading to understand an author’s message. Students will continue to apply earlier standards with greater depth in increasingly more complex texts as they become self-directed, critical readers. The student is expected to:

1. establish purposes for reading selected texts based upon own or others’ desired outcome to enhance comprehension;

(B) ask literal, interpretive, evaluative, and universal questions of text;

(C) monitor and adjust comprehension (e.g., using background knowledge; creating sensory images; rereading a portion aloud; generating questions);

(D) make inferences about text and use textual evidence to support understanding;

(E) summarize, paraphrase, and synthesize texts in ways that maintain meaning and logical order within a text and across texts; and (F) make connections (e.g., thematic links, author analysis) between and across multiple texts of various genres, and provide textual evidence.

(F) make intertextual links among and across texts, including other media (e.g., film, play), and provide textual evidence

Strategies for Reading

**Before reading**- The title to any book, essay, or poem reveals the main idea of the selection. Have the students discuss what the title means to them before reading it. Discussion will led to engagement and scaffold the connection to the text. Although student participation is needed first, teacher involvement is needed

\*First, partners share to each other before sharing out, so one hundred percent engagement occurs.

**During reading**- It is important that each essay, poem, or artwork planed for the day be read aloud. Teacher read aloud counts, but if some students are volunteer, encourage participation. The works from the literature are powerful, so reading it at least two times before discussion is necessary. Encourage to highlight any phrase or word they find significant. Have time for students to digest the work and discussion is crucial.

**After reading**- For complete participation, it is vital for students to write down their thoughts on a small sheet of paper. They should, they must share their thoughts with a partner, followed by a group discussion. In order for comprehension to take place group discussion should be implemented. The protocols that follow are forms of strategies that can enhance the comprehension.

**Protocols after Reading**

**Literacy Group Protocols**- Collaboration in which all students participate and are accountable is a form of 21st Century Skill. The protocols listed below allow students to express deep thoughts about the selection read. <http://www.nsrfharmony.org/free-resources/protocols/a-z> (the complete steps to all protocols are found in this free website)

**Save the Last Word**-Students highlight a sentence or phrase from selection; when it is there turn each student reads aloud their highlighted without saying why they chose it. After listening and thinking about the phrase read aloud, other students comment why that individual chose that sentence or phrase. The last person that comments is the student who highlighted the sentence. (It does not matter if others choose the same phrase or sentence for all have different reasons for that highlighted that particular text.)

**Text Rendering**- Student choose a sentence, phrase and a word the find plays an important part in the selection. Students discuss the significance in choosing the three. As a group the students use each other’s chosen words to create a summary of the selection and then present to the whole class.

**Read, Think, Write, Share**-(not found in in website version taking from think, pair, share protocol) Students write the message of the selection on a sticky note, then share with a partner to discuss their interpretation of message. Students share out to the whole group where the class can contribute to the interpretations.

Writing Prompts

**TEKS 8.16**-personal narrative

In the poem, “My People”, Ramón Escobar mentions about ignoring the voices of reason. Write a personal narrative about a time you ignored someone’s positive advice or your own inner voice not to do a certain action. Be sure to write about your experience in detail and share how it made you feel. TEKS 8.16-personal narrative

**TEKS 8.17**-expository and procedural text

*“But even a drop of brown can be noticed on an all-white canvas”*

**“Brown Dreams”**

By Juan Guardado

**Think** about the line from the poem *Brown Dreams*.

Every day you make choices that affect the world around you, and knowing this is the first step to truly contributing to society.

**Write** an essay explaining the importance of contributing yourself to society. How can you help others and stand out in *all-white canvas*.

TEKS 8.18- persuasive essay

*“Blind Warriors fighting without a cause”*

**“Blind Warrior”**

By Javier “Xavier Haro”

**Think** about the line from the poem *Blind Warrior*.

Sometimes we fight not knowing the cause or how the fight even got started other times we fight for a great cause.

**Write** an essay stating your position on whether fighting for a cause always has a negative effect on a person’s life.

**Vocabulary**

**TEKS 8.2BCE**- context clues, finish analogies, dictionary skills (electronic dictionary will help with TEKS 8.2A to find the origin of the word)

(This graphic source to learn the vocabulary words. The analogy section may not always be used depending on the word, but a synonyms or an antonyms can be replaced in that section to help acquire the meaning of the word.)

Antonym

**Vocabulary List**

“Womb of Culture”

* venerate
* inalienable (discuss the prefix and suffix and root word TEKS 8.2A)
* bestowing
* integrity (discuss the prefix and suffix and root word TEKS 8.2A)

“Some Advice to those who will Facilitate Arts on the Inside”

* forge
* nuance
* gnarly

“My People”

* solidarity
* viability

“Escape”

* overshadowing
* corruption
* sorrows

“Words of a Soldier”

* tormenting
* prevail

“Freedom is Battlefield”

* opposing
* remnants
* trenches

“Brown Dreams”

* inquisitive
* synchronized
* muted
* peering (peer the root word)

“Remember Me Now”

* hegemony
* destitute
* redemption
* flourish

“Enemy”

* confinement
* inflicted
* turmoil
* sincerity

Discussion Questions

**TEKS 8.4** -analyzing poetry **Figure 19ADE**-making lateral questions, inferring the text, and making connections to self, world and self (Use examples/lines, and textual evidence from the poems in the book to answer these questions.)

1. Why is the word \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ important to the poem?
2. How can this poem affect others?
3. How would describe the message of the poem?
4. What can the reader infer about the poet?
5. What would you add or change to this poem?
6. How does this poem connect to your own life?
7. How does the poem connect to a book, movie, or show you are familiar with?
8. How line \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is important to the reader?

Extension Activities

**Be an Artist**- Choose your favorite poem, and write your own version of the poem, design your own tattoo to match the message you are trying to convey. (**TEKS 8.15B**)

**Gallery Walk**- Choose a favorite line from any poem write on huge paper, hang across the classroom. With a marker, students silently write what they think about that certain line while reading what others have commented on that certain line (**TEKS 8.26ABC)**

**Media Connection**- Look online for a certain announcement, or other famous quote, or song that matches a certain poem from the book. (**TEKS 8.13C**)

**Vocabulary Extension**- With a partner or on your own, write an essay, poem, or song using the vocabulary word list (**TEKS 8.15A**)

Related Media

TEKS 8.23-Research

Here are websites that can be used to research topics that help define history within the Latin community.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/zoot/>

<http://latino.si.edu/virtualgallery/LVGhome.html>

<http://cronkitezine.asu.edu/latinomales/criminal.html> (article to read and discuss)

Further Reading

***Buried Onions*** by Gary Soto

***¡Juventud! Growing up on the Border*** stories and poems edited by René Saldaña, Jr. and Erika Garza-Johnson

***The Jumping Tree*** by René Saldaña, Jr

***Behind the Eyes*** by Francisco X Stork

***Street Life: Poverty, Gangs, and a Ph.D.*** by Victor M. Rios