

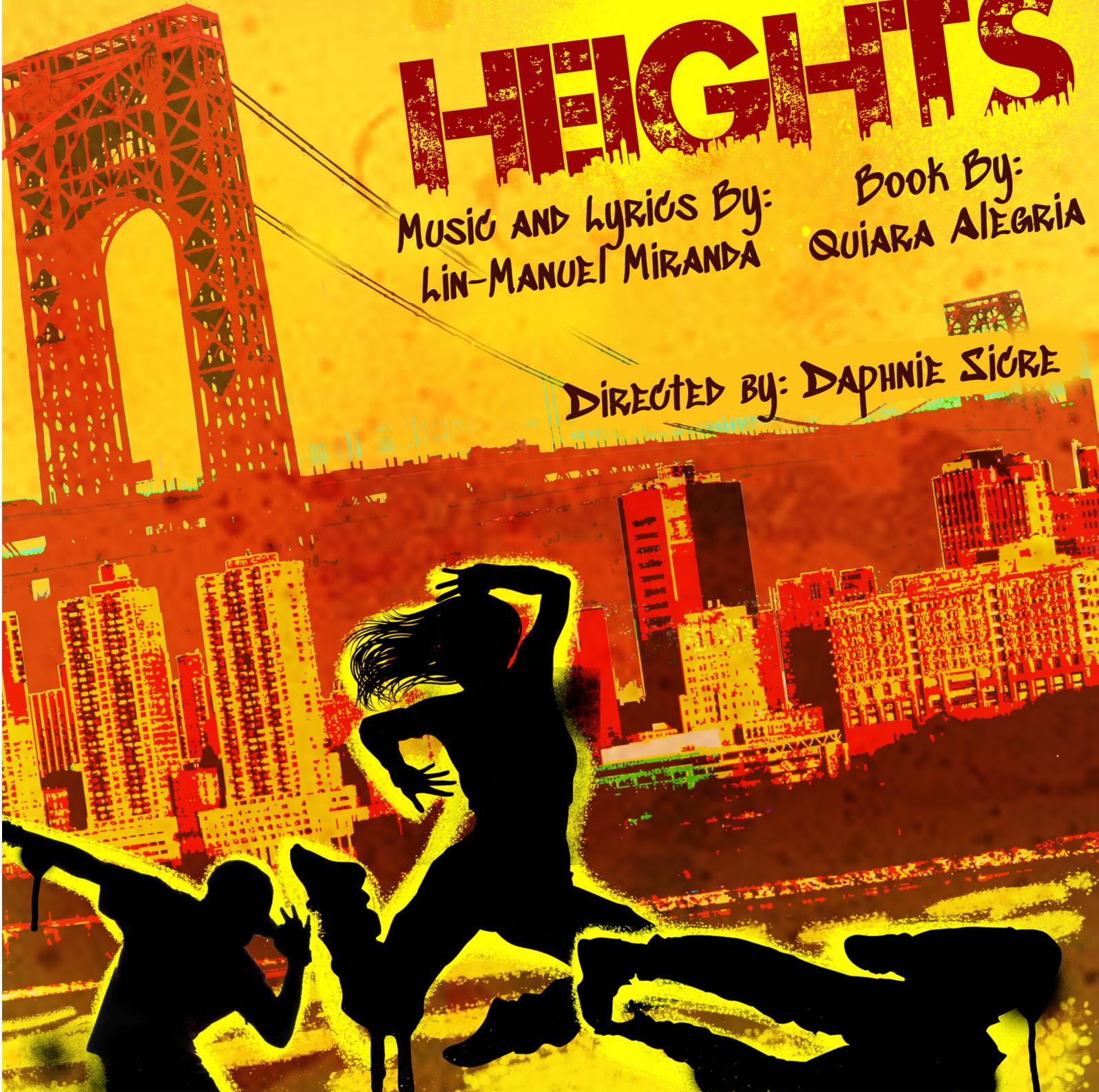
CONCEIVED BY LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA

IN THE HEIGHTS

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY:
LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA

BOOK BY:
QUIARA ALEGRIA

DIRECTED BY: DAPHNIE SIÛRE

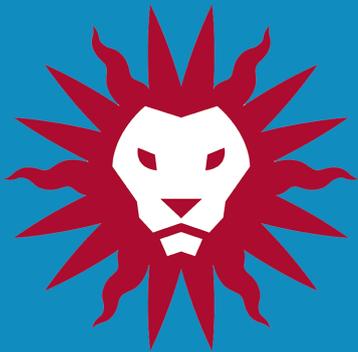


Curriculum Guide

EDITORS:

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- Production Dates -
February 20-23 & 27-29 @
8pm, STRUB

In The Heights Study Guide
Catalog, 2020, Loyola
Maramount University.

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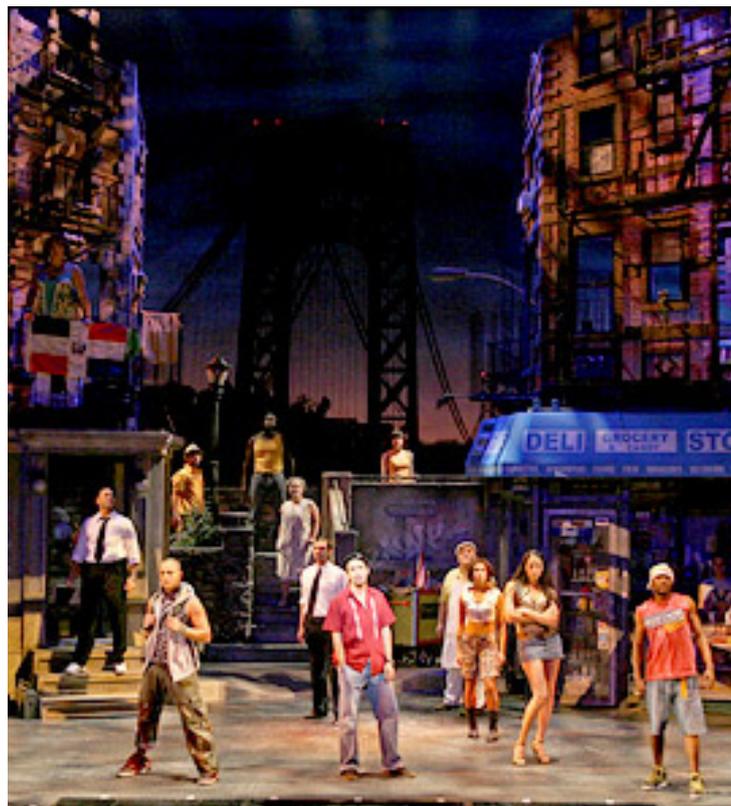
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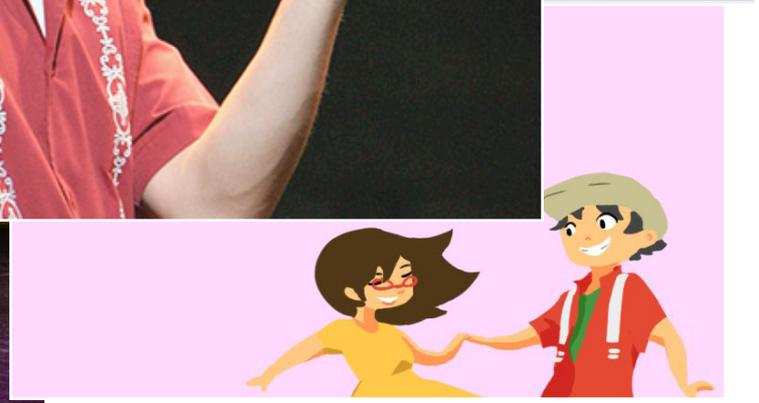
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Quiara Alegría Hudes' plays

Water By The Spoonful, A Soldier's Fugue, The Happiest Song Plays Last, In The Heights, Daphne's Dive, Miss You Like Hell, Barrio Grrrl!, Yemaya's Belly

Quiara Alegría Hudes

is a writer, strong wife and mother of two, barrio feminist and native of West Philly, U.S.A. Hailed for her work's exuberance, intellectual rigor, and rich imagination, her plays and musicals have been performed around the world. They include

Water By the Spoonful, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Drama; *In the Heights*, winner of the Tony Award for Best Musical and Pulitzer finalist; and *Elliot, A Soldier's Fugue*, another Pulitzer finalist. Her most recent musical, *Miss You Like Hell*, appeared Off-Broadway at New York's Public Theater. Hudes also wrote the screenplay adaptation for *In the Heights* which releases in movie theaters Summer 2020.

Originally trained as a composer, Hudes writes at the intersection of music and drama. She has collaborated with renowned musicians including Nelson Gonzalez, Michel Camilo, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Erin McKeown, and The Cleveland Orchestra.

Hudes recently founded Emancipated Stories, a collection of writing and art where inmates' voices matter. It seeks to put a personal face on mass incarceration by having inmates share one page of their life story with the world via the website: [instagram.com/emancipated_stories_project](http://www.emancipated_stories.com). On this website, the inmates are able to tell the world who they are, allowing people to read about the humanity of folks trapped in an unjust system.

<http://www.quiara.com>

Lin-Manuel Miranda

is an award-winning composer, lyricist, and actor. He wrote the book and lyrics for *Hamilton* (and also originated the title role), earning a record-breaking 16 Tony Nominations and winning 11 Tony Awards, including two personally for Miranda for Book and Score of a Musical. In addition, *Hamilton* was awarded the 2016 Pulitzer Prize in Drama.

Miranda's *In the Heights* received four 2008 Tony Awards with Miranda receiving a Tony Award for Best Score, as well as a nomination for Best Leading Actor in a Musical. *In the*

Heights also took home a 2009 Grammy Award for its Original Broadway Cast Album and was recognized as a Finalist for the 2009 Pulitzer Prize in Drama. In 2016, Miranda won the Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in Music for the Original London production of *In the Heights*.

Miranda is a recipient of the 2015 MacArthur Foundation Award, the National Arts Club Medal of Honor and the ASCAP Foundation's Richard Rodgers New Horizons Award. He has received stars on both the Puerto Rico Walk of Fame and the Hollywood Walk of Fame. He serves as a Council Member of The

Dramatists Guild and was appointed by Mayor Bill de Blasio to New York City's Theater Subdistrict Council in 2015. He received his B.A. from Wesleyan University in 2002. He lives in NYC with his wife, sons and dog.

<https://www.linmanuel.com>

"You are perfectly cast in your life. I can't imagine anyone but you in the role. Go play."
- Lin-Manuel Miranda

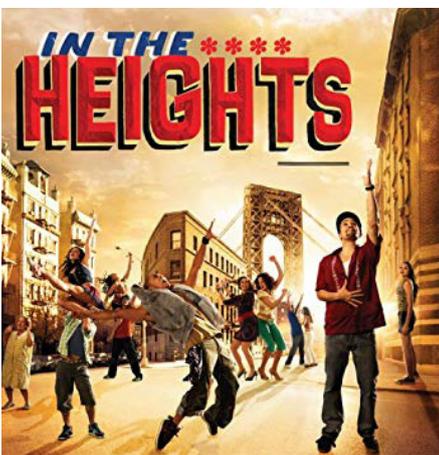


Notable Works

In the Heights (2005), *Bring It On: The Musical* (2011) *21 Chump Street*, *Hamilton* (2015)

IN THE HEIGHTS

In the Heights centers on a variety of characters living in the neighborhood of Washington Heights, on the northern tip of Manhattan.



At the center of the show is Usnavi, a bodega owner who looks after the barrio's aging Abuela next door, pines for the gorgeous girl working in the neighboring beauty salon and dreams of winning the lottery and escaping to the shores of his native Dominican Republic. Meanwhile, Nina, a childhood friend of Usnavi's, has returned to the neighborhood from her first year at college with surprising news for her

parents, who have spent their life savings on building a better life for their daughter. Ultimately, Usnavi and the residents of the close-knit neighborhood get a dose of what it means to be home. This revolutionary musical combines Latin rhythms and dance with hip-hop lyrics to tell a captivating story about what it means to chase your dreams as you cling to your roots.



*Lin-Manuel Miranda surprises 'In the Heights' crowd at the Kennedy Center



USNAVI DE LA VEGA, owner of De La Vega Bodega

NINA ROSARIO, a freshman at Stanford University

KEVIN ROSARIO, Nina's father, owner of Rosario Car Service

CAMILA ROSARIO, Nina's mother, co-owner of Rosario's

BENNY, employee of Rosario's

VANESSA, works at the salon



SONNY, Usnavi's cousin

ABUELA CLAUDIA, raised Usnavi, though not his blood grandmother

DANIELA, owner of Daniela's salon

CARLA, works at the salon

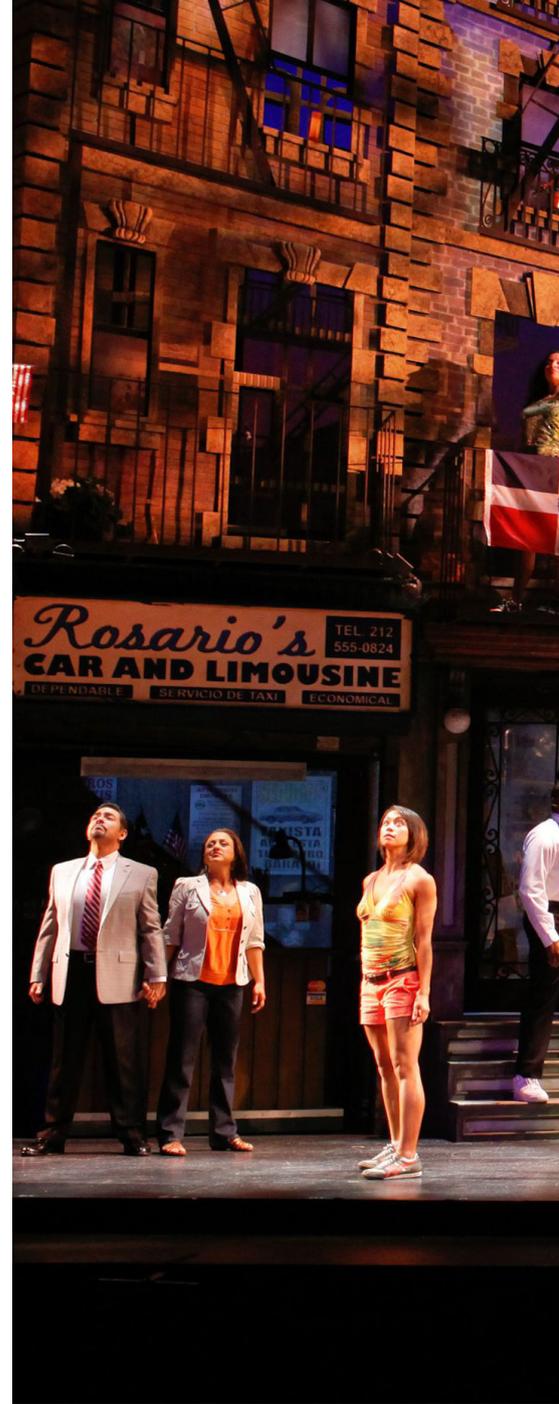
GRAFFITI PETE, an artist

PIRAGÜERO (PIRAGUA GUY), scrapes piraguas from his block of ice

ENSEMBLE, Various People



HISTORY AND ORIGINS OF PRODUCTIONS



Lin-Manuel Miranda wrote the first draft of *In the Heights* as a sophomore undergraduate student at Wesleyan University in 1999. In April 2000, the musical was selected by Second Stage (a student-led theatre company at the school) to be featured as an 80-minute one-act production. Encouraged by his classmates as well as theatre director and Wesleyan alumni Thomas Kail, Miranda continued his development of *In the Heights* after graduation, bringing in book writer Quiara Alegría Hudes in 2004 and presenting a new version at the National Music Theater Conference in 2005, then making it all the way to the Broadway stage by 2008. Since then, the show has garnered a great deal of accolades and success, and it has even been adapted into a movie, set to open in theaters June 26, 2020. While the film will mirror the Broadway original in terms of musical numbers and production value, there is talk that the new screenplay has been updated to address current political issues affecting the Latinx community.



Premiere July 23, 2005: Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, Waterford, Connecticut. [Productions](#) - 2007 Off-Broadway, 2008 Broadway, 2009 US Tour, 2011 Manila, 2011 Non-Equity Tour, 2013 Panama City, 2014 São Paulo, 2014 Off-West End, 2014 Tokyo, 2015 Melbourne, 2015 West End, 2015 Vancouver, 2015 Seoul, 2016 Lima, 2016 Lohne, 2017 Washington, D.C. 2018 Nyborg, 2018 Sydney, 2020 Film.

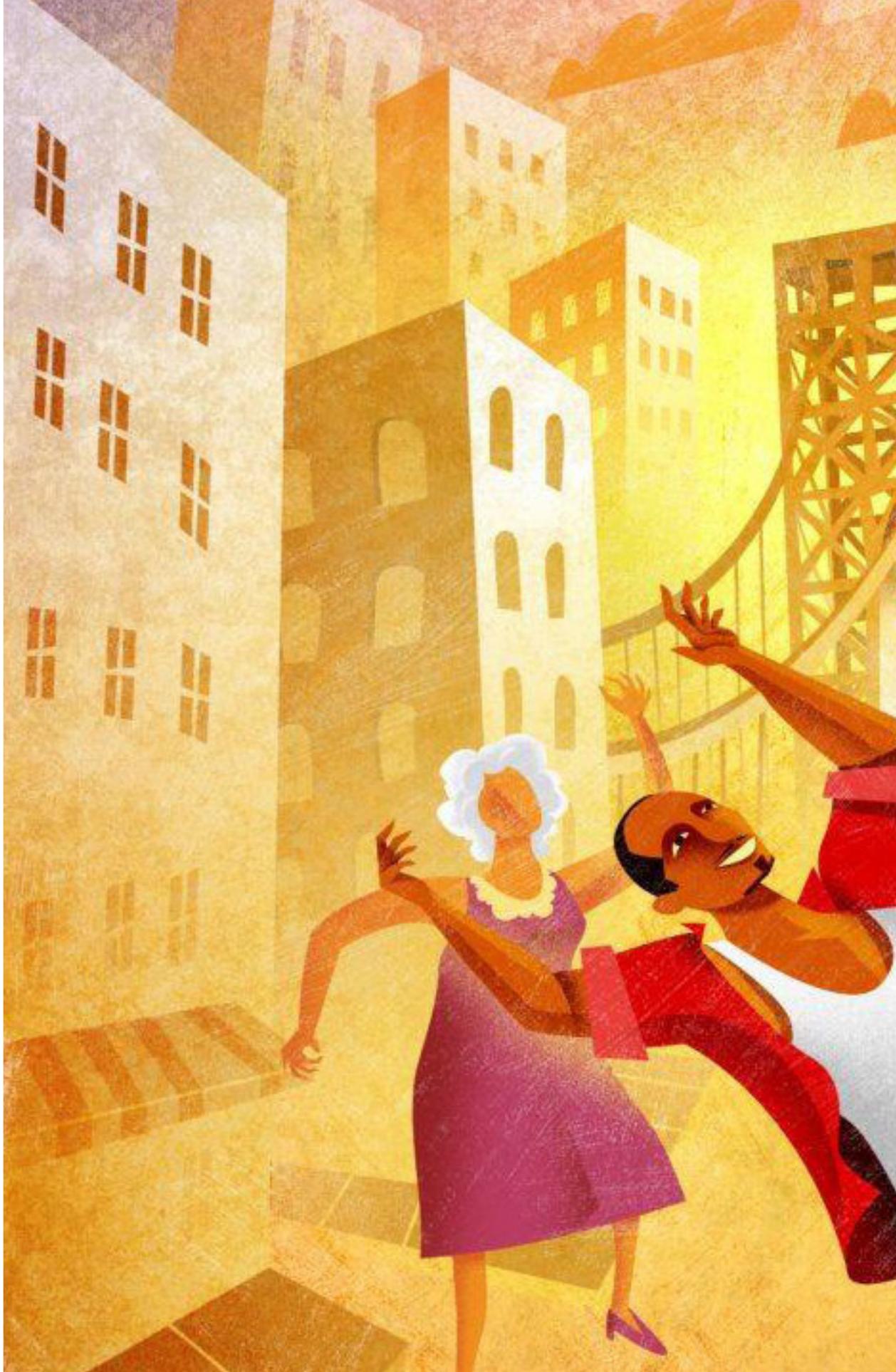
Awards

2007 Original Off-Broadway Production Drama Desk Award - Outstanding Ensemble Performance Drama Desk Award - Outstanding Choreography (Andy Blankenbuehler) Clarence Derwent Award - Most Promising Male Performer (Lin-Manuel Miranda)

2008 Original Broadway Production Tony Award - Best Musical Tony Award - Best Original Score (Lin-Manuel Miranda) Tony Award - Best Choreography (Andy Blankenbuehler) Tony Award - Best Orchestrations (Alex Lacamoire and Bill Sherman) Grammy Award - Best Musical Show Album

2016 Original West-End Production Laurence Olivier Award - Best Actor in a Supporting Role in a Musical (David Bedella) Laurence Olivier Award - Best Theatre Choreographer (Drew McOnie) Laurence Olivier Award - Outstanding Achievement in Music (Lin-Manuel Miranda) WhatsOnStage Award - Best Supporting Actor in a Musical (David Bedella)

MUSIC



"Here's the thing that I've observed about Lin Miranda. He deeply loves musical theater and Broadway, and has since he was a child, and he deeply loves hip-hop and pop music as a whole, and has since he was a child. His ability to work in both of those forms is inseparable from the fact that he loves both forms — he's not being a tourist when he visits one or the other, but he's deeply embedded in both of them." — Oskar Eustis, Artistic Director of the Public Theater



“I wrote the show I wanted to be in. I grew up with hip-hop, and I wanted it to sound like my neighborhood.” —

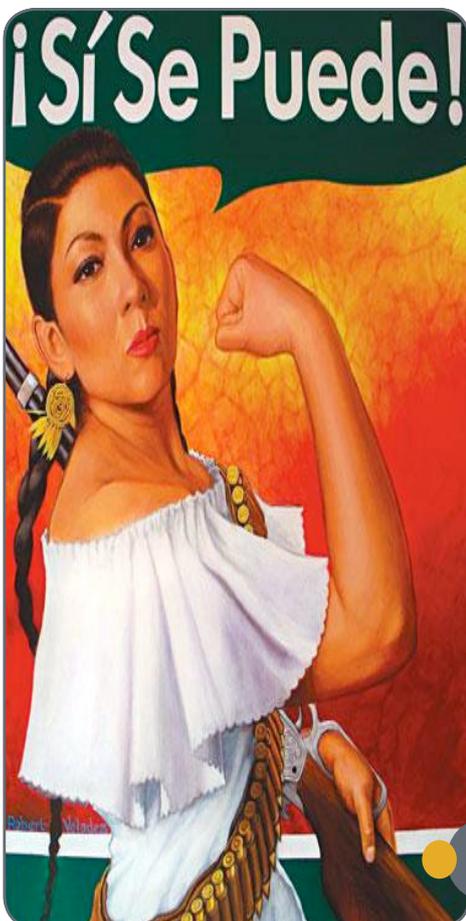
Lin-Manuel Miranda

Performed in two acts with its principle characters expressing themselves through song and dance, *In the Heights* follows the traditional formula of a classic American Broadway musical. But Lin-Manuel Miranda contextualizes this formula within Latinx culture, integrating bilingual lyrics and fusing various styles of music including hip hop, rap, salsa, R&B, funk, dance beat, waltz, bolero, pop ballad, reggaeton, merengue, and bachata. Influenced by his Puerto Rican roots, his upbringing in Inwood NYC (adjacent to Washington Heights where the play takes place), and his simultaneous love of 90’s hip-hop and Broadway tunes, Miranda merges his classic and contemporary sensibilities while celebrating the Latinx community and promoting positive representation of Latinx characters — a representation that has previously been lacking on the Broadway stage.

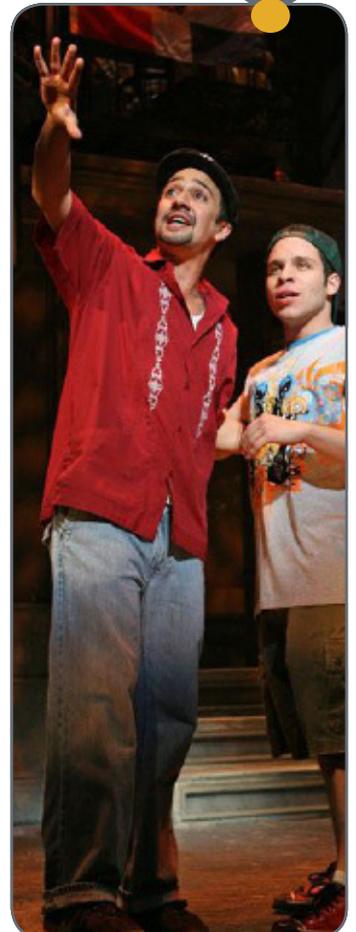


THEMES

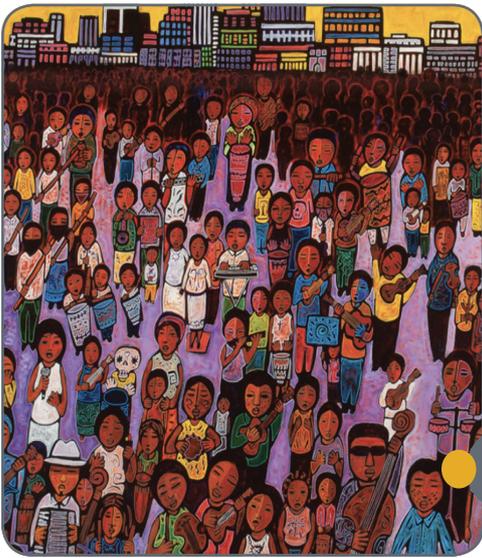
OPPORTUNITY. The opportunity that many seek when immigrating to the United States could perhaps be considered synonymous with the “American Dream.” This age-old aspiration suggests that with hard work and sacrifice, anyone can achieve the economic success they desire; or at the very least, they may create a better future for their children. The promise of such opportunity is especially present for the Rosarios in *In the Heights* as Kevin and Camila make the ultimate sacrifice, selling their car service in order to pay for their daughter’s Stanford education.



RESILIENCE. Resilience is defined as the capacity to adapt to stressful or tragic events, recovering ably from misfortune or change. The characters residing in Washington Heights show remarkable fortitude, drawing on each other for strength while navigating some of life’s most difficult challenges. From the threat of losing one’s business, to the struggle to afford educational opportunities, to the sorrow of saying goodbye to a loved one, the adversities reflected in *In the Heights* are met with both vigor and courage, depicting a community resolved to transcend even the greatest of hardships.



GENTRIFICATION. The term gentrification is used to describe the rebuilding of an urban neighborhood that results in an influx of more affluent residents and businesses. The process is controversial as it tends to displace current residents who often can no longer afford to pay rising housing costs or maintain their small businesses. *In the Heights* highlights the devastating effects of gentrification as we witness several of its characters and businesses — including Usnavi’s bodega, Daniela’s salon, and the Rosarios’ dispatch — struggle to survive.



COMMUNITY/LOVE. The word “community” holds a number of meanings. It can refer to a group of people with a common characteristic living together within a larger society, it can encompass a body of persons possessing the same social or economic interests, or it may simply indicate the shared heritage of a collective group. For the characters in *In the Heights*, community goes beyond any of the above definitions to reflect a neighborhood of residents who support one another, who lift each other up, and who come together in the most painful of times to offer love and healing.

IMMIGRATION. New York City’s Washington Heights has historically been home to a diverse population of immigrants seeking opportunity — and in some cases, refuge — in the United States. The neighborhood experienced a significant inflow of Latinx residents in the mid-1960’s, particularly those fleeing the Dominican Republic during a time of political turmoil. Rooted in this history, *In the Heights* celebrates the Latinx residents of Washington Heights, paying tribute to their vibrant culture and community.



LESSON IDEAS FOR YOUR CLASS

Lesson #1

Celebrating Community.

This activity can be used over the course of two class periods. During the first class, divide students into groups of 4 or 5 and ask them to reflect on the word “community.” After they have agreed on a definition, ask each group to send up a representative to write their definition on the board. A brief discussion can be held comparing the various definitions and further expanding the students’ ideas of community. Next, give students a few minutes to individually write down all of the communities of which they are a part. When they are finished, ask them to peruse the list and pick one community to which they feel most closely connected. For the following class, ask students to bring in something (an object, a picture, a poem, a song, etc.) that in some way represents their community. Students should present what they have brought and briefly discuss their connection to it as well as to their community. As a final discussion, ask students to reflect on the community depicted in *In the Heights*. What do each of the characters bring to their community, and what do they gain from it?

Lesson #2

Reflecting on Opportunity.

Either in class or as a homework assignment, instruct your students to write a reflection about educational opportunity. Ask them to consider the sacrifices that Nina Rosario and her parents made in *In the Heights* in order for her to attend Stanford University. What were these particular sacrifices? And how difficult was it to make them? Was Nina’s attendance at Stanford worth such sacrifices? Why or why not? Ask your students to also reflect on their own educational opportunities. Would they or their parents have to make similar sacrifices in order for them to attend college? Would it be worth it? If your students are in college, they may reflect on any sacrifices that they or their families have already had (or not had) to make. Ask them to reflect on how their educational opportunities are (or have been) either similar to or different from those available to Nina. Once the assignment been completed, allow any willing students to share their reflections with the class.

Lesson #3

Examining Resilience. Ask your students to define the word “resilience.” While there may be several interpretations, try to decide as a class on one definition that fits best. Write that definition clearly on the board, and instruct the students to open a notebook or journal. Give them a few minutes to write down as many qualities they can think of that would help a person to remain resilient in a time of difficulty. When they are finished, ask them to think of a time when they exhibited one of these qualities. How did this quality help them to stay strong during a time of struggle? Allow them a few more minutes to jot down their thoughts, and then instruct them to find a partner with whom they can share their stories. Give each pair roughly ten minutes to both share and respond (five minutes per student). When they have finished, ask if any of the pairs would like to share their stories or thoughts with the entire class. Finally, ask the class if there are any specific characters from *In the Heights* who demonstrated the qualities they have discussed, helping them to remain resilient in a difficult time.

Lesson #4

Understanding

Gentrification. Begin this activity by writing the following prompt on the board: When you hear the word “gentrification,” what comes to mind? Does it have a positive or negative connotation? Explain. Give the students a few minutes to write down their answers, and then ask any willing students to share. It is likely that some students will not have a full understanding of the meaning of gentrification, so instruct one student to look up the definition and read it aloud. If any of your students have experience with gentrification, ask them to cite examples for the class. Then show the short film titled *Gentrification Explained* which can be accessed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V0zAvImzDFc>. While viewing, have the students write down any correlations they notice between the effects of gentrification discussed in the film and events that occur in *In the Heights*. After viewing, divide students into small groups to discuss how the characters in the play are impacted by gentrification. (You may refer to the theme section on page 13 of this curriculum guide for a few examples.) Finally, ask one representative from

each group to share their thoughts with the class.



GLOSSARY

While the *In The Heights* characters speak mostly in English, the Spanish slang and phrases are just as important to the play as the setting itself. Below are some translations that may help you understand the characters better if you do not speak Spanish.



The [George Washington Bridge](#) is a double-decked suspension bridge spanning the Hudson River, connecting the Washington Heights neighborhood of Manhattan in New York City with the borough of Fort Lee in New Jersey. The bridge was ceremonially dedicated on October 24, 1931

Piragua — a frozen treat made of shaved ice and covered with fruit flavored syrup

Oye, piragüero, como estas? — Hey, piragua guy, how are you?

No, que pasó? — No, what happened?

Con leche — with milk

Paciencia y fe — patience and faith

Abuela — grandmother

Escuela — school

No me diga! — No kidding! (No tell me!)

No pares, sigue, sigue — Do not stop, go on, go on

3

CONTROVERSIAL CASTING TOPICS



Great plays are not without controversies.
These three topics can be great discussion
starters for classrooms or rehearsals.



CASTING ISSUE #1

Chicago's Porchlight Music Theatre cast Jack DeCesare, a white actor of Italian descent, to play Usnavi. The Chicago Latinx community was very upset.



CASTING ISSUE #2

In 2008, a production of *In The Heights* was done with a cast of all Japanese actors. Surprising critics, the play was received well.



CASTING ISSUE #3

In 2017, an Australian production of *In The Heights* was cancelled due to whitewashing concerns.



QUESTION #1

In a play that tackles race, ethnicity and immigration, what do you think is the right way to solve this controversy?



QUESTION #2

While not an example of whitewashing, this rendition does not live true to *In The Heights'* original community. Can a cast of only Japanese actors convey the themes Quiara Alegria Hudes and Lin-Manuel Miranda intended?



QUESTION #3

What is the difference between the Japanese production and the Australian? Why did the Japanese production get great reviews while the Australian was cancelled?

TEACHING ABOUT IMMIGRATION



Visit the link below for more lesson plans on immigration.

<https://www-tc.pbs.org/independentlens/newamericans/pdfs/>

“Imagine how it would feel going real slow down the highway of life with no regrets and not breaking your neck for respect or a paycheck.”



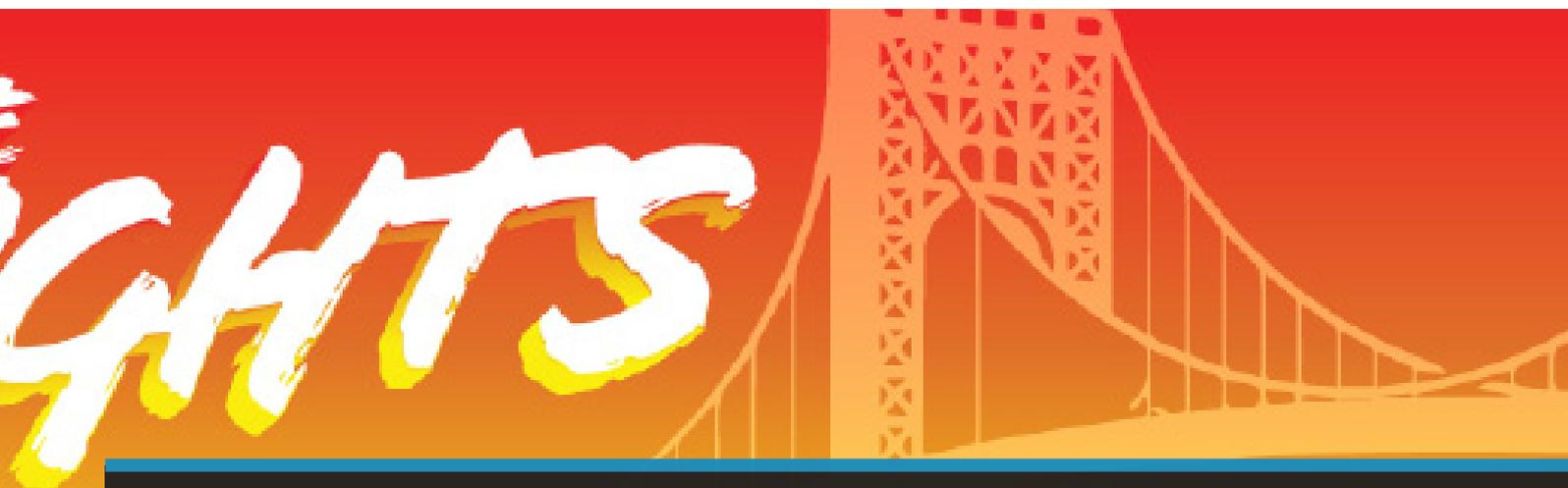
UNDERSTANDING IMMIGRATION

For this activity, please refer to Teaching Tolerance’s Ten Myths About Immigration article which can be accessed at <https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/spring-2011/ten-myths-about-immigration>. Before you begin, make sure that your students have a clear understanding of how the topic of immigration is present in *In the Heights*. You may refer to the theme section on page 13 of this curriculum guide, and you may even have your students conduct their own research into the history of Latinx immigrants residing in New York City’s Washington Heights.* After a discussion of such relevant information, explain to your students that immigration is a controversial topic in the United States, and

that misunderstandings can often lead to a negative view of immigrants wishing to enter (or perhaps already residing) in our country. Next, instruct your students to take out a piece of paper and tear it into five sections. Explain that you will read five statements about immigration in the United States that are either fact or myth. The students will guess as to whether or not the statements are true, writing “fact” or “myth” for each on a scrap of paper. Collect the scraps after each statement, and tally them up, relaying to students how many believe the statement is a fact and how many believe it is a myth. Then, reveal the correct answer by reading to your students the corresponding section from Ten Myths About Immigration. The five statements are as follows:

1. Most immigrants are here illegally (Myth);
2. Immigrants take good jobs from U.S. citizens (Myth);
3. As an immigrant, it is difficult and very expensive to enter The United States legally (Fact);
4. Undocumented immigrants do not pay any of the same taxes that United States citizens pay (Myth);
5. Refugees undergo more rigorous screenings than any other individuals the government allows in the United States (Fact).

*<https://scalar.usc.edu/works/latino-metropolis-a-brief-urban-cultural-history-of-us-latinos---1/washington-heights-1>

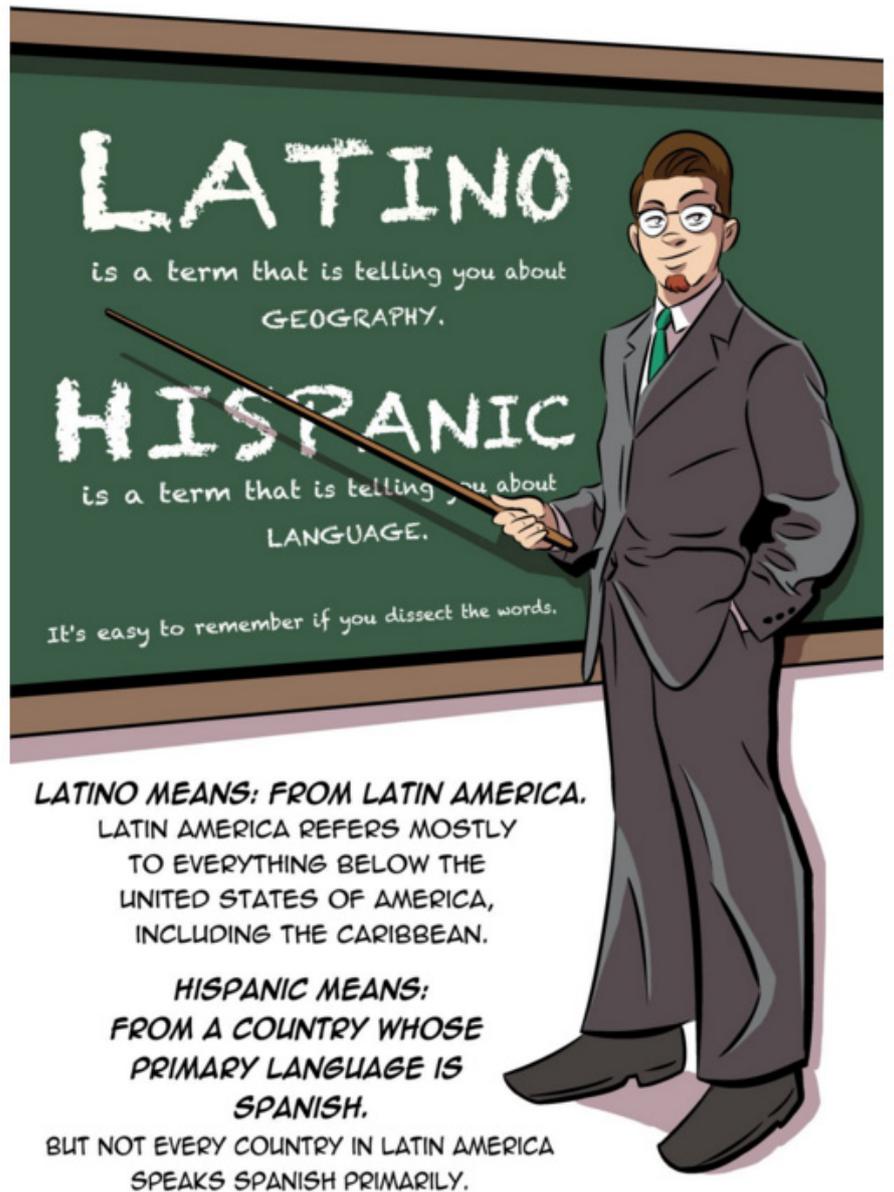


More lesson plans on immigration!

https://www-tc.pbs.org/independentlens/newamericans/pdfs/tna8_mosaic.pdf

https://www-tc.pbs.org/independentlens/newamericans/pdfs/tna11_latinos.pdf

TEACHING ABOUT LATINX IDENTITY



Illustrations by Terry Blas

Latinx/Latino/Latina

“Latinx” is a gender-neutral term used in lieu of “Latino” or “Latina” to refer to a person of Latin descent.

Using the term “Latinx” to refer to all people of Latin American descent has become more common as members in the LGBTQ community and its advocates have embraced the label. The gendered structure of the Spanish language has made “Latinx” both an inclusive and controversial term.

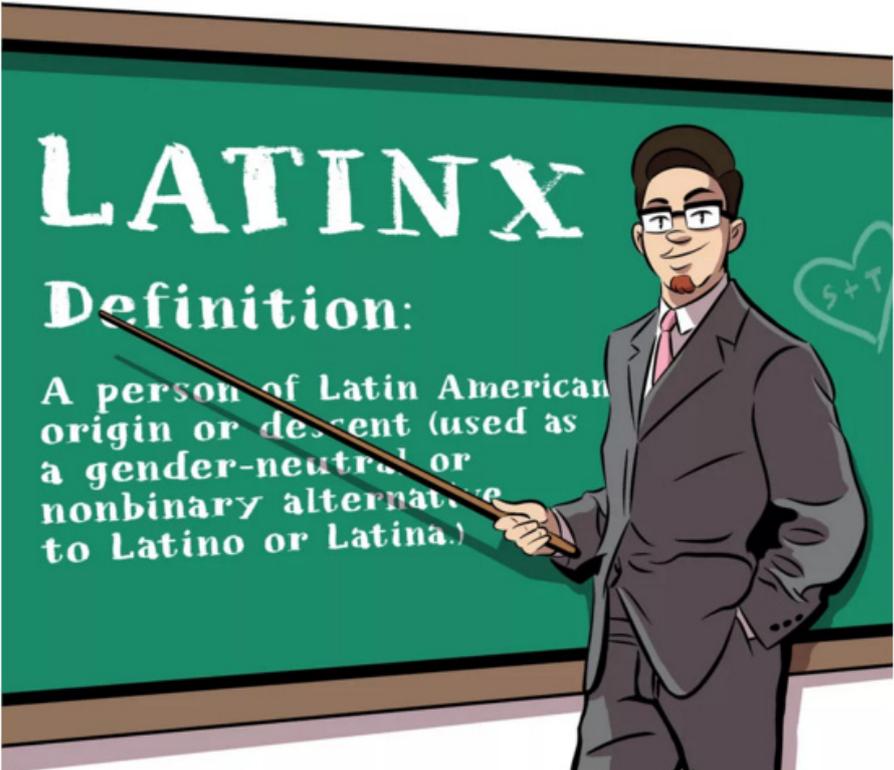
Pronounced “luh-TEE-neks, Merriam-Webster dictionary added the word in 2018 to describe those of Latin American descent who don’t want to be identified by gender, or who don’t identify as being male or female.

The word was created as a gender-neutral alternative to "Latinos," not only to better include those who are gender fluid, but also to push back on the inherently masculine term used to describe all genders in the Spanish language.

Even though "Latinos" technically refers to all genders of Latin American descent, it's still a masculine word in Spanish.

For example, a group of females would be called "Latinas" and a group of males would be called "Latinos." However, a group of males and females of Latin American descent would revert to the masculine "Latinos."

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2019/06/29/latina-latino-latinx-hispanic-what-do-they-mean/1596501001/>



BUT THIS ISN'T THE *ONLY* DEFINITION. IT'S JUST THE ONE THAT I FIND HELPS ME BEST UNDERSTAND THE TERM.

IF YOU FEEL THIS DEFINITION DOESN'T WORK FOR YOU, THAT'S FINE! DEFINITELY SEEK OUT YOUR OWN!



ACCORDING TO A WIDELY SHARED OP-ED IN A COLLEGE NEWSPAPER, WRITTEN BY GILBERT ORBEA AND GILBERT GUERRA, *LATINX* IS A TERM THAT CAME INTO POPULAR USE IN THE UNITED STATES AROUND OCTOBER 2014. THEY SAY IT'S PROBLEMATIC AT BEST, DUE TO ENGLISH SPEAKERS IMPOSING SOCIAL NORMS ON OTHER CULTURES.

IN THE ********
HEIGHTS

A New Musical

