

3-5 | Lesson 4



LESSON 4

TEXT TITLE

The Latin Times - May 1963, front page (obtained from Hoosier Latinos, p.47)

TEXT MAIN IDEA

This is the front page of The Latin Times from May 1963. The text prominently features a cartoon written in Spanish that depicts an armed man looking for someone who is “going to pay” and he is being stopped by another man who tells him that the weapon of the Latino community is in the voting booth. There is a political commentary piece written in Spanish and a sidebar written in English. The sidebar shares local news about new teachers who were hired in the community and the vacant teaching seats that haven’t been filled. There is also an editor’s note that points out that the names of the new teachers are not Latino names and attributes that to the policy of someone currently in office who is running for re-election. The editor’s note implores readers to vote for Nicosia. There is also the beginning of a story about George Lamb, who was the City Controller and was later indicted in a bribery scheme.

This excerpt demonstrates how The Latin Times was able to keep East Chicago residents informed of local news and events that were having an impact on the Latino community and potentially influence people to take action, for example, by applying for open jobs and voting.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

The unit essential questions developed through this lesson are...

- What are different ways that people can advocate for the causes they care about?

CONTENT OBJECTIVE

By engaging in this lesson, students will know/understand that...

- The Latin Times sought to both inform and persuade its readers using articles, editorials, and cartoons written in Spanish and English.
- The editors of the newspaper felt the Latino community was being slighted by local officials and encouraged readers to take action.
- Writing can be a form of activism because it can influence behavior.

LITERACY OBJECTIVE

By engaging in this lesson, students will strengthen their ability to...

- Draw inferences from the text and support inferences with details from the text.

STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. (RI 4.1)

LAUNCH (5 MINUTES)

Yesterday we read an article that proclaimed that The Latin Times changed the East Chicago community in the 1950s-1980s. The article we read reported that the newspaper helped Latino residents become more included in the community. Today we're going to explore that idea a little more as we focus on one of our unit's essential questions: What are different ways that people can advocate for the causes they care about?

Today we're going to answer that question by reading a primary source, which means we are going to have to draw inferences from the text in order to come up with our own ideas about how writing can spark changes in a community and of course our inferences have to be backed up with textual evidence.

Direct student attention to today's text. *This was the front page of The Latin Times on May 4, 1963. Let's take a few minutes to notice some of the features. Give students 1-2 to minutes to skim independently. Call on 2-3 students to share what they notice. Key things to elevate include:*

- Some is written in Spanish, some in English
- There is a cartoon written in Spanish that is communicating social/political commentary.

Let's jump in to see what we can infer about how this newspaper had an impact on the Latino community.

READING ALOUD / ENGAGE (15 MINUTES)

Together let's try to infer what the cartoon is communicating and consider how it might connect to our essential question. If possible, solicit translations from students. Annotate the cartoon with English translation.

- *Man with gun: Where is "pansoncito"? [slang/insult for a person]. Now he's going to pay!*
- *Man in suit: No, voting is the way.*

- *Voting booth: The weapon of the Latino community is the voting booth.*

What message can we infer from this cartoon? When you are discussing with your partner, be sure to name specific details that help you draw that conclusion.

Students turn & talk to discuss the question for 1-2 minutes. Listen to partnerships as students discuss; then select 1–2 students to share their ideas. After sharing, highlight this reading skill with a brief think aloud:

We can infer that the author of this cartoon wants its readers to believe in the power of voting and influence the community's behavior. I drew this conclusion because the man in the suit is stopping the man with the gun from engaging in unproductive behavior and telling him, "no" because voting is the way.

When we read the next section, let's continue to think about in what ways this publication was a form of Latino activism. As a heads up, you will see this written at the end of the editor's note "Viva Nicosia". That means "long live Nicosia". At this time, John Nicosia was running for mayor of East Chicago against Walter Jeorse who had been mayor for the previous 12 years.

Read English sidebar.

What can we infer about the editor's beliefs? Be sure to share specific details to support your inference.

Students turn & talk to discuss the question for 2-3 minutes. Listen to partnerships as students discuss; then select 1-2 students to share their ideas.

- The editor believed that Nicosia was a better candidate than the other person running. (Evidence: "... our only answer can be, VIVA NICOSIA!")
- The editor believed that the reason Latino teachers were not hired is connected to the policies of the person running against Nicosia. (Evidence: "This policy is the policy of a man who asks for the Latin vote.")
- The editor believes that Latino teachers should be hired in East Chicago. (Evidence: "This employment of teachers is well and good... but notice...")

DISCUSS (10 MINUTES)

How might the May 4, 1963 issue of *The Latin Times* have had an impact on the community's behavior and sparked change? Use text evidence to support your answer.

Exemplary student responses:

- *The Latin Times* might have had an impact on voting behaviors in the Latino population of East Chicago. In the May 4, 1963 issue of *The Latin Times*, the editor was raising awareness of which teacher hiring decisions were being made in the community and

highlighting the fact that the names of those hired were not Latino names. The editor then states “this policy is the policy of a man who asks for the Latin vote, our only answer can be, VIVA NICOSIA!” This sentence demonstrates how the editor used the newspaper to communicate their opinion about the failings of the leaders of the city and encouraged readers to vote for a different candidate.

- Since the newspaper was written in both English and Spanish, *The Latin Times* might have motivated more Latino residents to vote. The editor of the newspaper used articles, editor’s notes, and cartoons written in either Spanish or English to send a clear message about voting being a powerful way to spark change. In the May 4, 1963 issue, the front page featured a cartoon written in Spanish that conveyed the message that voting is the “weapon” of the Latino community, in other words, a way to deal with the injustice of being wronged. Publishing the cartoon in Spanish made the pro-voting message more accessible to the Spanish speaking residents of East Chicago.

Supporting Questions:

1. What were some of the editor’s beliefs? How do you know?
2. How did the editor convey their beliefs? How might that have had an impact on readers?

WRITE (10 MINUTES)

Students independently write a paragraph in response to the following prompt:

How might the May 4, 1963 issue of *The Latin Times* have had an impact on the community’s behavior and sparked change? Use text evidence to support your answer.

Great discussion, class! Now, we have an opportunity to reflect on our discussion and write your individual responses to today’s question. Considering the question and the ideas that your peers shared, craft your own written response. Remember to begin your response with a clear topic sentence that responds to the question asked. Then, include specific details from the newspaper to support your answer. I’ll be circulating to take a look at your great ideas and to offer feedback on the strength of the evidence you’ve selected.



EXIT TICKET

1. Which detail best supports the idea that the editor of *The Latin Times* believed in the importance of voting?
 - a. “This employment of teachers is well and good for the city and our children in general...”
 - b. From the cartoon: “Maquina de votar... la arma de la colonia Latina.” (The voting booth... the weapon of the Latino community.)
 - c. “This policy is the policy of a man who asks for the Latin vote...”
 - d. “All teachers currently employed were rehired, according to Supt. Dan Simon.”
2. How did the editor of *The Latin Times* convey their beliefs to readers in the May 4, 1963 issue of the newspaper? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
