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To the Teacher

Who Should Use This Book?

This is the first comprehensive book about the role of Latinos in the bloodiest conflict ever to take place on U.S. soil. For this reason, I have tried to make it accessible to as wide a range of students as possible. This book was written for the following students:

1. **All students studying the Civil War.** As described in the section Multicultural Education for All Students (page 93), the role of Latinos in this epic conflict has been excluded from most U.S. history textbooks. This book is unique in that it enables the teacher to integrate the detailed contributions of Latinos into a comprehensive Civil War unit. Moreover, many of the biographies in this book contain information about other key events in U.S. history related to the lives of these six heroes: the War of 1812, westward expansion, the Texas War of Independence, the Mexican War, and so on.
2. **All students studying biographies of famous Americans.** Biographies are widely used in many subjects to personalize difficult concepts, to motivate students to develop reading and writing skills, and to promote cultural pride or cross-cultural understanding. The biographies in this book contain detailed information about six Latino heroes' ancestors, childhoods, Civil War contributions, and later achievements. They are thorough enough to be used along with other biographies of famous Americans found in libraries and textbooks.
3. **English learners, or LEP Students.** Intermediate or advanced English learners—especially Latinos—will be eager to read about the role of these six bilingual Latinos in the Civil War. The book will spark an interest in

U.S. history and promote cultural pride, while helping English learners enrich their vocabulary and improve their reading, writing, and thinking skills.

How to Use This Book

There are several different ways to approach this book. Each of the six biographies is designed to be used by a whole class, by a group, or by an individual. Each biography contains a glossary of 15 to 20 words that might be difficult for English learners and younger readers. Each biography is divided into three sections: Before the Civil War, During the Civil War, and After the Civil War. Following each biography is a:

- vocabulary crossword puzzle based on the glossary words
- comprehension check divided into Before, During, and After the Civil War sections
- creative project involving writing and/or drawing
- map activity utilizing a variety of map skills

Each biography can be read separately and in any sequence; however, the book flows best if the chapters are read in order. Additionally, since the comprehension questions are divided by section, the biographies can be read one section at a time or divided up within a class or group.

To provide some context, I have included an introduction about the three main topics of this book: heroes, Latinos, and the Civil War. The biographies are divided geographically into two parts: The Civil War in the East and The Civil War in the West. The three biographies in the Civil War in the East are preceded by a short overview of the entire war from Fort Sumter to Appomattox. The three biographies in The Civil War in the West are preceded by a summary of

events west of the Mississippi River—primarily Texas and New Mexico. These lesser-known theaters of the war are often referred to as The Far West in other books on the Civil War. These background sections need not be read in order to understand the biographies. Brief descriptions of key battles and events are included in each biography.

The Teacher Guide contains information about using this book with all students as part of a multicultural approach to the Civil War—Multicultural Education for All Students. It also has detailed information about using this book with English learners. However, many of the techniques described in the section Strategies for Using This Book with English Learners (page 95) can be used by many mainstream students as well. For example, scaffolding and cooperative learning, two strategies described in detail in the Teacher Guide, have also proven to be effective with mainstream students.

The final Assessment Project (page 98) can also be used with all students. The only difference is that more proficient English-speaking students can be expected to include more detailed writing in the project.

The time lines and maps were prepared for the Teacher Resources for Assessment Project (page 101), but they can also be used with each biography without undertaking the entire assessment project. The follow-up ideas for researching twentieth-century Latinos are also an excellent resource for all students.

Finally, there are appendixes: Web Sites on Latino Heroes, Guide to Military Ranks, and Lati-

nos in the Civil War—Congressional Medal of Honor Recipients.

Objectives

Because of the multiple uses of this book, I have divided the objectives into three categories: general, social studies, and language arts.

General

Students will

- describe the contributions of Latinos to the Civil War
- gain an appreciation of the United States as a multicultural nation

Social Studies

Students will

- select, organize, and interpret information from written sources
- read and interpret maps
- label events on a map
- make a parallel time line

Language Arts

Students will

- identify vocabulary in context
- use the writing process to compose paragraphs, poetry, and letters
- write a biographical summary
- read for comprehension
- evaluate reasons for people's actions

Name _____

Date _____

What Is a Hero?



The word *hero* means different things to different people. To some, a hero is someone who makes a personal sacrifice by doing something dramatic and courageous for others—for example, rescuing people from a burning building or risking one's life in battle. Showing bravery in a specific event represents one kind of hero.

But a hero can also be someone who overcomes obstacles or challenges in life to accomplish something over a long period of time. What this type of hero does may not be as dramatic, but it is no less significant. Heroes can be famous role models in entertainment, sports, business, or politics. Or, they can be everyday, ordinary people, such as parents who work all day for their



children, or volunteers who help their community.

In this book, the heroes are persons of Latino heritage who showed their heroism through dramatic, courageous action in the bloodiest war ever fought in America: the Civil War. However, there were many other Latinos who did not fight in the war but who, nonetheless, displayed their heroism by carrying on with their daily lives in support of families, friends, and community.

You, too, can be a hero without participating in some dramatic event like a war or disaster. As you read the lives of these six Civil War heroes, think about how you can apply their determination, courage, and sacrifice to your own life.

Latino Heroes in U.S. History



Latinos are people whose heritage can be traced back to Spain or Latin America. These people have played a significant—though largely unrecognized—role in the history of the United States. The earliest explorers of what is now the United States were Latinos. These explorers from Spain (known as *conquistadors*) are common names in U.S. history books. They include Juan Ponce de León, who explored Florida in

1513; Francisco Coronado, who explored the Southwest in 1542; and Hernando de Soto, who was the first European to see the Mississippi River. After that, Latino names do not appear in most U.S. history books until the 1960's, when the lives of Latino leaders such as Cesar Chavez are included. What happened to Latinos between the 1500's and the late 1960's?



(continued)

