

# ◆ Classroom Spice ◆

Volume 2, Issue 1 Dr. Jeanne Mather, Editor

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## Hispanic & Native American Resources

September 15th - October 15th is designated as Hispanic Month, while the month of November is designated Native American Month. If you are interested in finding resources to help you incorporate information about these groups into your lessons the following may be of assistance.

Resources with a Hispanic flavor include: *Mexico: A Literature-Based Multicultural Unit* (Grade 1-3) by Betsy Franco (Evan-Moor Pub.), ISBN 1-55799-256-8 which includes cross-curriculum activities; *Fiesta! Mexico's Great Celebrations* by Elizabeth Silverthorne (Millbrook Press), ISBN 1-56294-836-9 with historical information and related activities; *Kids Explore America's Hispanic Heritage* by Westridge Young Writers Workshop (John Muir Pub.), ISBN 1-56261-034-1 written by kids for kids with wonderful information, recipes, & activities; and *The Hispanic Question Collection*, by Linda Schwartz (Learning Works), ISBN 0-88160-263-9, a collection of over 200 questions about Hispanic history, geography, culture, etc.

There are so many Native American resources, you may not be familiar with the following. One of my favorites is *More Than Moccasins: A Kid's Activity Guide to Traditional North* (Continued on page 4)

## Thanksgiving and Other Harvest Holidays

As fall approaches thoughts of football, autumn, Halloween, and Thanksgiving arise. This gives teachers a great opportunity to share the history of fall festivals, not only Thanksgiving, but *Chung Ch'ui*, the Festival of *Thesmosphoria*, *Sulloth*, *Deepavali*, *Cerelia*, and *Rosh Hashanah*. Take a few moments and learn about fall festivals around the world.

Thanksgiving was first celebrated in **October** of 1621 to celebrate the alliance of the Pilgrims and the Native Americans which enabled the Pilgrims to survive their first year in the New World. A national day of thanksgiving following the harvest was suggested in the late 1770's by the Continental Congress, and was officially proclaimed by Abraham Lincoln in 1863. Canada celebrates Thanksgiving similarly to the United States of America, but on the second Monday in

October.

Related to this is the National Day of Mourning. The first such day was in 1970 and was a response to the actions of The Commonwealth of Massachusetts. At that time the Commonwealth asked Frank James, Wampanoag leader, to deliver a speech.

When it became known that his speech was an angry statement regarding the historical oppression of Native Americans, the Commonwealth "uninvited" him.

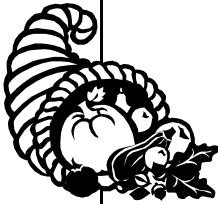
Many looked upon this action to silence a voicing of historical wrongs done to the Native American people as shameful. Thus, the National Day of Mourning was born. It is recognized each year by supporters who stand atop Coles Hill overlooking Plymouth Rock.

The ancient Greeks honored their goddess of corn at The Festival of *Thesmosphoria*. In autumn the married women would build leafy shelters furnished with couches made

of plants. This was followed by a day of fasting and then a feast in hopes of the goddess granting them a good harvest. The Romans similarly honored their grain goddess in an October festival called *Cerelia*, with music, parades, games, sports and a thanksgiving feast.

*Chung Ch'ui*, is an ancient Chinese harvest festival. The 15th day of the 8th month was recognized as the moon's birthday. Special moon cakes were baked and while Americans speak of "the man in the moon" the Chinese speak of "the rabbit in the moon," thus their moon cakes had a picture of a rabbit stamped on them. During this three day celebration there was also a thanksgiving feast. But this celebration was not only to celebrate the Moon's birthday, but also to remember the victory the Chinese had over an invading army. The Chinese used messages baked in moon cakes to plan an attack against the invaders.

*Sukkoth* is a Jewish (Continued on page 3)



Harvest Festivals

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## Famous Hispanics and Native Americans

### DID YOU KNOW:

#### One of our Astronauts is Native American?

Lt. John B. Herrington, born in Wetumka, OK, is America's first Native American Astronaut.

#### Many English words are borrowed from Native American Languages?

Most borrowed words are from the Algonquin language. Borrowed words include chipmunk, raccoon, skunk, moose, opossum, hickory, and pecan.

#### Tinker Air Force Base is named in honor of an Osage pilot?

Clarence Tinker was placed in charge of the remnants of the Air Corps in Hawaii following Pearl Harbor's attack. He reorganized & trained these forces, along with those which would later win the Battle of Midway. He attained the rank of Major General, and was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal.

Other than Ricky Martin, Jennifer Lopez, and Enrique Iglesias how informed are you and/or your students about successful Hispanic and Native Americans? This is a great conversation starter and research motivator. Take a few minutes and see how well you do. Information for these questions came primarily from *Extraordinary American Indians*, by Susan Avery & Linda Skinner, Children's Press; ISBN 0-516-00583-9; *The Biographical Dictionary of Hispanic Americans*, by Nicholas Meyer, Facts on File, ISBN 0-8160-3280-7; *Native American Scientists* and *Hispanic Scientists* by Jetty St. John, Capstone Press, ISBN 1-56065-35-0 & 1-56065-360-4; and *Hispanic*, September 1996. (Answers are provided on page 4.)

#### *WHO AM I?*

<u>Clue</u>	<u>Identity</u>
1. ____ In 1889 she became the first Native American woman physician	A. Will Rogers B. Luis Alvarez
2. ____ <b>1964</b> world record setting, Olympic athlete	C. Carlos Ramirez D. Eloy Rodriguez
3. ____ In 1986 became the first Hispanic American astronaut in space	E. Susan La Flesche F. Jim Thorpe
4. ____ First woman chief of the Cherokee Nation	G. Wilma Mankiller H. Billy Mills
5. ____ Pima soldier & World War II Hero, immortalized as one of six who raised the flag over Iwo Jima	I. Sequoyah J. Ira Hayes
6. ____ One of the most sought-after composers in Hollywood	K. Carlos Finlay M. Scottie Henderson
7. ____ Navajo marine biologist whose lab was featured in <i>Free Willy 2</i>	N. Frank Chang-Diaz O. Te Ata
8. ____ Inventor of the Cherokee writing system	P. Lalo Schifrin
9. ____ Nobel winning Hispanic physicist, & leader in the asteroid theory of dinosaur extinction	
10. ____ Cherokee cowboy humorist, writer, & actor	
11. ____ Established a new area of research involving the study of plants & other natural products used "by" animals as medicines (zoopharmacognosy)	
12. ____ Tishomingo born Chickasaw storyteller, declared an Oklahoma State Treasure in the 1990's	
13. ____ Olympic athlete who later played professional football "and" baseball	
14. ____ Biomedical engineer working on an artificial pancreas to help diabetics, as well as skin implants	
15. ____ Hispanic physician whose work on Yellow Fever enabled the completion of the Panama Canal	

(Harvest Festivals—cont'd from page 1)

harvest festival which has been celebrated over 3000 years. This festival lasts eight days and is a recognition of the huts (*succots*) Moses and the Israelites lived in during their 40 years in the desert. During *Sukkoth* the Jewish people build small temporary huts of branches in which they eat their evening meals comprised of fruits and vegetables.

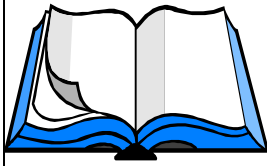
The ancient Egyptian harvest festival featured a parade, music, dancing and sports. Out of fear that their god of vegetation and fertility would become angry the farmers would weep and pretend to be grief-stricken when harvesting their crops. Note also that in Egypt harvest occurs in Spring, so the harvest festival was actually a Spring event.

In Malaysia, the Festival of Lights, Deepavali, is a day celebrated around October and November. It is the day when good forces overcome evil and involves decorating with tiny lights, prayers, incense, and food.

So you see, fall festivals and giving thanks are a worldwide tradition. Help your students become global citizens. Try and share similarities and differences in traditions and celebrations found around the world.

## The Literature Connection

Introducing the reader to books which help promote multicultural education is a regular feature of *Classroom Spice*. A prime example of that is *Under Our Skin: Kids Talk About Race*, by Debbie Holsclaw Birdseye and Tom Birdseye (Holiday House), ISBN 0-8234-1325-X which relates the stories of six twelve and thirteen year olds of varying ethnicities and their perceptions on race. A wonderful treatment of a very important topic.



Since the fall includes Hispanic Month and Native American Month the rest of this issue's reviews will concentrate on children's Hispanic or Native American literature. See what great books are available with a possible tie-in to your content/grade level.

An excellent secondary level or reference text is *Indian Chiefs* by Russell Freedman ISBN 0-590-45357-2. It relates the story of the decline of the American Indian from the perspective of six great Indian Chiefs: Red Cloud, Satanta, Quanah Parker, Washakie, Joseph, and Sitting Bull. It tells of the historical events, and the lives of those who waged war, of those

who waged peace, and of those who lost so much—fascinating.

An elementary level book *Buffalo Days* by Diane Hoyt-Godsmith (Holiday House), ISBN 0-8234-1327-6, tells the story of a Crow family whose responsibilities include care of the tribe's buffalo herd and follows them as they celebrate the Buffalo Days and Crow Fair and Rodeo. It provides a look at how people today are trying to maintain their cultural roots.

Tundra Books publishes a series on Native dwellings, which is very informative. For example in *Houses of Adobe* by Bonnie Shemie ISBN 0-516-08173-X we learn about the architecture and building techniques of the Southwestern Native Americans including pueblos, cliff dwellings, and kivas, plus information about how Native Americans were able to live in such arid regions.

Bill Wallace's *The Final Freedom* is a great middle school and up book about a young boy who meets Geronimo while the latter is imprisoned at Ft. Sill. It tells of friendship in an Oklahoma setting.

For a more current day story, and higher reading level, try *The Owl's Son* by Janet Campbell Hale. This tells the story of a Native American high school student's

(Continued on page 4)

## Halloween History

Is Halloween an American holiday? Actually Halloween is a combination of several worldwide traditions and beliefs. For example it comes in part from early Christian's All Saints Day, November 1st. On that day Catholics would celebrate a mass called *Allhallowmas* (the mass for all Hallowes or saintly people who did not have a special day of their own).

Another belief about Halloween says that it originated as the Celtic New Year's Eve, October 31st. That was the day when the disembodied spirits of those who had died within the preceding year would go in search of new bodies to inhabit. To ward off being taken over, people would dress up to scare the spirits away.

scare the spirits away.

Related to Halloween, is the Day of the Dead, *Día de Muertos*, celebrated by Mexican-Americans on the first and second day of November to honor family and friends who have died during the year. Many Mexican and Latin Americans believe that the souls of their departed relatives return to share a feast with the living. The celebration includes small altars in each home surrounded by pictures and other mementos of the recently dead, lots of food, clean up and placement of flowers in the cemetery, papier-mâché skeleton masks worn during processions and plays, prayers, and a mass.

What about the tradition of "trick or treating?" It began in the ninth century

when Christians would walk from village to village, on All Saints Day, begging for soul cakes—not candy. In exchange for the soul cakes they would promise to say prayers for the donor's dead relatives in hopes of accelerating their ascent into heaven. The official term "trick-or-treat" didn't start until the 1930's.

Pranks are also often associated with Halloween. In fact in northern Britain it is referred to as "Mischief Night."

These are just a few of the Halloween roots. Hope you enjoyed the holiday trivia!





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Fall Celebrations, Hispanic Month and Native American Month Information

*(Resources—Cont'd from page 1)*  
*American Indian Life* by Laurie Carlson (Chicago Review), ISBN 1-55652-213-4 packed with cultural notes, fast facts, and all kinds of activities and crafts geared for ages 3-9, but selected items will interest even older students. Another great resource is *Read & Respond: Native American Literature* by Karen Brown & Holly Engel (Edupress), ISBN 1-56472-029-2, for grades 3-6 and is reproducible. It includes 8.5" x 11" color posters, book summaries, related activities and blackline masters. Another source *A Unit about Woodland Indians* by Elaine Cleary (Evan-Moor) is one in a series including Native American history, culture, games, and critical thinking skill activities.

*(Literature—Cont'd from page 3)*  
move from an Idaho reservation to a California city and the problems he encounters. The author, himself Coeur d'Alene, artfully addresses racism, social isolation, and many of the problems of today's youth.  
*Gaucha*, by Gloria Gonzalez, is similar in that it tells the story of a young Hispanic who is living in New York and hating every minute of it. It shows many aspects of the Hispanic culture, as well as inner city culture. This book is aimed at middle school and up.  
*Hector Lives in the United States Now: The Story of a Mexican-American Child* by Joan Hewett, photographs by Richard Hewett, is also about a young Hispanic boy who lives in America, but Hector likes it. This elementary through middle school book follows some of his family's major events such as his brother's first

communion and his parent's application for amnesty. An excellent, up close look at one immigrant family's life.  
Everyone knows what a Piñata looks like. But there is a lot more to being a piñata maker than just knowing your way around papier mâché. This bilingual book is appropriate for elementary through junior high and can easily be used to talk about culture and/or art.  
*Arroz con Leche: Popular Songs and Rhymes from Latin America* by Lulu Deacre shares the children's songs and rhymes from her childhood. The lovely illustrations and Spanish/English text is a must for any library. Hopefully readers will attempt to read orally the "Spanish" rhymes and songs as the beauty of the rhythm and rhyme are lost when read silently or through

some of the English translations. The translations may be true to the text, but not to the beauty of words. A great book for ESL students or students studying Spanish which even nonspanish speaking students can enjoy. (If you are curious *Arroz con Leche*, means rice and milk, is a song based on a dish. The author provides the recipe on the back cover.)  
Remember books can be seen and checked out from the MRC at USAO.

**Answers to Quiz**

- 1 - E    6 - P    11 - D
- 2 - H    7 - M    12 - O
- 3 - N    8 - I    13 - F
- 4 - G    9 - B    14 - C
- 5 - J    10 - A    15 - K