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## Introduction

If one were to ask a student, or an adult for that matter, to name some famous Hispanic Americans, he or she would probably count no higher than the five fingers on one hand. United States Census Bureau data predicts that after the year 2000, not only will Hispanics become the largest ethnic group in the United States, but there will be no single ethnic majority. Clearly, the United States is increasingly becoming more linguistically and culturally diverse. Students need to be educated and must be encouraged to recognize the many contributions to our country made by all Americans.

The purpose of *Focus on Hispanic Americans* is to broaden teachers' and students' knowledge of the contributions made by notable contemporary Hispanic Americans. This book has been divided into five sections for easy reference: Education and

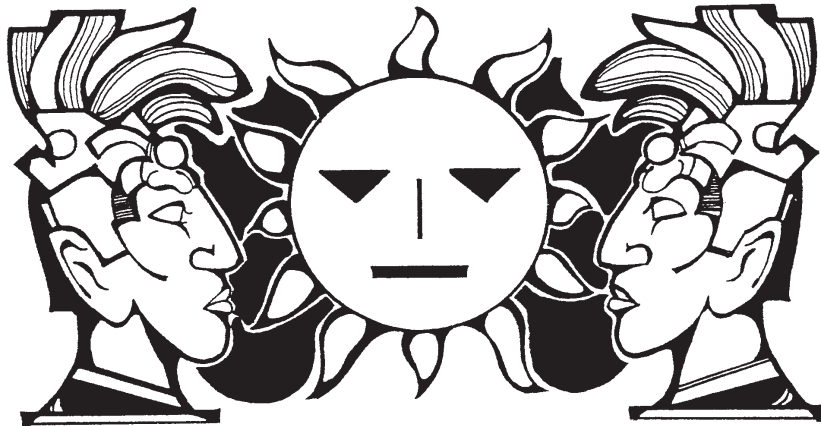
Scholarship, Fine Arts, Science and Medicine, Sports, and Civic Leadership. Within each section are biographical sketches of selected Hispanic Americans. On the same page with each biography is a picture or graphic representation of the Hispanic American. Next is a page of suggested activities which you can include in your lesson plans.

Following the activities is a bibliography of related reading material (trade books, fiction, and periodicals). A student's activity page is also supplied for each Hispanic American. The student page reinforces an aspect of the person's life or accomplishments.

*Focus on Hispanic Americans* will enable you to present some fascinating and motivational information to students. The inspiring stories of these men and women will encourage teachers and students to consider multiple perspectives when studying any field.

# Fine Arts






Below is a listing of Hispanic Americans represented in this section. Following each name is the Hispanic American's country of origin and a brief statement about his or her achievements.



<b>Hispanic American</b>	<b>Country of Origin</b>	<b>Achievements</b>
<b>Linda Ronstadt</b>	U.S.A.	Broadway actress and world famous musician
<b>Joan Baez</b>	U.S.A.	folk singer and political activist
<b>Amado Maurilio Pena</b>	U.S.A.	storyteller and artist in the Southwestern tradition
<b>Luis M. Valdez</b>	U.S.A.	playwright, dramatist, founder of El Teatro Campesino
<b>Carmen Zapata</b>	U.S.A.	actress, dancer, founder of Bilingual Foundation for the Arts
<b>José Antonio Burciaga</b>	U.S.A.	muralist, writer of social commentary
<b>Angela de Hoyos</b>	Mexico	bilingual poet
<b>Gloria and Emilio Estefan</b>	Cuba	world famous Latin musicians and community activists

# Suggested Activities

1. **Mexican Dance.** Try this simple dance called “Baile de los Viejitos” (Dance of the Old Ones) that is performed for the Day of the Dead. Dancers hobble to the dance area, single file, holding their backs and bending their knees as if it hurts to walk.

Counts	Steps	
2	Tap right heel on floor.	
2	Tap right toe on floor.	
2	Tap left heel on floor.	
2	Tap left toe on floor.	
Tap 3	Step right foot across left foot.	
Tap 3	Step left foot across right foot.	
Tap 5	Tap cane on floor.	
Hold 3	Twist head right.	
Hold 3	Twist head left.	
Hold 3	Twist trunk right.	
Hold 3	Twist trunk left.	
Tap 5	Tap cane on floor.	
Hold 3	Jump forward, feet together.	
Hold 3	Jump backward, feet together.	

Midway through the dance, “los viejitos” begin to jump around the dance with lots of energy, and then they resume the traditional steps. When the dance is over, they hobble out as they came in. Ask your local librarian for help in selecting a record or use your favorite music to try the dance.

2. **Comparison.** Attend a local production of a play, ballet, or dance. Compare the live production to television or video. How are they different? Alike? Which do you prefer? Why?

## Recommended Reading

*Arroz Con Leche* by José Luis Orozco (Scholastic Inc., 1994)

*Early Stages: The Professional Theater and the Young Actor* by Walter Williamson (Walker, 1986)

*Famous Mexican Americans* by Janet Morey and Wendy Dunn (Dutton, 1989)