

## Mexico Curriculum Materials – Samuel Smith

### Teaching Students about poverty in Mexico and why immigrants choose to come to the United States

#### Goals:

1. To help students understand poverty in Mexico.
2. To help students understand why poverty is more difficult to escape in Mexico.
3. To help students understand how Mexico's government contributed to poverty in Mexico.
4. To help students develop a sense of empathy for the poor.

#### Materials (selected readings):

1. Newspaper article, "The simple reason millions of Latin Americans come to the States - A better life" (Johnson City Press)
2. Chapter one, "The *Muchacha*", in *The Mexicans: A Personal Portrait of a People* (Oster, Patrick. New York: HarperCollins, 2002.)
3. Chapter seven, "The *Priista*," in *The Mexicans: A Personal Portrait of a People* (Oster, Patrick. New York: HarperCollins, 2002.)

#### Procedures (Lesson will take four to five days):

1. Day 1 - Students will be asked to write no more than one page explaining their feelings about immigrants. (This is when I hope that the negativity that I have seen will come out because I'll be working to change their feelings beginning here.) Each student will share his/her feelings with the class.
2. Day 2 - Students will read Adelaidas's story (chapter 1 of *The Mexicans*). (Hopefully her story will evoke compassion/empathy)
3. Day 3 - Students will read chapter 7 in *The Mexicans* (The purpose of this reading is to help students have an understanding of the root of poverty in Mexico)
4. Day 4 - Students will read article from the Johnson City Press, "Why people come to the United States – A better life."

**Body:**

There will be four to five discussion questions after each reading. Students must write short answers to the questions for evaluation, but the answers to the questions will be discussed aloud.

Day 1 reading discussion questions -

1. What are some jobs that Adelaida has worked?
2. What kind of work does Adelaida do now?
3. Describe Adelaida's daily routine.
4. Adelaida received what was considered above average pay, but where was a large sum of her money going?
5. Describe Adelaida's house.

Day 2 reading discussion questions -

1. Who was Cuauhtémoc Cardenas?
2. What was wrong with Cardenas according to the PRI party? (see pg. 94)
3. How are gubernatorial candidates selected?
4. What did change did Cardenas suggest concerning the selection of gubernatorial candidates?
5. Briefly discuss how the PRI worked against Cardenas.