

Identifying American Culture in the Classroom Using Multicultural Drama

Norina S. Olavere

INTRODUCTION

The first time that I entered an American classroom, I was amazed by the diversity of the students. The classroom unfolded, and I realized that the students were from many different cultural and ethnical backgrounds. Wherever I turned, the students displayed diversity in behavior, in speech, and, of course, appearance.

As the year progressed, I became accustomed to entering the classroom listening to the students' morning conversations. Spanish, slang, and even profanity are a large part of everyday language. By listening closely to the students, I learn that some of them would talk about their ancestors, most especially their grandparents who raised them in the absence of the parents. They were proud of how their grandparents would patiently follow traditions. I remember one particular student talk about the famous "gumbo," which is apparently a kind of food prepared in the South and very much a part of Southern culture. While this former group of students would talk about roots and culture, the large part of the student body would talk about what normal teenagers would have as a topic, like dates, the latest fashion, and other things. The atmosphere was as normal as any classroom around the world, but the students are more vocal and honest about what they feel and think. They are not like the ones I have grown used to in the Philippines.

Whenever the class is called to assemble to begin the day's discussion of a lesson, everyone speaks in English. There is exchange of ideas; some conflicting and others aligned. During such times, the students display different reactions: violent, reasonable, and complacent towards topics discussed. I almost could always sit back, just observe and listen to my students and think to myself how students would always have an opinion to share. Opinion is a common ground these students have among themselves.

Coming to the United States for the first time, my mind had been pre-programmed (sub-consciously) when I was still in my own country, the Philippines, that I would teach Caucasian or white people. The idea brought forth apprehensions that built a personal crisis for me of how to "fit in" and be accepted by the students, especially, since I would be teaching teenagers, the most outspoken group among age levels. My struggle worsened when I and my fellow Filipino teachers were introduced for the first time to "real" Americans: a Hispanic, a Caucasian, and an African American. While I was conversing with them, I became so excited relating my experiences as a professional while I was telling them stories about my country. I also related to them my first impressions of Houston. At one point, I mentioned that there are a lot of Americans visiting or residing in my country, and enumerated them by the color of the skin: white, black, brown or yellow. I noticed a change in the facial expression of one of the

conversants when I mentioned “yellow’ and “Black Americans.” I was naïve. I did not know that there are some terms I cannot use even tactfully. I suddenly realized that I am now in America, where people have a different culture and cultural values. The experience made me think that if adults can have objectionable reactions to my ways, how much more difficulty will the students have, who are mere teenagers?

Faced with these observations and realities in the classroom as well as in the community, I realized that my students needed more than a short story or a poem to which they can connect their lives. Considering the differences in background and culture, the students have their own perception of ideas. They need something more visual, action- and emotion-oriented pieces, like drama. Through drama, the students will have a “sneak preview” of the realities of life and may experience acculturation from it. Carefully selected plays will extract the distinctive character and individuality of each student as they undergo the process of reading and learning the plays.

This unit intends to deal with the issue of multiculturalism and provide students an overview of what it is so that they will be able to recognize how culture affects perception.

THE CLASSROOM SCENARIO

The classroom is America. My class can truly represent what America is like, its cultures and aspirations. There is no denying that all students who make up my class have their own drama that reaches out to everyone and appeals for acceptance of who and what they are, regardless of their race or ethnicity, background, or capabilities. Everyone brings with them a unique strand of their own individuality that tells a uniquely different story. My classroom, thus, becomes a source for exploration.

My ninth grade students are having their exploration period. In their young lives, several factors have influenced their thoughts and actions. Their culture and ethnicity anchor their perspective. A lot of their ways are culture-based. Some of their experiences are based on beliefs and traditions. The students’ culture molds their individuality and this is shared with the rest.

The cultural diversity in my classroom defines the drama that unfolds, manifested by the similarities and differences in my students’ ways.

FOCUS AND PRESENTATION OF THE UNIT

In my ninth grade classes, the students learn literature, mechanics of language, and practical writing skills. They use literary works to extend interpretations and connect these works to real life experiences.

Multicultural works include short stories, poems and essays written by an equally diverse group of authors. These works as well as the authors of these works are extensively discussed in Part V of the unit.

With the diversity that is evident in the classroom, I have decided to present a unit that will introduce the many cultures that are incorporated in the daily lives of my students. The unit intends to give my students an invaluable experience by helping them identify with their cultural links. This will serve as a vehicle for the search and affirmation of their dignified existence in the school and community where they live.

I plan to use *Day of Absence* by Douglas Turner Ward, *Letters to a Revolutionary Student* by Elizabeth Wong, *Los Vendidos* by Luis Valdes and *Beautiful Señoritas* by Dolores Prida to teach the unit. The multicultural works I will take up with the students for the first semester will help the students prepare for the exciting and fascinating world of drama as it unfolds and presents substantial symbolism of life in general. The plays will be presented for six weeks during the second semester.

Both the multicultural works and the plays will teach the students how to come to terms with the similarities and differences in everyone. The objective is to provide the students an awareness that similarities and differences are not obstacles to success in life but rather springboards to help them leap into the future.

By the time the unit will be presented, the students are expected to be prepared for various multicultural themes. The multicultural works are the sources of their information that will enhance their interpretive skills and prepare them for a more challenging adventure with the plays.

The four plays represent the student body in a typical high school and, more especially, in my classroom. Due to the multicultural nature of my classes, the selected plays are expected to address pertinent issues in the classroom such as diversity, nationality, and ethnicity. These issues will serve as focal points that will introduce other issues such as acculturation, assimilation, identity crisis, stereotypes, and double consciousness.

THE PLAYS

Day of Absence, *Letters to a Student Revolutionary*, *Los Vendidos*, and *Beautiful Señoritas* will showcase the themes or issues that are all basically told in the context of being in “between worlds.” Multicultural issues plague most of my students and these issues should be addressed in the classroom to minimize the effects of “cultural baggage.”

Day of Absence

As isolated cultures, the local American way of life breeds ignorance of what a particular culture is about and how a particular group of people adjusts to the new influences found to be existing in the American “local color.” In *Day of Absence*, the author portrays this same ignorance that leads to stereotyping. He addresses this issue because he has observed that much of American society has false ideas about people living in other parts of the world. For instance, he says, most Americans would believe that some people still live in trees or still wear g-strings and grass-skirts. He asserts that these misconceptions, while believable, are not entirely true.

The play tells of a story of a community where the white people rely too heavily upon their “Negro servants.” One day, the servants just disappear from every household and establishment. The mayor and the rest of the community seem very confident that the servants will come back because they believe that this group of people cannot survive without them. They appeal to the servants to come out and come back to their daily posts. Both characters in the story are actually portrayed as stereotypes where one cannot go on with his daily activities without the other. The white characters in the play are portrayed as confident of getting what they want all the time. The black characters, on the other hand, are portrayed as gullible, complacent and hardworking people. Stereotypes, of course, do not actually mean they are true. I find this play very appropriate to teach my students to provide them an awareness that stereotyping is a state of mind and it is something that can always be verified and corrected to better understand their neighbors, classmates and peers.

Letters to a Revolutionary Student

I also want to put emphasis on how people from different cultures are able to cope with their new American way of life. This is particularly and dramatically portrayed in the play *Letters to a Revolutionary Student*. The play presents groups of people who migrate to the United States and who are a picture of their pure ethnic background. After being exposed to the local culture of America, they assimilate to the local way of life that generates noticeable changes in them. People who have adjusted to American culture and who were born in the United States would project an “American” background and lose the original ethnic background. When they encounter members of their ancestral roots from the other side of the world, there are awkward moments brought about by the differences in the culture and similarity in physical appearance. This is a meeting of two worlds that introduces novelty to each one.

The play is a story of two women, Bibi and Karen, who are both of Chinese descent but raised in two different countries. Bibi, the extrovert and outspoken between the two, is an American. She was born and raised in the United States. Karen, the meek and complacent, turned militant in the end, is Chinese. She was born, raised and educated in strict communist China. The play opens with the women meeting at a square and sizing

up each other; they notice their similarities and differences. The meeting is a fleeting one and Bibi gives Karen her U.S. address. Bibi, being the modern woman, forgets about Karen until the latter decides to write to her “American friend” to ask for help to come to America. There is the typical resentment on Bibi’s part of Karen’s request and the typical desire any non-American like Karen - to come to the United States. As the story progresses, both characters undergo some changes through assimilation of each other’s culture and each one longs for what the other has.

The play will introduce students to a different world outside of theirs. It will provide them an angle of life where they could realize and accept each other’s differences and similarities brought about by differences in culture and beliefs around the world. The characters’ experiences in the story can serve as an example of how people, despite similarities and differences, can easily assimilate and adopt a particular way of life whether consciously or subconsciously.

Once a group of people is assimilated, there is drastic adjustment to the American culture, and in the process of assimilation, most immigrants tend to forget their cultural past and ethnic roots in search for their new American identity. *Los Vendidos* is a play that uses humor to depict not only assimilation but acculturation and stereotypes as well. It is a story that gives a humorous light to the role of capitalism in the United States. The play opens at a used items lot where a character, Honest Sancho, is a capitalist selling all sorts of wares. A secretary, Señorita Jimenez, of an American official comes in looking for a “Mexican type for the administration.” Honest Sancho introduces three robotic characters that represent Mexican stereotypes that “explore Chicano identity in the United States” (Swanson et. al., 56). The characters present a typical hardworking farmer, a city-bred man who survives city life through hustling, and an educated and professional Mexican-American. The characters are presented by showing a gradual change of the Mexican as they are melded into the American scene. Honest Sancho and the secretary symbolize Mexicans whose original cultures are lost in the American society while assimilating a large part of the American culture.

By assimilation, we join adverse things together. The students in a classroom are a classic example of “different things” joined together to create a whole that is a variation of the original. This is a form of welding - a process that melts two diverse substances, in this case, that are rigid and amalgamated as a less rigid whole. When we join two cultures into a new one, we blend the best of each and produce a new and softer version of each culture’s rigid standards. As time passes, the rigidity solidifies the new meld and the final product no longer resembles the original or the amalgamated cultures, but becomes a new ethnicity that has an identity of its own. In the classroom setting, the students are distinctly different from one another. They all have different attitudes and behaviors that they have learned due to exposure from their immediate surrounding - their family.

Beautiful Señoritas

Beautiful Señoritas is a story of a young adolescent Hispanic girl, Maribel Flores, who is trying to learn how to be a woman and attract a man. This is a coming of age story that is very appropriate for my ninth graders. The play opens with an expectant father who curses with disappointment for having a girl child instead of a boy child. A mid-wife narrator comments on the birth of another girl into the world and how girls become women eventually, looked up to and trampled on by many at the same time. The story then progresses until the girl Maribel Flores, who was born into a family of a disappointed father, becomes an adolescent and is taught how to be a woman. A number of other characters, such as a nun and beauty contestants in a pageant, deliver lines in soliloquies on how to behave, smile and talk as a woman.

This is a play that presents stereotypes of how American society views Hispanic women and the role of Hispanic machismo in the lives of these women. The women characters have played various stereotypical roles with the interjection of Cuban values as exemplified by the intrusion of a nun in the middle of the play. There is a presentation of how sex roles conflict with a lot of these Cuban values. The Hispanic machismo, as emphasized, has a lot of effect on the way girls are raised to womanhood and the underlying disappointment of having a girl for a child. The play depicts how women can be denied importance and existence at one point and then put to majestic heights as part of an entertainment and curiosity. The play also presents themes such as alienation in a new land, search for identity and prejudice against sex.

These themes are reflected in the classroom as well. The students struggle to overcome these issues while they learn to accept each other as part of a larger group.

Who they are when they first come to class is actually a “mirror of what the students experience at home, among peers, or in a larger society” (Athanases, et. al., 29). Or in some cases, it can be a continuous process in which, in time with the discussion of lessons and literature, the students are remodeled into different persons. The awareness may or may not be there but there would always be change. Each day becomes their experience and the lessons their guidance. There is no denying the fact that “the works of writers of color make us answer for our choices and behavior in the past and today, and confront uncomfortable truths” (Dilg, 24). It is also vital that the curriculum offered to the students mirror their “cultures, experiences and perspectives” (Dilg, 19).

These realities in the classroom are important in identifying the new identity that renounces and belittles the sum of its parts for its new heritage. With the search for this American identity, there is the personal battle against double consciousness being waged in each individual. This particular theme and all the other themes mentioned will be manifested and studied throughout the four selections.

THE THEMES AND ISSUES

Studying drama and using scenarios in an American classroom will dissect the themes and issues encountered by each student every day. Acculturation, assimilation, identity crisis, stereotypes and double consciousness are the themes I will emphasize in the unit. These themes will be discussed within the point of view of “being in between worlds.” This point of view is when a person (in the classroom, the student) experiences a sense of belonging to a particular community and yet feels an outsider at the same time as well.

Assimilation is the absorption and incorporation of something not originally owned. Students easily absorb norms and trends they observe from each other. The influence one has to another is unstoppable. Thus, another can easily assimilate the culture one has whether consciously or sub-consciously. The adaptation of the American way of life is melded and molded with the original culture and generates a more unique “culture.” The adaptation of a particular culture is contradicted by the state of double-consciousness. In the classroom, when my students are exposed to the existing norms, they have to learn how to adjust to their environment and the factors that help this adjustment evolve. They can easily blend with others and adopt what the existing culture offers. In the process, my students are pushed to their limits and are on the verge of losing their own original ethnic or cultural identity. An acceptance of a new culture and a denial of another result from this process.

To further my objective of providing my students an overview of multiculturalism, I will present the complexities of ethnic identity and the search for one’s own identity in a situation where one student has to confront the bare realities of one’s racial background and exposure to an entirely different culture. The students should be able to acknowledge that they are, for instance, of Chinese or Vietnamese descent, having ways adopted from the American culture. This will present to the students how people can be pliant as bamboo. Anyone can blend in but have the undeniable features that cannot be hidden from the naked eye. It is an undeniable fact that physical appearance strikes distinction between Chinese, Vietnamese, African, Norwegian, or any nationality for that matter, and the existence of the original ethnic culture poses a great factor that affects the carrying out of the “pure American culture.”

I mentioned in the first part of this essay that some people have a pre-conceived idea of how the people on the other side of the world from America look, behave, and respond to their environment. I also mentioned that while some of their ideas may be easily believed, they are not entirely true. It is a fact that anything that is unknown and different is hard to accept and accommodate. This situation happens when non-Americans migrate to America from other countries. At first, there is apprehensive and calculated evaluation of the new arrival until the people are allowed to interact with one another. The first impression would be generalized from the physical appearance to the learned historical background of the land of origin of the arrivals. From this knowledge, people tend to believe legends and folktales. The peculiar ways of the new people are also judged. I

would like my students to learn that stereotypical opinions about others are just a state of the mind generalized from the observable elements like the physical appearances and ways.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES AND INFORMATION

To spice up the plays chosen for this unit, I will use some selections I have used in the past found in textbooks and other books. I plan to incorporate the works of multicultural authors such as Guy de Maupassant, *The Necklace*; Eugenia Collier, *Marigolds*; Amy Tan, *Two Kinds*; Sandra Cisneros, *Only Daughter*; and William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*. Guy de Maupassant is a known writer in France. He was born to an upper-middle-class family whose fortune ran out and was forced to live by meager means. *The Necklace* is a story of a French woman in the nineteenth century when having social class was the most important thing in life and to live in poverty was like a disease. This short story will introduce students to a particular culture, that of the European aristocracy.

Eugenia Collier was caseworker in Baltimore, Maryland before she became a teacher-turned-writer/author-lecturer. *Marigolds*, one of her first efforts in writing stories, won her a Gwendolyn Brooks Award for Fiction in 1969. It is a coming-of-age story that is appropriate for my ninth graders who are in the stage of self-discovery. It portrays the wealth and the diversity of the black heritage. *Marigolds* can be a support story to *Beautiful Señoritas* or *Day of Absence*.

Amy Tan, author of *The Joy Luck Club*, wrote *Two Kinds*. The story tells of a Chinese mother who gives birth to a daughter after immigrating to America. She promises herself that the daughter will grow up to be a success in everything because she believes that everything is possible in America. But despite efforts, the daughter never perfects anything, including a piano recital. This is a story that exhibits opposing cultures, that of a mother whose culture is still deeply rooted in her Chinese heritage and a daughter who has the independent mind of an American. *Two Kinds* can be a supplement to *Letters to A Revolutionary Student*.

Sandra Cisneros was once an only daughter whose father dismissed the fact that she could be anyone and a success in the future. She wrote *Only Daughter* to show what her father's beliefs and traditions about being a woman should be, as dictated by influences from the culture of old Mexico. This personal essay presents the Hispanic machismo, stereotypes, and acculturation of the new Hispanic generation in terms of acceptance or melding of old and new traditions.

William Shakespeare's *Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* tells of a young love that ends in death. By the time the students study *Romeo and Juliet*, they will already be familiar with the elements of drama. All the plays in this curriculum unit may be interpreted through *Romeo and Juliet* since the latter broaches the subjects of diversity (differences

in belief), stereotypes (a lovesick person is romantic), and acculturation (acceptance of what circumstances dictate especially when the two families, Montague and Capulet, had to find and foster truce as an effect of the death of Romeo and Juliet).

I am also planning to use some Filipino folklore supported by poems and essays written by Filipino-American writers such as Jose Garcia Villa and Carlos Bulosan. (This is optional).

The supplement selections will provide the students a general overview of the multicultural elements and tone inside the classroom. It will help prepare the students for the exciting and fascinating world of drama as it unfolds and presents substantial symbolism of life in general. The lessons are projected to teach students how to come to terms with the similarities and differences in everyone.

The plays will be used as a vehicle to present the variety in cultures which are intertwined with certain issues in the present American society. An overall impression of multiculturalism of the present American society should be manifested.

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

Teaching the plays in the traditional lecture format would be a tedious task. The process of explanation and involvement of the students should be planned out carefully with activities that would stimulate their interest.

Collage-making: “Melting-Pot Challenge”

The collage is a jumpstart activity that will introduce students to the multicultural tone of the plays to be read and studied in class. Using pictures from magazines, the students will have an impression of life in the United States that an immigrant may have experienced. They will also study how some impressions can also be misleading as to the real characteristics of a particular culture.

Objectives:

1. To create a collage out of magazine picture cut-outs.
2. To portray and present the diversity of the people in America.
3. To provide a general impression of life in the United States.
4. To learn the term “melting- pot.”
5. To analyze the collage and judge if the pictures shows a “melting-pot.”

Rationale:

According to British playwright, David Quixano, the United States is a “great melting pot” where all races, not only from Europe but from all over the world, are “melting and

reforming” into the America of today. Different cultures are incorporated into the way of life. He used this term in his play, “The Melting Pot,” which he wrote when he experienced the settlement of ten thousand Jews in the west of the United States. At that time, he was the president of the Emigration Regulation Department of the Jewish Territorial Organization founded after the “great massacres of the Jews of Russia.” His term became a label for the existing condition of the American society itself.

In the classroom, the “melting pot” idea is a challenge to everyone, especially to my students. The melting pot challenge is visible and existing with the co-existence of each student and their shared individualities that make up my classroom. The classroom is a place where the students learn and interact as well share with one another their racial and cultural mores. The students do not actually meld together so that they become one people, but through interaction they influence each other. This same influence grows among peers and social acquaintances.

Assignment:

1. Students will be divided into groups.
2. Each group will bring magazines and glue.
3. Cut-out pictures showing people in America, and think of factors that help in the evolution of the American way of life.
4. Paste on construction paper.
5. Create a theme for the collage that will provide an overview of the “Melting-Pot Challenge.”

Motivation:

To stimulate the interest of the students, ask them to answer guide questions. Who lives in the United States? Are these people originally from America? What are factors that help in the evolution of the American way of life? What is ethnicity, culture, melting pot, and challenge? Does ethnicity affect the blending of cultures? What experiences can you cite that are culture-based? How do you think you might be different if you grew up somewhere else other than the United States?

Research and Presentation: Scrapbook

This activity will be included in the lesson discussion of the *Letters to a Revolutionary Student*. The scrapbook will provide students a visual aide to understanding Chinese-American culture.

Objectives: Group work

1. To present Chinese and American culture through pictures, articles, poems, and essays found in magazines and newspapers and paste the materials gathered in a scrapbook.
2. To find similarities and contrasts between the two cultures.
3. To find out aspects of each culture and identify with some aspects.
4. To use a journal as record book.

Rationale:

Ninth graders are constantly curious about every change around them. They ask questions about themselves and their heritage. They easily associate their own experiences to several selections, or topics taken up in class. Most students are open about race issues and identifies with immediate situations. One factor that piques their interest and curiosity is the evident diversity in the classroom. Another factor are the celebrations of each heritage. As a representative of a distinct race, some students undergo a process of identification (Dilg, 20). This process creates psychological and educational challenges. The learners recognize factors and identify with some of the characters or situations in a particular selection used for discussion of a lesson. This sometimes poses awkward moments that can result in either embarrassment or anger. The fact that the students are a lot different from each other exacerbates the situation at times. The students should realize that each one is not only a representative of a particular race but in reality a part of a much larger group who should take pride in their own heritage.

Their inquiries about students and teenagers in other countries and their comments about the ways and peculiarities of foreigners lead to an understanding of the importance of explanation and illustration of the similarities and differences between cultures. Connections to literature and discussions should be encouraged.

Assignments:

1. Student groupings.
2. Each group should provide a scrapbook, or if it is too expensive, use recycled materials to make a scrapbook.
3. Using magazines and newspapers, or the internet, clip or download histories, photos, essays, articles, poems, or anecdotes that will showcase Chinese and American culture.
4. Scrapbook presentation. All groups will prepare a report written in essay form presenting their analysis of their scrapbook.

Motivation:

Have the students record observations and insights in their journal about the pictures and writings they have collected and pasted in the scrapbook. To help them gather their ideas, let one student in each group read an article, or show a photo while telling an anecdote about it.

Mobile of Cultural Identity

Los Vendidos is a play that showcases different stereotypes of the Hispanic -Americans. Although the stereotypes may not be precise, there are still some characters that probably relate to anyone, which may be due to experiences within the family or among peers and acquaintances. This activity will help the students identify these stereotypes in the play and go beyond what the play has to offer and find out all the other stereotypes or characteristics of a particular race in the other plays.

Objectives:

1. To gather information about a particular culture: African, Asian, or Hispanic.
2. To choose a particular culture to portray.
3. To use objects with cultural associations to create a mobile. The students can use toys, household objects, recipe cards, and mementos that identify with a particular culture.
4. To display a project in the classroom and make it a reminder of each one's similarities and differences and the uniqueness of each one that makes the classroom a healthy and enjoyable experience.

Rationale:

While students are protected against a myriad of issues such as racial oppression and cultural denunciations, there can be no harm done if the students are exposed to such issues provided there is proper explanation and guidance. Ninth graders are sensitive and curious all the time. Their values, opinions, and idioms are easy prey to offensive issues and situations.

In the journal entitled *Fostering Empathy and Finding Common Ground in the Multiethnic Classes* the authors addressed the issue of identification. They assert that there is a need "to explore the value of empathy and the need for reconciliation among groups divided by differences, biases, and histories of injustice" (Athanases, et. al., 26). This lesson on empathy and identification can help alleviate the alienation that fosters anger and racial tensions inside the classroom.

Motivation:

Ask students to recall aspects of their own cultural heritage that are especially important to them. For each aspect, they will choose their object for the mobile. For instance, a student may remember an incident during childhood when a grandmother would use a quilt to tuck him in bed at night as part of a culture. The student may find a piece of cloth and hang it in the mobile. The same student may also remember a particular game played within the family using buttons. The buttons can be used in the mobile. There could be a lot of objects that may represent an aspect or cultural heritage.

Poetry and Music

This activity is an enrichment activity for *Beautiful Señoritas*. The students will make use of music, poetry and props to understand the story at the same time relating to it.

Objectives:

1. To write a poem using experiences and insights about the play.
2. To choose appropriate music or music the students like, which can accompany or represent a poem.
3. To read the poem in class with the music.

Rationale:

The classroom atmosphere is founded on the students, their interaction with one another, and how they receive and perceive knowledge. It is within the classroom that issues of difference, assimilation, acculturation, cultural stereotypes and ethnic identities are extensively discussed. Students impart a portion of their individuality and influence each other. The influence rouses a blending of cultures that sheds off the similarities and differences. This blending of cultures lead to an acceptance of the current way of life in America, most specifically in the classroom.

Distinct similarities and differences are important and are potent factors that lead to an appreciation of everyone's identity. Interpretation of a play through poetry and music, as well as connection to real life situations using literature and experience can bring out the personality traits in the students so that they are able to identify with each other inside the classroom.

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An article on the idea of the United States as a melting pot for all races around the world. It also provides a brief background on the coining of the words.

Reading Drama. (8 February 2001).

http://www.smpcollege.com/litlinks/drama/read_drama.htm

A literary link found on the web that contains questions asked when reading or writing drama.

Smalley, Webster (ed.). *Five Plays By Langston Hughes*. Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1963.

The book contains plays written by Langston Hughes. The plays can help give light on the African American culture.

Sime, Tom. *The Dallas Morning News*, "GuideLive: *Beautiful Señoritas*," (8 February 2001).

<http://dtw.citysearch.com/E/E/DAITX/0213/33/38/csi.htm>

A review of the play *Beautiful Señoritas* as directed by Marisela Barrera. The play was presented at the Cara Mia Theatre Company.

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http://www.dallasnews.com/entertainment/1/3/89_señoritas_22ov.htm

The article is found on the web and contains a musical review of the play *Beautiful Señoritas* written by Dolores Prida.

Swanson, Meg and Robin Murray. *Playwrights of Color*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press, Inc., 1999.

This book contains plays written by multicultural playwrights and contains the selected plays for the unit. It also includes several definitions of terms relevant to the curriculum as well as the background of the author of each play, a historical background of the play, and an analysis of each play.

Zimmerman, Marc. *U.S. Latinos: Their Culture and Literature*. (12 February 2001).

<http://www.uic.edu/~marczim/latlit/essay.htm>

This essay is found available in the internet which provides valuable information on the culture and literature of the Latinos/Hispanics/Mexicans.

Zhou, Min and James V. Gatewood (ed.). *Contemporary Asian America A Multidisciplinary Reader*. New York and London: New York University Press, 2000.

The book examines the growth and development of the Asia American society.