

Lesson #10: *The Distance Between Us: A Memoir* Assignment Suggestions

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Teaching Ideas:

- Have students write their own memoirs about being the “new” person somewhere unfamiliar. Whether that includes being a minority in race, religion, etc., have them tell about having to learn to fit in.
- Have students research Mexican culture and traditions.
- Have students research the role of extended family in Mexican culture. How does it differ from the way people here tend to view extended family?
- Have your students write about or discuss racial stereotypes. What are some prevalent stereotypes of Mexican Americans? Other groups? How do they think these came about? How do we combat them?
- Have students find a concept that is unfamiliar to them. With a partner or small group, have them present their concept or term to the larger class. Make sure they include pictures, videos, or food examples, if applicable. Suggestions: quinceanera, dia de los muertos, foods, etc.
- Have students discuss what kinds of racism Reyna and her siblings encounter. How do the kids in the story differentiate between those born in Mexico, those of Mexican decent born in the United States, etc? How is this applicable in your students' lives?
- Have a cultural food fair in your class. Have students bring in food, music, pictures, games, etc. that represent either Mexican culture, or have each of them bring in something from their own cultures.
- Have a holiday celebration in your class. Have students research the different Mexican holidays and each group can present some aspect of their holiday to the rest of the class.
- Have students take a dramatic moment in the text, such as when Reyna and her siblings are sneaking into the United States, and have them write a different outcome to that event.