

# LIBERATED ETHNIC STUDIES MODEL CURRICULUM



## MOJADA: A MEDEA IN LOS ANGELES

Grade Level: 7th-12th

**Purpose (What will students learn from this lesson?):** The plight and complexity in the lives of many undocumented immigrants living in the United States, gentrification in the greater Los Angeles area, cultural preservation vs. forced assimilation/acclulturation, and Greek/Indigenous mythology and tragedy as told through oral and/or theatrical traditions. How to express and connect to the complex issues within the play through the various characters and their archetypes and embodied performance.

### Unit Enduring Understandings Alignment:

- We understand and challenge all forms of oppression and their manifestations by conceptualizing and enacting transformative projects of agency and resistance.
- We understand that while studying forms of oppression, it is also critical to engage ourselves in developing critical consciousness, reclaiming hope and healing.

### Lesson Guiding Questions:

- How do immigration journeys impact people in their new home?
- What is the impact on immigrants who choose to acculturate, assimilate and/or retain their home culture?
- How is gentrification a complicated process?

### Essential Skills:

- Speaking & Listening
- Making Inferences
- Informative Writing
- Research Skills
- Social Emotional Health: Empathy and Understanding

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- Collaboration/Group Work

### **Cultural Wealth (Yosso, p. 78):**

- **Aspirational capital** refers to “the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers. This resiliency is evidenced in those who allow themselves and their children to dream of possibilities beyond their present circumstances, often without the objective means to attain those goals” (p. 77-78). *The characters of this play represent folx who migrate in order to achieve their hopes, goals and dreams.*
- **Social capital** can be understood as “networks of people and community resources. These peer and other social contacts can provide both instrumental and emotional support to navigate through society’s institutions... Mutualistas or mutual aid societies are an example of how historically, immigrants to the US and indeed, African Americans even while enslaved, created and maintained social networks... This tradition of ‘lifting as we climb’ has remained the motto of the National Association of Colored Women’s Clubs since their organization in 1896” (p. 79-80). *Several characters of this play represent those who become resources for other members of the same immigrant community.*

### **Ethnic Studies Principles Alignment:**

- 3. Center and place high value on pre-colonial, ancestral, indigenous, diasporic, familial, and marginalized knowledge;
- 5. Challenge imperialist/colonial hegemonic beliefs and practices on the ideological, institutional, interpersonal, and internalized levels;
- 7. Conceptualize, imagine, and build new possibilities for post-imperial life that promotes collective narratives of transformative resistance, critical hope, and radical healing.

### **Standards Alignment:**

- English Language Arts Standards » Reading: Literature  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.2  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.5  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.7
- English Language Arts Standards » History/Social Studies  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8
- CA ELD Standards  
A. Collaborative 1. Exchanging information and ideas with others through oral collaborative discussions on a range of social and academic topics.

### **Modifications, Accommodations, Resources for Multilingual Students:**

● Translation of key vocabulary terms	● Use of movement, music and props to
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Close readings of pivotal scenes in the play, specifically those with critical vocabulary, concepts, symbolism, etc. required to understand the overarching themes and enduring understandings.</li> <li>● Translation into home language of some of the close readings of pivotal scenes in the play, specifically those with critical vocabulary, concepts, symbolism, etc. required to understand the overarching themes and enduring understandings.</li> </ul>	<p>express universal concepts and enduring understandings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Note-catcher documents for close readings and translated texts.</li> </ul>
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**Critical Vocabulary (also found on Critical Concepts slides 8-13):**

<b>CRITICAL VOCABULARY</b>	<b>Definition and Rationale for choosing this word, phrase, or concept</b>	<b>Idea for pre-teaching or front-loading the concept.</b>
<b>Gentrification</b>	<p>Gentrification: a process of neighborhood change that includes economic change in a historically disinvested neighborhood —by means of real estate investment and new higher-income residents moving in - as well as demographic change - not only in terms of income level, but also in terms of changes in the education level or racial make-up of residents.</p> <p>Gentrification is complex -- to understand it, there are three key things to consider:</p> <p>The historic conditions, especially policies and practices that made communities susceptible to gentrification.</p> <p>The way that central city disinvestment and investment patterns are taking place today as a result of these conditions.</p> <p>And the ways that gentrification impacts communities.</p>	<p>Teach this using the slides before beginning the “Readers Theatre of the Play.”</p>

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<p><b>Redlining</b></p>	<p>From the 1930s through the late 60s, standards set by the federal government and carried out by banks, explicitly labeled neighborhoods home to predominantly people of color as “risky” and “unfit for investment.” This practice meant that people of color were denied access to loans that would enable them to buy or repair homes in their neighborhood. Resource: Take a look at redlining maps in your community: “Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America.” University of Richmond Digital Scholarship Lab.</p>	<p>Teach this using the slides before beginning the “Readers Theatre of the Play.”</p>
<p><b>Central city disinvestment and investment patterns</b></p>	<p>Today, both people and capital are flooding back into these historically disinvested neighborhoods. Why? Relative affordability. In many US cities, the rental market has gotten increasingly expensive, and even moderate income earners are on the hunt for lower housing costs.</p> <p>For example, in San Francisco, the median rent of a typical 2BR apartment went up nearly 70% between 2011 and 2017. Source: Zillow Data. Older, historic housing stock that appeals to new residents</p> <p>Close proximity to city centers, where jobs, restaurants, and art spaces are increasingly located.</p> <p>Revitalization -- cities are investing in some of these neighborhoods with improved transit access and infrastructure in part to draw in newcomers.</p>	<p>Teach this using the slides before beginning the “Readers Theatre of the Play.”</p>
<p><b>Community</b></p>	<p>a social group of any size whose members either reside in a specific locality, share government, and/or have a common cultural background, struggles, views, or history.</p>	<p>Teach this using the slides before beginning the “Readers Theatre of the Play.”</p>
<p><b>Counter-narrative</b></p>	<p>refers to the narratives that arise from the vantage point of those who have been historically marginalized. The idea of “counter” implies a space of resistance against the status quo or the “dominant/master narrative.”</p>	<p>Teach this using the slides before beginning the “Readers Theatre of the Play.”</p>

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<b>Cultural retention</b>	the act of preserving or retaining the culture of a specific group of people, in particular the cultures of those that have been historically marginalized, or cultures that are feared of being lost or erased for a multitude of reasons.	Teach this using the slides before beginning the “Readers Theatre of the Play.”
<b>Migration</b>	movement of people, voluntarily or involuntarily, from one region to another.	Teach this using the slides before beginning the “Readers Theatre of the Play.”

### C1: Cultural Ritual and/or Energizer Slides 1-7

**Title of Cultural Ritual/Energizer:** Worksheet for Cultural Energizer: Mojada's Dreams

**Description:**

How will you engage the students? This energizer contributes to setting the “culture” of the classroom while also connecting the main concepts of lesson plan to the students prior experiences/knowledge/interests.

We encourage Ethnic Studies lessons starting off with land and ancestor acknowledgement. Example provided in the slides. *The slides are to be used before beginning the close read via “Readers Theatre” Once you’ve cast the characters, you can have the students who were not cast use the Worksheet for Guided Questions Throughout the Play linked above.*

	DESCRIPTION	TIME
	<p><b>Building Background - You can use any of these related documents to build background before reading the play.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Research the playwright <a href="http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/arts/la-ca-cmg-etty-">http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/arts/la-ca-cmg-etty-</a></li> <li>● <a href="http://villa-mojada-medea-los-angeles-20150906-story.html">villa-mojada-medea-los-angeles-20150906-story.html</a></li> <li>● Research the garment industry in Los Angeles <a href="http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/9/9/sweats-hop-conditions-in-la-garment-industry.html">http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/9/9/sweats-hop-conditions-in-la-garment-industry.html</a></li> <li>● Research traditional roles of women in Ancient Greece <a href="https://www.reading.ac.uk/Ure/tour/citizenship/gender.php">https://www.reading.ac.uk/Ure/tour/citizenship/gender.php</a></li> <li>● The basics of Greek tragedy and the tragic hero <a href="http://faculty.gvsu.edu/websterm/tragedy.htm">http://faculty.gvsu.edu/websterm/tragedy.htm</a></li> </ul>	Varies

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	<p>You can use this worksheet with guiding questions to guide students reading from building background to completion of reading the play.</p> <p><a href="#">Worksheet for Guided Questions Throughout the Pl...</a></p>	30 min
Slide 1-2	Introduction Slides	2 min
Slide 3	Land Acknowledgement	2 min
Slide 4	Ancestor Acknowledgement	4 min
Slides 5-6 & worksheet	<p>Cultural Energizer</p> <p><a href="#">Worksheet for Cultural Energizer: Mojada's Dreams</a></p>	20 min
Slide 7	<p>Watch the Trailer to “Mojada: A Medea in Los Angeles”</p> <p><i>Use the protocol below to reflect on the play that is about to be read.</i></p> <p>Watch Reflect Pair Share</p>	15 min

## C2: Critical Concepts

	DESCRIPTION	TIME
Slide 8	<b>Gentrification</b>	5 min
Slide 9	<b>Redlining</b>	5 min
Slide 10	<b>Central city disinvestment and investment patterns</b>	5 min
Slide 11	Community Counter narrative Migration	5 min
Slide 12	Cultural Retention Assimilation/Acculturation	5 min
Slide 13	<b>Bruja</b>	5 min

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<b>Next step</b>	<p>Chisme Curandera El Guaco Migra Mojada Náhuatl</p>	
	<p><b>Worksheet for Critical Concepts (Internet needed)</b>  <b>Worksheet for Critical Concepts</b></p>	<b>15 min</b>

### C3: Community Collaboration and/or Critical Cultural Production

STEP	DESCRIPTION	TIME
Slide 14	<p><b>Cast the play with students for each character. You can re-cast for each scene or after several scenes. Slide 14 has pictures of students reading the play in a Los Angeles classroom using a Readers Theatre format.</b></p> <p>-</p> <p><b>Guided questions can be used to facilitate a close reading.</b></p>	<b>2-3 class periods.</b>

### C4: Conclusive Dialogue/Critical Circular Exchange

<p><b>Connection:</b> How is this relevant to students? How is it relevant to the unit? How do you bring back to the PURPOSE of the unit?</p>	<p>Community circles! Form several depending on the size of your class, ideally 6 to 8 students per circle.</p> <p>Potential questions:</p> <p>Why did Medea do what she did? Did she have another choice? If so, what was it?</p> <p>Why did Medea want to hold on to the safety of her culture and why did Jason choose a different path?</p> <p>What is the theme of this play? How do you know? What was Luis Alfaro, the playwright, wanting to illuminate for us?</p> <p>How does understanding gentrification, redlining, etc. help us to understand the complexity of what immigrants face when trying to find subsistence in the United States?</p>
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<p><b>Assessment:</b> How will the students be assessed?</p>	<p>Students will be assessed by their meaningful participation in the culminating community circles. A rubric is not provided but is suggested.</p>
<p><b>Evaluation:</b> How will the effectiveness of this lesson plan be evaluated?</p>	<p>How well students are able to explain the connection between concepts like gentrification and the plight of an immigrant laborer. How well students are able to discern multiple meanings from the text, including perspectives. How well students can explain the ancient Greek tragedy and the applicability to the modern stories of immigration from Mexico and Central America to the United States.</p> <p><i>The students should write or record a culminating reflection based on their responses and the responses of their peers in the community circle.</i></p>

### RESOURCES AND NOTES

#### Materials:

<p><b>THE PLAY:</b></p> <p> <b>Copy of MOJADA-NOT FOR OFFICIAL USE.pdf</b></p> <p>This play cannot be used for a public performance/production without the permission of the playwright or the legal representative for the playwright.</p>	<p><b>BUILDING BACKGROUND RESOURCES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Research the playwright <a href="http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/arts/la-ca-cmgetty-villa-mojada-medea-los-angeles-20150906-story.html">http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/arts/la-ca-cmgetty-villa-mojada-medea-los-angeles-20150906-story.html</a></li> <li>● Research the garment industry in Los Angeles <a href="http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/9/9/sweatshop-conditions-in-la-garment-industry.html">http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/9/9/sweatshop-conditions-in-la-garment-industry.html</a></li> <li>● Research traditional roles of women in Ancient Greece <a href="https://www.reading.ac.uk/Ure/tour/citizenship/gender.php">https://www.reading.ac.uk/Ure/tour/citizenship/gender.php</a></li> <li>● The basics of Greek tragedy and the tragic hero <a href="http://faculty.gvsu.edu/websterm/tragedy.htm">http://faculty.gvsu.edu/websterm/tragedy.htm</a></li> </ul>
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