

PAN-AMERICAN UNITY MURAL

ESL Lessons Prepared by Dayamudra Dennehy

NOTE TO EDUCATORS These are lessons that can be adapted to learners of all levels of language development. The focus may be on discussion, note-taking/infographics, paragraph writing, research, group collaboration, or public speaking/presentation.

Student work may also be compiled digitally, using platforms such as Adobe Spark pages, Adobe Spark video, on a Jamboard, or on Padlet.

THE PANELS

FOR EDUCATORS Start with the middle panel and move out, to panel 2 and 4, 1 and 5. In the middle panel, focus on Coatlicue and the ancient meeting the industrial. In the top of panels 2 and 4, notice San Francisco and the emphasis on work and leisure. On the bottom of panels 2 and 4, notice North American history in peace time and in war. In panels 1 and 5, look at the history of culture, innovation, and the arts.

More: [CCSF Mural Site](#)

FOR STUDENTS: Notice that there are 5 panels of this mural, and each of these 5 panels has a top and bottom section. For these activities you may:

- Write down in words what you see
- Sketch the images that interest you
- Discuss what you see with a classmate/small group.

THE MIDDLE PANEL: LOOK & REFLECT

Start in the middle and look at the top section.

1. There is a large image in this top panel. How is this image different on its left and right sides?
2. What do you think this image is?
3. Describe as many details as you see in this large image.
4. What questions do you have about this image?
5. What is interesting to you about this image? Explain why.
6. Sketch what you see, or how it makes you feel, in your notebook.

There are also two men in this top panel.

1. What are they doing?
2. Why do you think they are doing this?
3. What questions would you ask these men?

Now look at the bottom panel in the middle.

1. Describe all the characters (people or animals) that you see.
2. What are all these characters doing?
3. What do you think is the relationship between these characters?
4. Why do you think these characters are here, in the middle of this mural?
5. What is interesting to you about this image? Explain why.
6. Sketch what you see, how it makes you feel, in your notebook.

RESEARCH:

1. Investigate the name and meaning of this central image on this middle panel.
2. What questions do you have about this image now?
3. Why do you think this image is in the center of this mural?
4. Investigate the characters on this middle panel.
5. What questions do you have about these characters now?
6. Why do you think these characters are in the center of this mural?
7. What did you learn from your research about the relationship of this middle panel to the title of this mural, "Pan American Unity"?
8. What is most interesting to you now about this middle panel?

PRESENTATION: Describe the middle panel, in writing or speaking, and present questions you have about this panel. What is interesting to you about this middle section? Why?

PANELS 2 & 4: LOOK & REFLECT: Look at the top sections of these two panels.

1. SETTING: What is the location?
2. CHARACTERS: Who are the people/animals in these top sections?
3. PLOT: What are the characters doing in these panels?
4. What is interesting to you about this image? Explain why.
5. What questions do you have about these images in these two sections?
6. Sketch what you see in your notebook.

RESEARCH:

1. Investigate the characters and settings in these top sections of these panels.
2. Why do you think these images are in this section of this mural?
3. What is the relationship of these characters and settings to San Francisco? To Mexico?
4. What questions do you have about these images now?
5. What is the relationship of the top sections of panels 2 and 4 to the title of this mural, "Pan American Unity"?
6. What is most interesting to you now about this section?
7. Sketch what you see in your notebook.

PRESENTATION: Describe the top sections of panels 2 and 4, in writing or speaking, and present questions you have about this panel. What is interesting to you about this section? Why?

PANELS 1 & 5: LOOK & REFLECT

Look at the top sections of these two panels.

1. SETTING: What are the locations?
2. CHARACTERS: Who are the people/animals in these top sections?
3. PLOT: What are the characters doing in these panels?
4. What is interesting to you about this image? Explain why.
5. What questions do you have about these images in these 2 sections?
6. Sketch what you see, how it makes you feel, in your notebook.

RESEARCH:

1. Investigate the characters and settings in these top sections of these panels.
2. Why do you think these images are in the two ends of this mural?
3. What is the relationship of these characters and settings to San Francisco/California? To Mexico?
4. What questions do you have about these images now?
5. What is the relationship of the top sections of panels 1 and 5 to the title of this mural, "Pan American Unity"?
6. What is most interesting to you now about this section?
7. Sketch what you see., how it makes you feel, in your notebook.

PRESENTATION: Describe the top sections of panels 1 and 5 and present questions you have about this panel. What is interesting to you about this section? Why?

THE BOTTOM SECTIONS PANELS 1 & 5 AND 2 & 4: LOOK & REFLECT

1. Look at the bottom of panels 2 and 4 and describe the setting, characters, plots.
2. What is the relationship between these 2 bottom sections of these panels?
3. What questions do you have about these images in these sections?
4. What is most interesting to you about these two sections?
5. Look at the bottom sections of panels 1 and 5 and describe the setting characters and plots.
6. What is the relationship between these 2 bottom sections of these panels?
7. What questions do you have about these images in these two sections?
8. What is most interesting to you about these sections?
9. What is the relationship of these characters and settings to San Francisco/California? To Mexico?
10. Sketch what you see, how it makes you feel, in your notebook.

RESEARCH:

1. Investigate the characters and settings in these bottom sections of these panels.
2. Why do you think these images are in this position of this mural?
3. What questions do you have about these images now?
4. What is the relationship of these bottom sections of panels 1 and 5 and 2 and 4 to the title of this mural, "Pan American Unity"?
5. What is most interesting to you now about these sections? Why?

PRESENTATION:

1. Describe the top sections of panels 1 and 5, in writing or speaking, and present questions you have about this panel.
2. What is interesting to you about this section? Why?

YOUR FAVORITE PANEL Take a look at one of the panels that you like the most in the mural. Describe:

1. The setting
2. The characters
3. The plot
4. The conflict: which characters, symbols, or concepts appear to oppose one another?
5. How this conflict might be resolved in this setting. Use your imagination!

For this activity you may:

- Write a paragraph
- Tell this story in a drawing or series of images
- Discuss this perspective with a classmate/small group.

ADD A PANEL Imagine that you have been commissioned to add a 6th panel to the mural. Describe:

1. What would be the setting of this panel?
2. Which characters would you include?
3. What activities would they be doing?
4. How does your panel connect to the existing 5 panels?
5. How does your panel bring the mural up-to-date?
6. Add a sketch, drawing or image.

For this activity you may:

- Write a paragraph
- Tell this story in a drawing or series of images
- Discuss this perspective with a classmate/small group. Compare ideas.

THE CHARACTERS

FOR EDUCATORS In this section, students use their imagination to identify with the characters in the mural, after studying a bit of the history and people of the mural.

More: [CCSF Mural Site](#)

FOR STUDENTS: In this section, you will use your creativity to imagine connecting with the characters in this mural.

POINT OF VIEW

Take a look at one of the characters in the mural. Imagine that you are that character.

From your point-of-view as that character and tell us:

1. Who are you?
2. Where are you?
3. What are you doing?
4. How do you feel? Why? (Use your imagination!)
5. What is on your mind? Why?

For this activity you may:

- Write a paragraph
- Tell this story in a drawing or series of images
- Discuss this perspective with a classmate/small group. Compare ideas.

LETTER TO DIEGO RIVERA

1. Write a one-page letter in which you introduce yourself and your background to Diego Rivera.
2. Describe your reaction to this mural. What do you like? What is most interesting to you?
3. Ask Diego Rivera questions about his mural, career, and life.

Format this like a proper letter that you would send someone. Be sure to sign it.

LETTER TO A CHARACTER

Find one of the characters in the mural and write that character a letter. In your letter:

1. Introduce yourself
2. Describe similarities you share. Use your imagination!
3. Ask them questions about what they are doing in the panel.

ADD YOURSELF

Imagine that Diego Rivera wants to paint you in the mural. Describe:

1. Which panel would you be in?
2. Which characters would you be next to?
3. What activities would you be doing?
4. Why did you choose this part of the mural?

For this activity you may:

- Write a paragraph
- Tell this story in a drawing or series of images
- Discuss this perspective with a classmate/small group.

WHO IS PRESENT AND WHO MISSING?

1. Who is included in each panel?
2. Who is left out?
3. Why did Rivera make these choices?
4. Who would you add? Explain why.

For this activity you may:

- Write a paragraph
- Tell this story in a drawing or series of images
- Discuss this perspective with a classmate/small group.

RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS



[Dayamudra's Intro Slide Deck](#)

[CCSF Mural Site](#)

[Student Project Sample](#)



