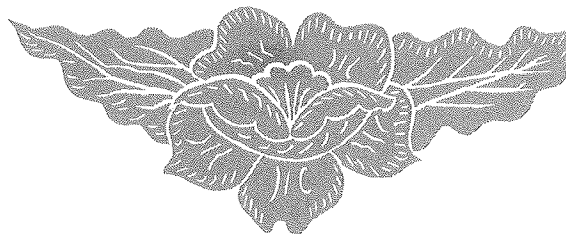


# **BORDERS AND IDENTITY**

*A Resource Guide for Teachers*



# **IDENTIDAD Y FRONTERAS**

*Una guía para maestros*

# C ONTENTS

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*Preface:*

**BACKGROUND TO THE  
BORDERS AND IDENTITY MATERIALS 11**

*Introduction:*

**WHAT DOES BORDERS AND IDENTITY MEAN? 21**

**TEACHER INTRODUCTION 23**

**MAP EXERCISES 27**

**WHAT IS A BORDER? 27**

**READING MAPS 27**

**IDENTITY EXERCISES 29**

**DEFINING IDENTITY 29**

**A STATEMENT OF IDENTITY 31**

**ANOTHER LOOK AT IDENTITY 31**

**NICKNAMES 33**

**DESIGNING YOUR OWN IDENTITY CARD 35**

**SUMMARY 37**

**WHAT'S NEXT 37**

*Part 1:*

**HISTORY AND IDENTITY 39**

**TEACHER INTRODUCTION 41**

**DISCUSSION QUOTATION 43**

**VIDEO VIEWING 43**

**EXERCISES 45**

**VIDEO CRITIQUE 45**

**CHOOSE A QUOTATION 45**

**CULTURAL MAP 47**

**EXERCISES 47**

**HISTORY: INVESTIGATING OUR PAST 47**

**THE PEOPLE OF THE BORDER 47**

**IMAGES OF THE BORDER: INTERPRETING PHOTOGRAPHS 49**

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<b>READING: BORDER HISTORY</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>WHAT'S NEXT</b>	<b>57</b>

*Part 2:*

**CELEBRATIONS AND IDENTITY 59**

<b>TEACHER INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>DISCUSSION QUOTATION</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>VIDEO VIEWING</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>EXERCISES</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>CELEBRATION ANNOUNCEMENT</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>SHRINES IN EVERYDAY LIFE</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>EXPLORING EVERYDAY RITUALS</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>PLANNING YOUR OWN FIESTA</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>READING: THE VIRGIN OF GUADALUPE</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>QUESTIONS AND EXERCISE</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>WHAT'S NEXT</b>	<b>81</b>

*Part 3:*

**EXPRESSIVE TRADITIONS AND IDENTITY 83**

<b>TEACHER INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>DISCUSSION QUOTATION</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>VIDEO VIEWING</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>EXERCISES</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>ART CHART</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>CORRIDOS: THE SINGING OF A STORY</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>LOWRIDERS: A STATEMENT FROM THE STREETS</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>THEATER IMPROVISATION</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>READING: THE STORY OF THE DUO</b>	
<b>EL PALOMO Y EL GORRIÓN</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>QUESTIONS</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>READING: MURALS</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>WHAT'S NEXT</b>	<b>109</b>

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*Part 4:*

**OCCUPATIONS AND IDENTITY 111**

- TEACHER INTRODUCTION 113**
- DISCUSSION QUOTATION 117**
- VIDEO VIEWING 117**
  - EXERCISES 119**
    - LOOKING AT OCCUPATIONS 119**
    - TOURISM: OCCUPATIONS AND ECONOMY 119**
    - INTERVIEW: PROFESSIONS IN YOUR COMMUNITY 119**
    - USING WHAT'S AROUND 121**
- READING: INDUSTRY: CHEAP LABOR AND ASSEMBLY PLANTS 123**
  - QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES 125**
- READING: RIDING THE INTERNATIONAL FRONTIER 127**
  - QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES 131**
- SUMMARY 135**
- WHAT'S NEXT 135**

*Part 5:*

**BORDERS AND IDENTITY IN YOUR OWN COMMUNITY 137**

- TEACHER INTRODUCTION 139**
- STUDENT PROJECT 141**
- YOUR OWN MAP 141**
  - EXERCISES 143**
    - DESIGNING YOUR PROJECT 143**
    - OUTLINE 145**
    - CARRYING OUT THE PROJECT 145**
    - PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER 147**
- FOLLOW-UP 151**

*Appendix: 153*

- KEY DATES 155**
- KEY WORDS 161**
- CORRIDO 171**
- BIBLIOGRAPHY 173**
- VIDEO TRANSCRIPT 183**
- REPRINTS 207**



Norte (COLEF), John E. Conner Museum,  
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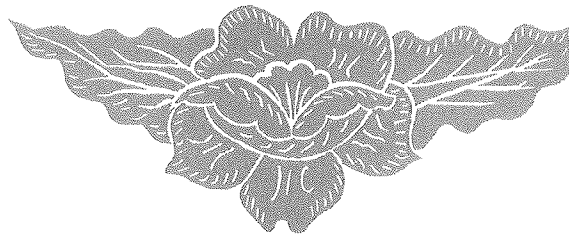
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*Preface:*

**BACKGROUND TO THE  
BORDERS AND  
IDENTITY MATERIALS**



*Prefacio:*

**ANTECEDENTES DE LOS  
MATERIALES DE  
IDENTIDAD Y  
FRONTERAS**



In the summer of 1993, the Smithsonian Institution's Festival of American Folklife featured a program on the culture of the United States-Mexico borderlands. Over one hundred residents of the U.S.-Mexico border region gathered on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., to demonstrate their knowledge and skills to almost one million visitors. The Festival brought together a wide spectrum of people living on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border, including musicians, members of the Border Patrol, cooks, cowboys, and many more. People came to Washington from many different backgrounds — among them Chicano, Mejjicano, Tejano, Mixteco, Tohono O'odham, Pai Pai, Yaqui, Black Seminole, Cajun, and Chinese — to participate in this program. The participants at the Festival were selected by scholars and community resource people along the border, who researched border communities and traditions.

The Festival program provided a glimpse of the many different components that shape border culture: different histories, religious beliefs, occupations, local and regional identities, music, art, crafts, theater, healing practices, foodways, and storytelling.

The Festival was held in Washington, D.C., but the research took place along the border. The success of the Festival encouraged Smithsonian staff and Festival researchers and participants to pursue production of educational materials, for



**Gloria Moroyoqui, of Nogales, Sonora, shares border stories with (left to right) Enrique Lamadrid, of Albuquerque, New Mexico, Arturo Carrillo Strong, of Tucson, Arizona, and Reynaldo Hernández, of Nogales, Arizona.**  
 ● **Gloria Moroyoqui de Nogales, Sonora, comparte historias de la vida en la frontera con (izquierda a derecha) Enrique Lamadrid de Albuquerque, Nuevo México, Arturo Carrillo Strong de Tucson, Arizona, y Reynaldo Hernández de Nogales, Arizona.** Photo by/foto de Richard Strauss, cortesía/cortesía Smithsonian Institution

use along the border and beyond. The *Borders and Identity* educational materials are based on the photographs and video and audio documentation from the 1993 Festival research and presentation.

These materials aim to contribute to an increased understanding of the complexities of border culture through a focus on the peoples and places of the U.S.-Mexico border. The materials encourage students to explore different kinds of borders and to examine how borders shape identities, through close examination of the experiences of border residents and also of students themselves. Planned activities will challenge students to think critically and creatively, and will stimulate them to form conclusions through careful observation and analysis. Students will be encouraged to express themselves through role-playing, writing, and art work.

The *Borders and Identity* materials include this teacher resource guide, a four-part video, and a poster-size cultural map with additional exercises. The goals for the materials are:

- to introduce students to the peoples and cultures of the U.S.-Mexico border;
- to guide students in an investigation of borders in their own communities and to think about how such borders affect their lives and identities;
- to introduce students and teachers to ethnographic investigation methods (close observation and documentation of living persons) used by folklorists and anthropologists to explore living culture;
- to engage students in critical thought through the use of oral interviews, photographs, videos, maps, documents, and topical readings. Student exercises take a variety of forms: written, performed, recorded.

This guide is written for teachers and students. Each section begins with an introduction for the teacher. The loose-leaf format allows teachers to reproduce pages as needed and to add new materials to “customize” the materials for each classroom. Exercises and readings are written for a student audience and are meant to be xeroxed from this book.

The overall structure of the teacher resource guide is as follows:

- an introduction to the concept of *borders and identity* with related exercises;

- four sections corresponding to the four parts of the video (History, Celebrations, Expressive Traditions, Occupations). Each section includes:
  - a discussion quotation with questions to be completed prior to viewing the video;
  - questions and exercises to follow the video;
  - a short reading with discussion questions and exercises.
- a concluding section to guide students in their own documentation project;
- appendix with key dates, key words, a *corrido* (ballad), bibliography, text of the video narration, and reprints of articles from the 1993 Festival program book.

The content of the six sections plus Appendix is as follows:

### **Introduction: What Does *Borders and Identity* Mean?**

This section locates the U.S.-Mexico border through the use of maps and introduces the topic of borders. What is a border? How does it affect people's lives? What does identity mean? Discussion questions and exercises encourage students to examine maps — both of the U.S.-Mexico border as well as their own communities — and to guide students to understand how borders shape people's identities as well.

### **Part 1: History and Identity**

This section stresses the importance of historical circumstances in the formation of today's border culture. In addition to Part 1 of the video, students will use the cultural map. A short reading provides more in-depth information about the history of the U.S.-Mexico border.

### **Part 2: Celebrations and Identity**

This section looks at celebrations on the U.S.-Mexico border: Day of the Dead preparations, Tohono O'odham feasts, and Pascola dances. This section shows how many of these celebrations rely on the interdependence of people on both sides of the border. Students document and explore the rituals, celebrations, and secular shrines in their own lives. The short reading examines the importance of the Virgin of Guadalupe as a cultural symbol along the U.S.-Mexico border.

### **Part 3: Expressive Traditions and Identity**

This section introduces students to several expressive traditions on the border: mural art, lowrider cars, and traditional music. This section discusses how these

cultural forms often depict historical and contemporary social issues. Exercises examine *corridos*, lowrider clubs, and street theater. Readings include excerpts from the story of a musical duo and an explanation of the history and contemporary manifestations of murals on the border.

#### **Part 4: Occupations and Identity**

This section explores several occupations that have been created by the geographic, political, and economic reality of the border region: tourist craft sales, assembly-line work, ranching, and the Border Patrol. Exercises examine how people learn the skills needed for their jobs, and how these occupations often evolve over time. Readings include a piece on *maquiladora* factory workers and an article on Border Patrol agents.

#### **Part 5: Borders and Identity in Your Own Community**

This section guides students through a documentation project on their own community. Ideas for a final project, as well as practical information about methodology, are included.

#### **Appendix:**

The appendix includes a timeline of key dates, a glossary of cultural concepts and border terminology, an example of a *corrido*, an annotated resource listing and bibliography of historical and literary sources, a transcript of the video narration, and reprinted articles from the 1993 Festival program book.

If you have any questions about using these materials, or if you wish to contact other teachers in the border region or elsewhere who have implemented these materials, please contact: Education Specialist, Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies, Smithsonian Institution, 955 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Suite 2600, MRC 914, Washington, DC 20560, (202) 287-3424.