



A Day of Rage, A Legacy of Resistance

The 1970 National Chicano Moratorium

Name: _____ Date: _____

What's Inside?

This packet follows a full class-period arc, from warm-up to independent practice:

- Warm-Up – a quick, no-background-needed entry point
- Essential Questions – Identity, Power, and Civic Response
- Direct Instruction – Key Vocabulary and a Background Primer for the teacher to deliver
- Guided Practice: Primary Source Analysis – eight voices: eyewitnesses, organizers, an artist, a journalist, a historian, a statistical study, and an official government report
- Synthesis: Connecting to Ethnic Studies Themes – Identity, History and Movement, Systems of Power, and Social Movements and Equity
- Synthesis: Historical Context & Putting It Together Tables

This resource is part of the Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x Studies discipline of the CA Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (adopted by the State Board of Education, March 2021). It extends Sample Lesson 13, “The East LA Blowouts: An Anchor to the Chicano Movement” (Chapter 4, pp. 159-163) forward in time to the 1970 Chicano Moratorium, a companion topic within the same discipline's Additional Sample Topics (pp. 164-165). Students engage all four Model Curriculum themes: Identity, History and Movement, Systems of Power, and Social Movements and Equity. Text and images are drawn from the Los Angeles Times retrospective “How an East L.A. Protest Gave Voice to the Chicano Movement” by Daniel Hernandez (Aug. 23, 2020), Rubén Salazar's own 1970 column, and a widely cited academic casualty study. Scaffolds throughout – a vocabulary preview, a plain-language background primer, and sentence starters – make the material accessible to all students, including multilingual learners and students who need extra reading support.

This lesson was created by Jazmin Kent, ES Resources Ethnic Studies Educator-Mentor & Curriculum Innovation Fellow.

WARM-UP (5-10 MIN)

Warm-Up

1. Look at the banner image on the cover of this packet. Without any other information, what story do you think it's telling? Jot down a few words or a sentence.
2. Quick write: Have you ever seen footage of, or taken part in, a protest march or demonstration? What do you already know about why people march?
3. What do you already know about the military draft or the Vietnam War? List anything, even if you're not sure it's correct.

Be ready to share one idea with a partner or the class.

OBJECTIVES

Essential Questions

1. Whose stories get remembered as history and who decides that?
2. What happens when a peaceful protest turns into conflict? Who is responsible?
3. How do everyday people, artists, and journalists respond when they witness injustice?

DIRECT INSTRUCTION (10-15 MIN)

Direct Instruction: Background & Vocabulary

Teacher delivers this section as notes, a mini-lecture, or a short reading. Students should have this context before opening the sources in Part 1.

Key Vocabulary

Preview these words before you read. Come back to this list any time you need it.

Moratorium	An official pause on an activity. Here, organizers called for a "moratorium" on Latino deaths in the Vietnam War.
Chicano / Chicana	A term of pride many Mexican Americans embraced during the 1960s-70s civil rights movement to describe their identity.
The draft	A system that required young men to join the military, whether they chose to or not.
Barrio	A neighborhood, especially one where a Spanish-speaking or Latino community lives.
Sheriff's deputies	Local law enforcement officers; in this case, from the LA County Sheriff's Department.
Tear gas	A chemical used by police to break up crowds. It causes burning eyes and trouble breathing.

Testimonio	A firsthand, spoken account of someone's own experience – a kind of oral history.
Legacy	The lasting effect an event or person leaves behind, long after it happened.
Casualty study / statistic	Research that uses numbers (like death counts) as evidence of a pattern or injustice.

Background

On August 29, 1970, an estimated 20,000 to 30,000 people marched through East Los Angeles in the National Chicano Moratorium Against the Vietnam War, the largest gathering of Mexican American demonstrators in U.S. history up to that point. Organizers pointed to research showing that Latinos were dying in Vietnam at nearly twice their share of the population in the Southwest, and they linked that injustice to the broader fight for Mexican American civil rights. The march began peacefully at Laguna Park, but it turned violent after sheriff's deputies moved in, and clashes over the following hours left three people dead, including Los Angeles Times journalist Rubén Salazar, who was killed by a tear-gas projectile fired into a café. Fifty years later, the Moratorium is remembered as both the high point and the beginning of the end of the Chicano Movement, and its legacy still shapes conversations about protest, policing, and Latino identity today.

GUIDED PRACTICE (30-45 MIN)

Part 1: Primary Source Analysis

Directions: Below are eight firsthand and secondhand accounts of the Chicano Moratorium. For each source, answer the questions to the right using full sentences. Work with a partner or small group.

Source	Questions
Source #1: Consuelo Flores was 9 years old and marched with her siblings. "I was excited, so I wore my red tennis shoes." "I'm 9 years old, and I'm seeing the cop who's supposed to protect me, whacking a young man ... my feet are burning too, and ... I'm just trying to get home." <i>Source: LA Times, "How an East L.A. Protest Gave Voice to the Chicano Movement," 2020</i>	1. Is this a primary or secondary source? How do you know? 2. How does Flores's mood change from the beginning of the day to the moment tear gas is used? Point to specific words. 3. Why might a historian value a 9-year-old's memory of this event as much as an adult organizer's?

Source #2: Gloria Molina marched that day. She later became the first Latina elected to the California Assembly and the LA County Board of Supervisors. "We were really there to have a peaceful march, and we wanted to make a point. And instead our community was destroyed, Salazar was killed, and hundreds of people were hurt by the batons." <i>Source: LA Times, 2020</i>	1. What was the marchers' original goal, according to Molina? 2. What is the effect of Molina calling this a "loss of innocence" elsewhere in the article? 3. How might Molina's later career in politics connect back to this day?
Source #3: Rosalío Muñoz co-organized the Moratorium and chose East LA as its location. "We needed to have our own moratorium, in our own neighborhoods. Someone mentioned [Ralph] Guzman's statistics, and that linked those two concerns, the war and the civil rights movements." <i>Source: LA Times, 2020</i>	1. What two issues does Muñoz say the Moratorium connected? Why connect them? 2. Why do you think organizers chose East LA, "the biggest barrio of them all," for the march?
Source #4: Harry Gamboa Jr. was 18 and later co-founded the art collective Asco. "It looked like being in the middle of a war, and how best to fight back other than culturally and creatively? ... Asco emerged from the Moratorium." <i>Source: LA Times, 2020</i>	1. According to Gamboa, what did artists do in response to the Moratorium instead of (or alongside) political organizing? 2. Why might art and "instant murals" be a form of resistance, not just decoration?

Source #5: Rubén Salazar, the journalist killed at the Moratorium, wrote this seven months before his death. "A Chicano is a Mexican-American with a non-Anglo image of himself." <i>Source: Rubén Salazar, "Who Is a Chicano? And What Is It the Chicanos Want?" Los Angeles Times, Feb. 6, 1970</i>	1. Is this a primary or secondary source? Why does it matter that Salazar wrote this himself, in his own newspaper column? 2. What does his definition suggest about identity and self-image, rather than ancestry alone? 3. Why is it especially significant that the man who wrote this was later killed while covering the Moratorium?
Source #6: Political scientist Ralph Guzmán's 1969-70 study analyzed Vietnam War casualty records by surname. Guzmán found that people with Spanish surnames made up under 12% of the population in the Southwestern United States, but accounted for over 19% of the region's Vietnam War casualties. <i>Source: Ralph C. Guzmán, cited in multiple retrospectives on the Chicano Moratorium</i>	1. Is a statistic like this a primary or secondary source? Explain your reasoning. 2. Why would organizers use a number like this to build public support for the Moratorium? 3. What are the limits of a study like this? (Hint: how did Guzmán identify who counted as Mexican American?)
Source #7: Historian Mario T. García, a scholar of the Chicano movement, assesses its legacy 50 years later. "In the end they didn't achieve revolución, but they achieved some	1. Is this a primary or secondary source? What is different about how a historian evaluates an event, compared to someone who lived through it?

very important reforms, and opportunities in education, in media, in the political system and economically.” <i>Source: LA Times, 2020</i>	2. Do you think a movement can be a success even if it does not reach its biggest goal? Explain, using García's quote.
Source #8: In 2011, the LA County Sheriff's Department released an internal Inspector General report on the events of 1970. The report “found that deputies used excessive force at the Moratorium and were poorly trained to handle large crowds in 1970.” The department says its training has since improved. <i>Source: LA Times, 2020, citing the LASD Inspector General</i>	1. Why does it matter that this finding came from the Sheriff's Department itself, 41 years after the event? 2. What does the existence of this report tell you about how institutions of power sometimes respond to public pressure over time?

SYNTHESIS (10-15 MIN)

Part 2: Connecting to Ethnic Studies Themes

Directions: Use what you read in Part 1 to respond to each theme below.

Theme	What it means	Your Connection
Identity	How people understand and express who they are.	How does marching, or Salazar's own definition of “Chicano,” shape how someone saw themselves?
History and Movement	How groups of people move, migrate, or change position in society over time.	How does the Moratorium build on the 1968 Blowouts you may have already studied? What changed between the two events?

Systems of Power	Who holds authority, and how that authority is used or abused.	Find one moment in the sources where a system (the draft, the police, the Sheriff's Department) used its power. What was the effect?
Social Movements and Equity	How people organize collectively to demand fair treatment.	What tactics or evidence (testimony, art, statistics) did organizers use to build the Moratorium? Were they effective?

Part 3: Historical Context

Use the sources and independent research to complete the tables below.

	Your Answer	Direct Quote / Source
Who organized the Moratorium, and why did they choose East LA?		
What was happening with the Vietnam War and the draft at this time?		
What happened during and after the march?		

Who was Rubén Salazar, and why does his death matter to this story?		
What did the 2011 Sheriff's Department report conclude?		
How does this event connect to the 1968 East LA Blowouts?		

	Your Answer	Direct Quote / Source
What was the central goal of the Moratorium?		
What price did participants pay for taking part?		
How is the Moratorium remembered or used today (in art, politics, or memory)?		

What surprises you?		
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INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

Independent Practice: Culminating Essay & Extend Your Learning

Culminating Essay

Explain the historical significance of the Chicano Moratorium and how it contributes to the Chicano legacy. Your answer should include key details and at least two direct quotes from the sources above to support your answer.

Sentence starters (use any that help you get going):

- The Chicano Moratorium was significant because ...
- One piece of evidence that shows this is when [source] said, "..."
- This event contributes to the larger Chicano legacy by ...
- Even though the Moratorium did / did not achieve its biggest goal, it still mattered because ...