

FROM PARADIGM PRODUCTIONS INC.
THE FIGHT IN THE FIELDS



C E S A R C H A V E Z
and the
Farmworkers' Struggle

A DOCUMENTARY FILM

by Ray Telles and Rick Tejada-Flores

STUDY GUIDE

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The Fight in the Fields Study Guide

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INTRODUCTION

The Fight in the Fields: Cesar Chavez and the Farmworkers' Struggle tells the story of the farmworker movement and the man who inspired and led it — Cesar Chavez.

Chavez was much more than a labor leader; he was the most important Latino leader in this country's history. He successfully organized migrant farmworkers for the first time, and helped them to have an important impact on American politics and society. Chavez' effectiveness was rooted in his unique combination of conviction, dedication and talent — his commitment to social justice, to the empowerment of all farmworkers, women as well as men, his firm belief in the use of non-violence to achieve social change, and his ability to generate national support for the farmworkers' cause.

This Curriculum Guide is designed to help teachers use *The Fight in the Fields* to present lessons that teach a wide range of topics, including American history, social studies, conflict resolution, minority history, ethnic studies, and labor studies. Each of the five lessons provides teachers with background information, pre- and post-viewing discussion questions, and activities and ideas for further research.

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SAMPLE LESSON

The entire film is two hours long and may be shown to some groups in one showing. However, since the material is so rich in content and evokes so many questions from students, we recommend the following schedule:

TEACHER PREPARATION 30 to 45 minutes

Read Teacher Background information, select materials, discussion questions, activities, and research projects you want to use.

IN CLASS TIME 50 minutes

Introduction of Themes, Vocabulary, and any pre-viewing activities	10 minutes
View film	25 minutes
Discussion/Activities	5-20 minutes
Research (writing, interviewing, library work)	Homework

We recommend taking a minimum of one week to view the entire film in a regular 50 minutes per day class setting. If you work in blocks you can try to fit in two lessons in one day, or expand the pre and post-viewing discussions and activities. Homework should be assigned nightly from the Discussion or Research sections to enrich student learning.

NOTES ON HOW TO USE THE CURRICULUM GUIDE

Please read all the background information on how to use the guide and each lesson the day before you show the film because it will give you valuable information on how to answer student questions. You are not expected to just “know” historical and background information, so we have attempted to anticipate any questions you may have regarding content material. Please look carefully at the Resource List at the end of the study guide. You may want to order or locate some items and need to allow time.

Time cue There are no breaks in the film, so use the time cue in the upper left-hand corner of the video to start and stop the VCR at the times indicated at the beginning of each lesson. Each lesson indicates the length of the corresponding video segment, and the start/stop points.

List of Themes The main ideas talked about in that lesson. All pre- and post-activities are designed to expand student knowledge of these themes. Assessment can be an essay on one of the themes.

Synopsis An overview of each section of the story. Please read the Synopsis as part of planning your lesson. There are also brief explanations of various related subjects, for example, the Great Depression and “Zoot Suiters.”

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Vocabulary List Includes contextual definitions, background information, and related history. There are several ways to introduce the vocabulary: photocopies, overhead transparencies, or the words written on a chalkboard or chart paper are some options. They may be used for reference, discussed in class, or students can write a sentence or paragraph for each as homework.

Discussion Questions Are open ended, and appropriate for youth and adult audiences. For younger audiences, discussion questions that are designed to make a connection with the students own life can be particularly effective. Older students may respond better to more abstract and analytical questions. Select the questions that you feel will interest your students. The discussion may be held with the entire group, or you can divide into groups which discuss each theme for 10 to 15 minutes. Ask each group to choose a facilitator, whose job is to make sure everyone gets a chance to talk, a recorder to make notes of people's ideas, a time keeper to make sure that each item gets discussed, and a reporter, whose job is to give an oral report of the discussion to the large group.

Activities Include map skills, debates, scenarios, writing ideas, plus arts and crafts ideas. These are "suggested activities" and do not include lesson plans, so select those you are comfortable doing. Many activities are designed for younger students.

Research Topics Can be assigned for homework or in-class work. They range from looking up labor history and interviewing family and friends, to investigating where the food in the refrigerator came from. The research topics are designed for use with students from eighth grade to college level. They may be assigned for short- or long-term projects. Final products should be presented to the entire class, as exhibits or oral presentations.

Resource List At the end of the study guide contains subject-related books, videos and other resources that can be used for additional information or research projects. Many of the books may not be available in your school library, so it is best to call or visit your public library or local book store to see what is available. The government pamphlets are really interesting resources, but they need to be requested weeks in advance.

A Note on organizational names: The National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) and the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC) merged to become the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFWOC), which later became the United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO (UFW). To make it less confusing, we will use UFW to mean all stages of the development of the present Farmworkers Union.

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THE FIGHT IN THE FIELDS INDEX

Following is a listing of sections of the film, for use in planning individual lessons.

Time	Section
:02	Tease and Credits
2:06	Historical Introduction
5:40	Cesar Chavez birth and early childhood in Arizona
8:00	Conditions during the 1930s, Chavez family become migrants
11:10	Organizing during the 1930s
14:18	World War II begins, the bracero program brings farmworkers from Mexico
15:36	Chavez family moves to Delano, Cesar joins the Navy, marries, moves to San Jose
17:12	Fred Ross and the Scommunity Service Organization
22:40	The NFWA, beginning to organize farmworkers in Delano
29:53	The Delano grape strike
41:06	Discussion of non-violence
43:00	Labor support
45:35	The Farm Worker Theatre
48:58	Senate sub-committee with Robert Kennedy comes to Delano
51:28	March from Delano to Sacramento
54:20	First election victory at the DiGiorgio ranch
55:06	How the strike affected the Chavez family
57:12	The grape boycott
1:01:30	1968 fast by Cesar Chavez

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Time	Section
1:07:30	Robert Kennedy presidential campaign and assassination
1:10:30	Ronald Reagan and the farmworkers
1:11:30	The grape boycott intensifies, and first victories
1:13:20	Victory in Delano
1:17:00	Lettuce strike in Salinas and confrontations with the Teamsters Union
1:24:45	1973 strikes and confrontations with Teamsters
1:33:00	Strikes end with deaths and funerals of UFW members
1:35:22	Jerry Brown and the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act
1:37:25	UFW election victories
1:39:58	Republican administration blocks the law
1:40:57	The UFW changes course
1:42:44	Labor on the defensive
1:43:30	UFW focuses on pesticides
1:45:28	The problems of the 1980s
1:46:10	Cesar Chavez' last fast
1:46:55	Remembering Fred Ross
1:48:45	Hearing the news of Cesar's death
1:51:35	Cesar Chavez' funeral

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HOW THIS CURRICULUM MATERIAL FITS INTO THE HISTORY-SOCIAL SCIENCE FRAMEWORK FOR CALIFORNIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS, KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE TWELVE

As with most state frameworks, the *History - Social Science Framework for California Public Schools - Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*, (the “Framework”) contains general outlines of what should be covered in each grade. While there is no provision for enforcement, its intention is to provide teachers with a guide to History and Social Studies content that will expose students, over the course of 12 years of public schooling, to a body of knowledge considered essential to being an active citizen in a modern multi-cultural society. In its own words, the Framework

“emphasizes the importance of history as a story well told. Whenever appropriate, history should be presented as an exciting and dramatic series of events in the past that helped to shape the present.”

It also calls on teachers to

“recognize that the history of community, state, region, nation, and world must reflect the experiences of men and women and of different racial, religious, and ethnic groups...The experiences of all these groups are to be integrated at every grade level in the history-social science curriculum.”

Teachers should

“encourage students to reflect on the individual responsibility and behavior that create a good society, to consider the individual’s role in how a society governs itself, and to examine the role of law in society,... what the state owes to its citizens, and what citizens owe to the state....Students should be given opportunities to lead and to follow. They should learn how to select leaders and how to resolve disputes rationally....and should learn to respect the rights of the minority, even if this minority is only a single, dissenting voice.”

The THEMES and DISCUSSION QUESTIONS for *The Fight in the Fields* fit into the Framework at all grade levels. Nevertheless, we feel it is more age-appropriate for Grades Four through Twelve because of the length of the film and the depth of its content. *The Fight in the Fields* can be used when any of the main ideas, themes, or concepts of the farmworker struggle appear, since the *History-Social Science Framework* greatly encourages such “links to the present.” Following is a description of how *The Fight in the Fields* fits into the required curriculum for each Grades Four through Twelve. “CCC” is a reference to the

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California Concepts Collection, a publication of the California Council for Social Studies. The CCC is a guide to curriculum development that firmly supports the practice of rooting curriculum in important thematic ideas. It identifies specific concepts and links them to the Framework at each grade level. CCC concepts are highlighted for ease of identification.

Grade Four **California - a changing state** Fourth Graders may not have the attention span necessary for *The Fight in the Fields*, but that decision should be made by you, the teacher. The Framework recommends that pre-colonial to modern California be studied. The time period coincides with the formation of the agricultural communities in the Central Valley. The CCC identifies *migration, agriculture, and the human environment* as key concepts. *The Fight in the Fields* complements this grade’s curriculum by telling about the people who came to work in the fields, the daily work they did, and what the presence of farmworkers means and has meant to the quality of life in California.

Grade Five **United States History and Geography: making a new nation** In Grade Five, “students examine the contributions of different groups that built the American nation, and in the process, became a new people.” They also learn about Mexicans moving to the United States after the Mexican Revolution, “which provides important opportunities to focus on the Hispanic people of California and the Southwest, and ...on their lives and on their distinctive contributions to American culture.” The CCC identifies *immigration and immigrants’ adaptation to the different areas of the United States* as the key concepts to be studied in this grade.. Many of the Mexicans who migrated to the United States during the early 1900’s, and many people who moved to California looking for a better life during the Great Depression, became field workers and their story is told in *Fight in the Fields*, as are their contributions to American culture.

Grade Six **World History, Geography: early civilizations covering the agricultural revolution to the present** The Framework recommends teaching about the cultural universals such as family, economics, art and literature, government, communication, food, clothing and shelter, games, and religion, that together define culture. The CCC’s main concepts are the *agricultural revolution’s link to agricultural work done today, and social responsibility* - the responsibilities we owe to those who will come after. *The Fight in the Fields* shows the people who work in agriculture in modern times and their culture, and definitely stresses social responsibility for future generations of field workers.

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- Grade Seven** **World History, Geography: medieval and early modern times**
The Framework states that Grade Seven “study will conclude with an examination of the political forces let loose in the Western world by the rise of capitalism and the Enlightenment and the impact of the ideas of this period on Western society in the future.” This ties in with the story of agri-business shown in *Fight in the Fields*. “Students need to continue to influence our nation and the world today....with the ideal of human rights.” The CCC sees natural rights as a link that extends to dignity and respect for work. This is one of the major themes in *Fight in the Fields*.
- Grade Eight** **United States History & Geography** This curriculum covers the development of the Constitution and the rise of industrial America. The Framework states, “attention should be given to the developing West and Southwest... [The] large-scale commercial farming of this region provided essential resources for the industrial development of the nation. Families from Mexico increasingly provided the labor force that developed this region. Students should understand the social, economic, and political handicaps encountered by these immigrants.” The Framework continues, “Mexican-American communities survived and even thrived, strengthened by their rich cultural traditions and community life.” *The Fight in the Fields* covers immigration after the Mexican Revolution, and the Bracero program is also discussed. The Framework advises teachers and students to “examine the transformation of social conditions ... from 1914 to the present. They should assess major changes in the social and economic status of blacks, immigrants, women, religious minorities, children, and workers, ... and discuss how citizens in a democracy can influence events and, through participation, apply ethical standards to public life.” *The Fight in the Fields* gives examples of this in its section on early organizing efforts in the 1930’s as well as the community organizing that led to the formation of the Community Service Organization and the UFW. CCC concepts that *The Fight in the Fields* addresses include *discrimination, agrarian economy, slavery, the melting pot theory, and the labor movement*.
- Grade Nine** **Elective Courses in History/Social Science** The Framework recommends teaching “advanced historical, political, and civic learning and advanced critical thinking skills” in Grades Nine through Twelve. Grade Nine courses that *The Fight in the Fields* complements include “Women in Our History,” “Ethnic Studies,” “Area Studies: Culture,” “Law-related Education,” and “Our State in the Twentieth Century.” Key concepts discussed in the Framework, as well as the film, include “political conflict in a free society and its resolution under law; understanding the fundamental substantive and procedural values guaranteed by the Constitution; and understanding the close and reciprocating relationships

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meaningful discussions of the notion that “individual citizens can influence public policy through participation and can make a difference in the economic, political, and social development of their state.”

Grade Ten **World History, Culture, Geography: the modern world** According to the Framework, “students will examine major turning points in the shaping of the modern world, from the late eighteenth century to the present. The year begins with an introduction to current world issues and then continues with a focus on the expansion of the West and the growing interdependence of people and cultures throughout the world.” The Framework recommends the study of why many immigrants left their countries of origin, including factors such as “crushing national debt, ... war and terrorism; and economic and cultural dislocations caused by ... the struggle to defend human rights and democratic freedoms.” Many California farmworkers came to the United States for those same reasons, and the film provides strong first-hand testimony that students will relate to and understand. The section of the Framework on “The Rise of Democratic Ideals” reviews “the moral and ethical principles of Judaism and Christianity that have profoundly influenced Western democratic thought, including belief in the dignity and equality of all; the search for social systems that ensure the freedom to make individual moral choice; and the duty of each to work for morally just communities.” There is also a section that talks about the “Development of Labor Unions” during and after the Industrial Revolution. The section on “Totalitarianism” stresses the understanding of “the right to criticize the government without fear of reprisal...and other safeguards of individual rights,... and the ethical responsibility of the individual when confronted with governmental actions such as ...violations of human rights.” *The Fight in the Fields* can be used as a vehicle to discuss the CCC concepts of *racism, poverty, resources, ethics, natural rights, social structure, non-violence, and self-determination.*

Grade Eleven **United States History and Geography: continuity and change in the 20th Century** Major turning points in American history in the 20th century are focus points in Grade Eleven. The Framework states that themes that must be emphasized include “the continuing tension between the individual and the state and between minority rights and majority power; change in the ethnic composition of American society; the movements toward equal rights for racial minorities and women.” The framework stipulates that students should “recognize the way in which natural drought combined with unwise agricultural practices to cause the Dust Bowl, a major factor in the economic and cultural chaos of the 1930’s.” Students should further understand “the linkage between severe economic distress and social turmoil.” This period is detailed very clearly in *The*

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Fight in the Fields with coverage of pre- and post-Depression labor history and footage of “Okies” and “Arkies” arriving in California looking for work. World War II and its “wartime factory work which created new job opportunities for unskilled women and blacks” is depicted in *The Fight in the Fields*. “The Civil Rights Movement in the Postwar Era” curriculum states that “the successful example of the black civil rights movement encouraged other groups - including women, Hispanics, American Indians and the handicapped - in their campaign for legislative and judicial recognition of their civil equality. Major events in the development of all these movements and their consequences should be noted.” *The Fight in the Fields* notes these events in a solid context of accurate history and footage. The film covers the civil rights movement, with its emphasis on non-violence which Cesar Chavez mirrored, the Vietnam War era, and the protest movements of the 60’s and 70’s. CCC concepts covered are *judicial activism, standard of living, freedom of expression, environmental protection, women’s rights, technology, unemployment, cause and effect, negotiated settlements, non-violence, equal opportunity, and cultural diversity.*

Grade Twelve Principles of American Democracy (one semester) “Contemporary Issues in the World Today” are studied and “should conclude with an activity in which students analyze a major social issue. This activity might be a research paper in which students analyze a problem, marshal historical and social science evidence, provide a critique of alternative positions, and present their own position on the issue.” *The Fight in the Fields* discusses a major social issue: the struggle to organize farmworkers so they could defend their rights. It also examines the institutions, prejudices, and formidable opponents the UFW came up against. The CCC concepts covered in the first semester are *responsibilities, participation, due process, equal protection, free speech, right of assembly, civil rights, racial discrimination, legislation, the law-making process, lobbying, special interests, politics, power, campaigns, social welfare, human rights, issues clarification, multiple causation, local government, environmental protection, and citizen participation*, all of which are discussed in great depth in *The Fight in the Fields*.

Economics (one semester) *The Fight in the Fields* is a useful tool for this grade because of the film’s coverage of labor history and the economics of California agri-business. The second semester CCC concepts are *natural resources and human resources, labor, goods, services, capital, factors of production, means of production, supply and demand, profits, command economy, market economy, labor union, and exports.*

LESSON ONE:

History of California Agriculture and the Evolution of an Activist

Time Period: 1855-1962

Length: 22:20 minutes, 0:00 to 22:20

Companion Book: Chapters 1 and 2

THEMES

History of California Agriculture
and Farm Labor Organizing

Immigration and Migration

The Role of Family and Community

SYNOPSIS

Lesson One begins with an overview of California's agricultural history starting with the end of the Gold Rush. The completion of the Transcontinental Railroad in 1855 created a surplus of Chinese workers who became the first group of immigrant farmworkers. After the Chinese, California's agricultural industry attracted new waves of immigrants and migrants: Japanese, Filipino, Native American, Anglo, Mexican, and African-American. This diverse population of farmworkers endured low wages and poor working conditions. Their efforts to improve wages and working conditions began a long history of labor organizing. The Great Depression created widespread unemployment during the 1930's, bringing a flood of Anglo-Americans to look for work in the fields of California..

The Chavez family was among the thousands who were forced to become migrant farmworkers. After losing their farm in Arizona they traveled to the fields of California, where they lived in migrant camps. Juana Chavez, Cesar's mother, taught her children at an early age the importance of non-violence. Librado Chavez, Cesar's father, had a strong sense of right and wrong and often moved his family rather than put up with the injustices he saw in the fields. The principles that Cesar learned from his parents while growing up guided his later activism.

After World War II Cesar married and settled down in *Sal Si Puedes*, a San Jose barrio. There he met Fred Ross, who trained him as an organizer in the Community Service Organization (CSO), along with Dolores Huerta and Gilbert Padilla. Cesar rose to become the national director of CSO, but left the organization in 1962 to organize farmworkers.

LESSON ONE:

History of California Agriculture and the Evolution of an Activist

LESSON ONE:

VOCABULARY

barrio

Bracero Program

cheap labor force

Communist

community organizing

pachuco

immigrant

migrant

Sal Si Puedes

strike

union

DEFINITIONS

barrio

The Spanish word for neighborhood, often used to refer to a neighborhood where people of Mexican or other Latin American heritage live.

Bracero Program

A government-sponsored program that started during World War II and ended in 1964. Farmworkers were recruited from Mexico to replace the workers who moved from the fields into war-related industries. The word derives from the Spanish word *Brazo*, or arm, which refers to the kind of work they did — strenuous manual labor.

cheap labor force

When there are more people than jobs, workers are often paid low wages because they can be replaced by someone who is willing to work for less. During the Great Depression in the 1930's, California was flooded with people looking for any kind of work. Immigrants and unemployed workers provided a "cheap labor force" for growers.

Communist

The Communists organized the Russian Revolution of 1917. Their principles of a workers state, public ownership of re-

sources, and economic equality were supported by many early labor organizers in the United States. During the 1930's when most unions were not interested in organizing farmworkers, many Communists were active organizing in the fields. Senator Joseph McCarthy's investigation of the "Communist infiltration" of America during the 1950's created an atmosphere in which many people were wrongfully accused of disloyalty to the U.S., and lost their jobs and reputations. The term "Communist" came to mean "outside agitator" or "un-American" to many. Labor and community organizers were often called Communists by their opponents to discredit them.

community organizing

When a group of people in a community work together to solve their problems. The idea is that those most involved can create workable solutions and strategies, and in the process become empowered and develop leadership skills. Cesar began doing community organizing in his barrio in San Jose, California, with activities like voter registration and citizenship classes.

LESSON ONE:

History of California Agriculture and the Evolution of an Activist

LESSON ONE:

immigrant

An immigrant is somebody who moves from one country to a different country. Immigrants to the United States have included refugees from war, drought, religious and political persecution, and economic hardship. Many have ended up in California because industries like agriculture, construction and the garment industry have always needed large numbers of workers willing to work for low wages that U.S. citizens will not accept.

migrant

A migrant is somebody who moves from one region to a different region within the same country. Migrant farmworkers generally follow established routes each year — called “migrant streams” — as they harvest different crops in different regions during different seasons.

pachuco

The name given to Mexican-American youths who wore a particular style of dress during the 1940’s and 1950’s. Men wore Zoot Suits — big-shouldered long jackets with long watch chains, baggy pants and highly polished shoes. Women wore high heels and dresses with padded shoulders. These styles were made popular by entertainers like Cab Calloway and Rita Hayworth. Young people who dressed this way were viewed by some as hoodlums, just as youths who wear hip-hop fashions today are viewed by some as gang members. In 1943, during the so-called Zoot Suit Riots, mobs of sailors roamed the streets of East Los Angeles attacking young Mexican Americans.

Cesar Chavez wore a Zoot Suit when he was young and considered himself a pachuco.

Sal Si Puedes

Spanish phrase meaning “get out if you can.” This was the name of the barrio, or neighborhood, in San Jose, California, where Cesar and Helen Chavez lived during the 1950’s.

strike

A strike is a practice used by workers when efforts to reach an agreement with an employer fail. During a strike, workers refuse to work or to allow their workplace to continue its business (as in a “sit-down” strike) until a contract is signed between the union and the employer. A sit-down strike (as practiced by auto workers in the 1930’s) is when workers refuse to work or leave once they are on the factory floor.

union

An organization formed by workers to negotiate on their behalf with employers to obtain better wages, working conditions, benefits and job security. Union representatives negotiate with the employer to come up with a mutually acceptable contract that spells out the rights and responsibilities of both sides.

LESSON ONE:

History of California Agriculture and the Evolution of an Activist

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The History of California Agriculture and Farm Labor Organizing

1. What crops are grown in California? Who worked in the fields from 1855 to 1962? What were their living and working conditions?
2. Why was working in the fields compared to slavery in the film? Were farmworkers free to leave the fields? What might have helped them to escape these conditions?
3. Have you or anyone in your family ever worked on a farm? Do you know anyone who has? If so, what did they do? How did they like it?
4. Why do you think people become farmworkers? What other options do they have? What about young children? Would you choose to work in the fields?
5. What were working and living conditions like for farmworkers when Cesar was a child? Do you think that going on strike was necessary to change these conditions?
6. What happened during early attempts to organize farmworkers? What were they trying to accomplish? What strategies or tactics did organizers use? How successful were they?
7. Why was the term “Communist” used to discredit farmworker organizers over the years? What groups were opposed to organizing farmworkers?

8. Do you think organizing workers to form a union is a “Communist” or “un-American” idea? Why do you think people who work for social change or fight for their rights might be called “un-American” or “Communist”?

9. The National Labor Relations Act of 1936 excluded farmworkers and domestic workers. All other workers were granted the right to join unions to protect their interests. Why do you think farmworkers were excluded? What was the result of their being left out of the law?

10. What are the special problems in organizing farmworkers, compared to organizing workers in other industries? What impact do you think the seasonal and migratory nature of farmwork has?

Immigration and Migration

1. Why did people come to California from other countries or other places in the United States? What were they looking for? What were they leaving behind?
2. When did your family come to this state or this country? Where did they come from? Why? What kind of work did they do when they first got here? How did their lives change?
3. What were the different races and cultures of the farmworkers shown in the film? What did farmworkers of different races have in common? What separated them? How did they deal with each other?

LESSON ONE:

History of California Agriculture and the Evolution of an Activist

4. What was the Bracero Program? How do you think the program affected the wages of domestic farmworkers? How did the Bracero Program affect efforts to organize farmworkers into a union?

5. In America we talk about “freedom of choice.” What kinds of choices do you think are important for people to have? What choices have farmworkers had or not had over the years?

The Role of Family and Community

1. What values did Cesar learn from his parents? How did these values help him to become an effective organizer?

2. Cesar left school after the 8th grade to work in the fields to help support his family. What would it be like to quit school at 8th grade and go to work because you had to help put food on the table for your family?

3. Why did Cesar get involved with the Community Service Organization (CSO)? What was CSO trying to accomplish? What did he learn from this experience that later helped him organize farmworkers?

4. What issues or problems are the most important in your community or school? What type of organization could you join or build to resolve some of these problems?

5. Do you know of any organizations or groups that are working to make positive changes or enrich peoples’ lives in your community? What do they do?

6. Cesar Chavez and Fred Ross came from very different backgrounds, yet both were effective community organizers. Do you have to come from a particular community in order to understand its problems and help people solve them?

ACTIVITIES

Where Crops Come From

Bring to class fresh fruits and vegetables that still have the grower’s stickers or wrapper (make sure the name of the city is on the sticker/wrapper). Put up a large map of California, the United States, or the world (depending on where the produce is from). Pass the produce out to the students, have them remove the stickers and place the stickers on the area of the map where the produce was grown. Ask students what they know about the places the products come from, how they

are grown (tree, vine, roots, etc.), how they are harvested, packaged, shipped, and sold.

How the money and profits are distributed

Hold a basket of strawberries in your hand and ask students to try to determine who is involved in growing them and how they gets to customers in the market — e.g. who plants, harvests, packs, ships, sells, etc. Then show them the graph

LESSON ONE:

History of California Agriculture and the Evolution of an Activist

ACTIVITIES continued

(Appendix) illustrating how the final cost of the basket of strawberries is distributed among all the parties involved. “Who gets what part of the total? How much does the grower get? the grocer? the trucker? the sales broker? and the farmworker? Why does the farmworker get the least amount if they do the most work?”

Immigrant Stories

Designate each participant to be an immigrant or migrant worker just arrived in the California fields in 1920, in 1950, and in 1980. Give them 10 minutes to write a short biographical sketch to present aloud to the group. They can make up a name for themselves and must tell what conditions led them to come to California, what their fondest dreams are for their future, and how it feels to be doing farm work

Immigrant geography

Make copies of the blackline master map of the world (Appendix) for each student or for the class as a group. Make a list with the students of the names of the countries that farmworkers in California might come from (e.g. Mexico, China, the Philippines, Yemen, etc.). Then, color the first country a solid color and draw an arrow of the same color connecting it to California. Use different colors to do the same for other countries listed. Tape the maps up on the wall and discuss immigration issues.

How far do they come from? What are some reasons they might leave their homeland? How do they go about finding work and a home in the U.S.? How would you feel about going to some other country with your parents and working on a farm?

Write a Play

Have students write a play set in a barrio named Sal Si Puedes. The main characters are a family like Cesar’s with eight children. Divide the students into four groups and give each group a section of Cesar’s young life to dramatize: growing up on the farm, losing and leaving the farm, growing up in migrant camps, living in Sal Si Puedes. Present each group’s play to the entire class.

Working Conditions

Simulate what it’s like to pick certain crops that require bending over all day (ie. lettuce or strawberries). Instruct students to form a single-file line or large circle. Then have them bend their knees and touch their toes. Have them walk around the room in a line or circle keeping their fingers on their toes. Do this for one full minute. When finished with simulation, discuss working conditions...

Do you think picking crops like this would be hard work? How would you like to do this in the hot sun? Do you think this type of work might cause short-term or long-term health problems? What might farmworkers say to a grower about these working conditions?

LESSON ONE:

History of California Agriculture and the Evolution of an Activist

RESEARCH TOPICS

1. Research your own family tree. Look for migration information. What kind of work did your parents do? How old were they when they started working? Do they remember the Great Depression? Did any of your family members ever belong to a labor union or professional association?
2. Research the Great Depression of the 1930's, what caused it and how it affected the U.S. and the world.
3. Read novels that tell about life during the Great Depression, like *The Grapes of Wrath*, or *Of Mice and Men*. What are the over-riding themes of the novels? How do they relate to what you have seen in the film?
4. Research and make a chart of the labor strikes of the 1930's.
5. Research the National Labor Relations Act and find out why it excluded farm and domestic workers.
6. Research the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the establishment of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) to get a better perspective on the history of Communism.
7. Find out what happened during the "Red Scare of 1919, and during the "McCarthy" period, when people were publicly accused of being anti-American and of supporting the overthrow of the United States government.
8. Research the Bracero Program and the reasons for its existence.
9. Find out why many Mexican-Americans were sent back to Mexico in the 1930's and 1950's.
10. Research the history of CSO (Community Service Organization). How did it start and what was Fred Ross' role? What did the group accomplish?
11. Write about a day in the life of a farmworker child during the harvest season..
12. Write about a situation when someone in your family or someone you knew was on strike. If no one you know has participated in a strike, ask the local Labor Council for the names of people who have participated in strikes. What were the strikers' demands? What was the effect of the strike on that particular person and their family?

LESSON ONE:

History of California Agriculture and the Evolution of an Activist

Important Films to Watch

Watch the hour-long documentary “Harvest of Shame” and discuss the impact this had on people in 1961, when it was shown on Thanksgiving to a national audience who knew little about where their food came from.

Watch “Salt of the Earth,” a dramatic film about Mexican American miners on strike in New Mexico.

Field Trips

Arrange a field trip for the class to go to a local farm or community garden and actually work in the field for a morning or afternoon. Discuss what they think of having to do this day after day after day.

Related Reading

Read a passage from *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Of Mice and Men*, *The Earth Did Not Swallow Them*, or *The Autobiography of Rigoberta Menchu* to see vivid descriptions of working in the fields and living in the camps.

Compare these descriptions to those in the film. Ask students if they think there are places like that in California today.

LESSON TWO:

Empowerment Through Non-Violent Activism

Time Period: 1962-1965

Length: 27:00 min., 21:56 to 48:58

Companion Book: Chapters 3 and 4

THEMES

Building a Movement

Non-violence as a Personal
Philosophy and Political Strategy

The Role of Women in the
Farmworker Movement

Development of
Farmworker/Chicano Culture

SYNOPSIS

As Cesar, his family and companions began to organize farmworkers in 1962, they found that little had changed since the 1930's. The work was still hard and dangerous, and farmworkers of different races were still pitted against each other. Cesar moved his family back to Delano, and his wife worked in the fields while he began organizing the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA). He found that women were often the first to say, "It's time for a change." The NFWA slowly attracted members by providing services such as life insurance and a credit union. The organization's bold new symbol was the black farmworker eagle in a white circle, on a red background.

While Cesar focused on organizing Mexican farmworkers, the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC), led by Larry Itliong, had been organizing Filipino farmworkers. AWOC responded to a wage cut by calling a strike on September 8, 1965. The NFWA joined them on September 16, Mexican Independence Day, and the Great Delano Grape Strike began. The strikers received immediate support from church groups, and soon labor activists, students, and veterans from the civil rights movement in the South joined *La Causa*, the cause. Walter Reuther, President of the United Auto Workers, came to Delano to pledge the support of the labor movement. From the outset, Cesar was convinced that the only way the movement could succeed was by practicing non-violence. The picket lines set the stage for creative, non-violent forms of protest. A farmworker theater group emerged — El Teatro Campesino — led by Luis Valdez. The explosion of art and cultural expression from the farmworkers movement was the spark that ignited the Chicano movement.

LESSON TWO:

Empowerment Through Non-Violent Activism

VOCABULARY

activist

back-breaking

compañero, compañera

Chicano, Latino

huelga

issues

non-violence

picket line

scab

short-handled hoe

solidarity

teatro

voluntary poverty

DEFINITIONS

activist

A person who takes an active role in social change, by organizing and working with others. Many people in the 1960's and '70's were angered by the Vietnam War, racism in the United States, and the unequal status of women in society. They committed their time and energy to build groups and coalitions that tried to solve these problems.

back-breaking

When work is extremely hard it is called back-breaking. Farmworkers spend much of the work day bent over — pruning, picking, boxing, and hauling crops. Many suffer severe back injuries, and have limited access to health care.

compañero, compañera

The Spanish word for companion or comrade, used for fellow workers or friends. The term expresses a sense of solidarity and affection.

huelga

The Spanish word for strike. “La Huelga” is commonly used to refer to the Great Delano Grape Strike which began in September 1965.

issues

Points of discussion or disagreement. There were many such points that farmworkers wanted to resolve with the growers, such as wage rates, health care, access to water and bathroom facilities, living conditions at the labor camps, child labor, and exposure to pesticides.

non-violence

A method of resolving conflicts in which communication and negotiation are used instead of physical violence. Cesar's mother taught him that non-violence was better than violence for achieving just and lasting solutions. His study of the lives of the Indian leader Mahatma Gandhi, Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., and St. Francis of Assisi taught him that non-violence could be an extremely effective way of changing society.

picket line

When workers go on strike, they usually set up a line of striking workers in front of the business or farm that they are striking against. These workers attempt to inform the public of the issues involved, and convince other workers and consumers not to break the strike. People usually carry signs and flags on a picket line, and sing

LESSON TWO: Empowerment Through Non-Violent Activism

and chant to keep their spirits up and spread their message.

scab

Another term for strikebreaker, a worker who breaks a strike by crossing a picket line to work. *Esquirol*, the Spanish term for strikebreaker, means squirrel, perhaps referring to the timid nature of the strikebreaker.

short-handled hoe

A tool with a handle so short that workers must stoop over to use it. In Spanish, it is often referred to as *el Diablito*, the little Devil, because of the permanent back injuries that it causes. It was finally outlawed through the efforts of the United Farmworkers Union.

solidarity

The sense of feeling close to and supporting the efforts of people in whose cause you believe. In the labor movement, solidarity is expressed when people not directly affected in a labor dispute support workers on strike. This can take the form of honoring a strike and not doing business with the employer involved, public education, or raising contributions to support the strike.

teatro

The Spanish word for theater. The term has come to refer to the style of theater developed by El Teatro Campesino during the Delano Grape Strike. Using songs, satire, masks and simple props, ordinary strikers became performers and created political theater that reflected their own lives and concerns. El Teatro Campesino drew on the classic satire of Italian “Comedia dell’Arte,” political theaters like the San Francisco Mime Troupe, and the rich Mexican vaudeville tradition. Countless Chicano teatros have continued this tradition.

voluntary poverty

Everyone who joined the farmworkers organization had to make a commitment to live simply. Volunteers were paid \$5 a week, plus room and board. Cesar Chavez and all of the Union leadership received the same amount. Chavez strongly believed that if you were trying to work with poor people, you needed to share their experience and accept voluntary poverty.

LESSON TWO:

Empowerment Through Non-Violent Activism

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Building a Movement

1. Why did Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta leave the Community Service Organization (CSO) to work with farmworkers? What did they hope to accomplish?
2. Why do you think the growers were so opposed to farmworkers having a union?
3. Why did Cesar choose the name National Farm Workers Association in 1962 instead of National Farm Workers Union?
4. Why do you think Filipino strikers initially didn't want to picket their bosses? Why do you think they finally decided to go ahead and picket?
5. Why was it important for different ethnic groups to work together to promote the goals of the UFW? Why did the growers want to keep the groups separate? How do people from different groups work together at your school or in your community?
6. What different ethnic groups were involved in the farmworkers' movement? What might some of the advantages or disadvantages have been of this racial and ethnic inclusiveness?
7. What is the one thing that you would most like to change in your school or community? How would you go about it? What strategy do you think would work? What groups or individuals might support you?
8. How important was the support of church groups in helping the grape strikers? How did the farmworkers' religious faith influence their participation in the movement? Do you think that churches should get involved in social and economic issues like strikes and immigration?
9. What did the red, black and white colors of the farmworker flag represent? How are colors used to unite or divide people? What do red and blue mean to young people in gangs, and why do people feel so passionately about them?
10. The farmworkers movement drew upon the experiences of the African American civil rights movement. How were the two movements similar, and how were they different?
11. Why did so many students and young people want to work with the Farmworkers movement? What do you think they got out of the experience?

Non-violence as a Personal Philosophy and Political Strategy

1. How did Cesar learn about non-violence? What do you think would have happened if he had encouraged farmworkers to confront the growers violently?
2. The 1992 Los Angeles uprising was a violent response to perceived injustice in the Rodney King trial. Was the violence effective? Would a non-violent response have had a different result?

LESSON TWO:

Empowerment Through Non-Violent Activism

3. How hard would it be for you to remain non-violent if you were threatened with violence? What might some of the advantages and disadvantages be? What about in the long-term?

4. Is there anything in your life that you would fight for in a non-violent way? What is it? Why?

5. Do you think violence can be used to achieve and maintain peace? How do governments and churches justify waging war or executing criminals? Do you agree?

The Role of Women in the Farmworker Movement

1. When Cesar began organizing farmworkers, why do you think women were more apt than men to say they had had enough of unfair working conditions?
2. Why were there more women and children on the picket lines than men?
3. What might have happened if Cesar's wife and family had said, "It's the Union or us!" What would you have done if you were in Cesar's family?
4. Women who organized and picketed still had to go home and take care of their children and household at the end of the day. Should men and women have shared these responsibilities?

5. Paul Chavez said that his mother Helen Chavez was "the bedrock of the Union." How did she support the movement? How was this different from the role of someone like Dolores Huerta?

6. Jessica Govea Thorbourne said that Cesar didn't care whether you were a man or a woman, "if you're willing to take the responsibility, you've got it." In your experience, do women have the same opportunities as men?

The Development of Farmworker/Chicano Culture

1. Why do you think the farmworkers used songs and skits on the picket lines? How do you think workers felt hearing and seeing stories about their own lives?
2. Why did the farmworkers choose the eagle as their symbol? How important are symbols like flags or the logos of sports teams? What symbols are important to you?
3. Why were religious symbols like the Virgin of Guadalupe and altars so important to the farmworkers?
4. Why do you think that Chicano artists and activists in the cities were inspired by the farmworkers movement?

LESSON TWO: Empowerment Through Non-Violent Activism

ACTIVITIES

The UFW Flag

Make a UFW flag from pieces of black, red and white fabric; or have students draw and color a flag.

Classroom debate

Debate year-round school. Inform students that summer vacation was created so that children could harvest the crops. Is it still necessary to have summer vacation? How many students in your class work summers harvesting crops or doing other work? Do you think you should work since you have all this free time? Why or why not?

Building For a Cause

Brainstorm with students about what things in the school or community need to be changed — things that are so unfair or unbearable they can't continue. It can be anything, e.g. the school lunch program, a drug house next door, homelessness, racial tension, sexual harassment, the need for after-school activities, etc. After identifying the problems, discuss the possibilities for changing things.

Ask questions such as: What are the causes of the problem? What are the changes or outcomes we want to see? What are the steps to get there? What other individuals or groups could we work with to solve the problem? What is the best way to present our ideas and proposals to other people? Outline an action plan.

After viewing the entire film, come back to this activity to follow it through as a real community activity. The follow-through could consist of any number of different actions — e.g. writing

an article/analysis for the school or local newspaper; setting up a meeting about the issue for students, parents, teachers, and community members; bringing up the issue at a city council meeting; organizing a school-wide petition, etc.

Role Playing

Create a scenario where one student plays Cesar Chavez talking with a friend about wanting to organize farmworkers. The friend wants him to go to the movies with him and forget this “community service” work. Each character is to attempt to persuade the other to understand his point of view.

Non Violence

View the film *Gandhi* or read to students about his life. Role play a meeting between Gandhi and Cesar Chavez. You may want to invite Martin Luther King Jr. as well. Have each character discuss the problems they faced and the ways in which they used non-violent activism to help their people and to change society.

Create a scenario where students are welcoming a new student to their class. They can sense this student has a history of violent behavior and are concerned about maintaining a calm atmosphere. What are some activities they might arrange to make the new student comfortable and at the same time show they do not want to deal with violence in their lives. The ideas can be done in a brainstorming format, with students saying whatever they think of and the teacher writing their ideas on the board. After all ideas are given, discuss them.

LESSON TWO:

Empowerment Through Non-Violent Activism

The Kitten

Read “The Kitten” by Richard Wright, from the book *Black Boy*. It tells how a young boy used an act of violence to show his power over his father. The violence is somewhat shocking, so allow students to process their feelings. Discuss what else he could have done to show his feelings of anger. Use the activity sheets in the Appendix.

Conflict Resolution

Ask students to act out a recent conflict that could have turned violent, or did turn violent. Have them stop the scene just before things get very heated or violent, and discuss the situation.

Is there anything they need to know about the conflict or about the people involved before they let this go on? What can you say to these people to get them to understand there might be another way to solve their conflict? What will happen if they continue in this mode? Is it worth it? How do peer pressure or “reputation” concerns contribute to the escalation of the conflict? What do you think happens to people who resolve conflicts violently as they get older — at age 25, 30, 40? Why do you think non-violence was so important to Cesar Chavez? Finish by having them re-enact the scene with a non-violent resolution to the conflict.

Communicate with your community

Make a leaflet or poster about the UFW grape boycott or any other issue you feel is important in the film.

Make a leaflet or poster about some other issue that you feel is important and needs publicity.

Negotiation Skills

Re-enact a farmworker strike. Have one-third of the class play growers, one-third play striking farmworkers, and the other third play impartial observers or journalists. Have the farmworkers and growers each spend 5 minutes presenting their case to each other and to the observers. Stop. Have participants change sides and talk for another 5 minutes. Stop everyone and ask them how they felt when they had to change sides.

Ask students to name issues that make them angry or that they feel need to be changed. Select one that could be solved through a strike. Have students make signs and discuss what it might be like to really strike, and then vote on whether they want to go through with the strike.

Women in the Workforce

Create a scenario where one student plays the mother (boys and girls can play this role), another her daughter or son. The mother has come home from working all day and is going out again to attend a meeting. The child wants Mom to stay home, cook dinner, and help with homework.

Have the two characters talk to each other about what is going on. What does Mom need from her child? What does the child need from Mom? What kind of solution can they come up with? It can be up to the “actors” to decide how the father character fits into the scenario. Do this with several sets of students playing the roles.

LESSON TWO:

Empowerment Through Non-Violent Activism

ACTIVITIES continued

After the role-play, discuss as a group what people thought and felt. What do they think the role of a woman should be?

Clay Designs

Make some jewelry or ornaments with the UFW symbol using baking clay. Glue on pin or earring backs and give as gifts to family and friends.

RESEARCH TOPICS

1. Make a list of the different people and groups who sided with the grape growers during the Delano Strike, as well as a list of those who sided with the farmworkers. After each name, write a reason why that particular person or group supported that side. Discuss their backgrounds, philosophies, and motivations for supporting one side or the other.

2. Why did so many urban Latinos and Chicanos support the UFW? What did the UFW represent to them? What values and goals did they share? What problems did they have in common?

3. Investigate the writings of Gandhi and King. Read them and identify which of their ideas you think most affected Cesar Chavez and his world outlook.

4. Compare what happened to movements that used non-violence, like the UFW, with what happened to movements that responded with violence when they were attacked, like the Black Panthers, the American Indian Movement (AIM), the

Brown Berets, and the Young Lords. Which groups have survive and continue to do their work? Why do you think some groups survived and some did not?

5. Research and write about the different organizations that supported the UFW. For example the California Migrant Ministry, American Federation of Labor - Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), United Auto Workers (UAW), and any others named in the film.

6. Look up information about other important civil rights activists of the 1960's and 70's and write a short biography of at least one. Potential subjects include: Dolores Huerta, Robert Kennedy, John F. Kennedy, Jose Angel Gutierrez, Corky Gonzales, Reies Lopez Tijerina, Martin Luther King, Jr., Jesse Jackson, Malcolm X, Huey Newton. Try to define their basic philosophies. Compare and contrast their philosophies with each other and with Cesar Chavez.

LESSON TWO:

Empowerment Through Non-Violent Activism

7. Find a company near your school where the UFW or another union is either organizing or in the process of negotiating a collective bargaining agreement.

Invite a representative of the union involved to your class to discuss the issues. Invite a representative of the company management to do the same.

Why do the workers have a union? When was the union voted in? What was the response of the employer to the workers' efforts to organize a union? What are the union's current demands?

LESSON THREE: **In the National Spotlight**

Time Period: 1966 - 1970

Length: 28:00 min., 48:58 to 1:17:00

Companion Book: Chapters 4 and 5

THEMES

Appealing to America's Conscience

Making Powerful Friends and Enemies

Personal Sacrifice in the Struggle for
Social Justice

SYNOPSIS

Senator Robert Kennedy first came to Delano in 1966 as part of a Senate sub-committee investigating farm labor conditions. He challenged the local sheriff about the authorities' response to the strike, and met with the UFW strikers. The next day a small group of strikers began a march from Delano to Sacramento. By the time the "pilgrimage" ended at the California state capitol building in Sacramento, 10,000 supporters had joined them, and the UFW had signed their first contract with the Schenley Corporation.

Now the strikers began following Delano grapes to market. When growers switched labels to confuse consumers, the UFW responded with a national boycott of all California table grapes. Strikers went to every major city in the U.S., working with local churches, unions, and community groups to convince the public not to buy grapes. In Delano, union members and supporters were wavering in their commitment to non-violence. Chavez responded by going on a fast to re-dedicate the movement to the principles of non-violence.

Robert Kennedy returned to Delano to celebrate the end of the fast, and then began his campaign for the presidency of the United States. The UFW provided Kennedy with key support in winning the California primary, and Dolores Huerta was with Kennedy when he was assassinated in Los Angeles the night he won the primary election. Despite attacks from conservative politicians including California governor Ronald Reagan, the boycott intensified and millions of Americans supported it. In 1970, the UFW signed historic contracts with grape growers. These contracts guaranteed better wages and working conditions, family medical care, protection from pesticides, and the establishment of union-run hiring halls in place of the labor contractor system.

The UFW moved its headquarters to an abandoned tuberculosis sanitarium in the mountains, far from the turmoil of Delano. Cesar named the compound *Nuestra Señora de la Paz*, or "Our Lady of Peace."

LESSON THREE: In the National Spotlight

VOCABULARY

boycott
contract
fast
gringo

hiring hall
La Paz
negotiate

DEFINITIONS

boycott

A campaign to convince the public to stop buying a product or patronizing a company. One of the first campaigns of the African American civil rights movement in the South was the boycott of the city bus system in Montgomery, Alabama. African Americans refused to ride the buses until they were allowed to ride anywhere in the bus, instead of being forced to ride only in the back of the bus. The farmworkers grape boycott was the first successful national boycott in U.S. history.

contract

A written agreement between two parties, which spells out terms and conditions that apply to a situation. When you buy a car or a house, you sign a contract. When employees and owners of a business agree to wages and working conditions, the terms are specified in a labor contract.

fast

The practice of not eating for an extended time, in order to purify the mind and strengthen the spirit. Fasting is associated with several religious traditions, including Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Cesar Chavez engaged in fasts as a form of personal sacrifice and demonstration of commitment. His example helped the UFW and the public focus on the struggle for social justice.

gringo

A Spanish slang term for an Anglo person. “Gringo justice,” as used in the film, describes the “White man’s law,” the enactment and enforcement of laws that preserve the power and privilege of Anglos.

hiring hall

A place where jobs are distributed to workers on the basis of their seniority and position on a waiting list. Many unions, like the carpenters, electricians, and longshoremen use a hiring hall. The UFW adopted the hiring hall to eliminate the abuses caused by growers using labor contractors.

La Paz

Spanish for “peace.” Nuestra Señora de la Paz, Our Lady of Peace, is the name of the UFW headquarters in Keene, California.

negotiate

To resolve differences through discussion and compromise among all parties. Workers and employers negotiate the terms of labor contracts. The Delano grape growers refused to negotiate with the UFW until they felt the economic pressure of the grape boycott.

LESSON THREE:

In the National Spotlight

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Appealing to America's Conscience

1. What was the reason for the UFW grape boycott? Why did millions of Americans support the boycott?
2. Did anyone you know support the boycott? Would you have stopped buying and eating grapes during the boycott? Would you have joined the picket lines outside of grocery stores to try to convince other people to stop eating grapes?
3. When thinking about buying something you want or need, do you think it's a good idea to consider the working conditions of the people who made the product? What about considering the labor and human rights policies in the country where the product was made (e.g. South Africa during Apartheid, Burma, China, Mexico, etc.)?
4. What groups did the farmworkers work with to build so much public support for the boycott?
5. Did the UFW know how to run a boycott when they started? What were the keys to their success? Have you ever accomplished anything that you thought was impossible when you started?

Making Powerful Friends and Enemies

1. How did Robert F. Kennedy help the UFW? Why do you think he supported Cesar Chavez and the UFW? Why did Kennedy suggest that the Kern County Sheriff and District Attorney read the United States Constitution?
2. In the interview with Teofilo Garcia and Adelina Gurrola, there is a framed photograph of John and Robert Kennedy on the wall. Why do you think the Kennedys were so important to farmworkers? What did the candidacy of Robert F. Kennedy represent to Cesar Chavez and the farmworkers movement?
3. Why do you think Governor Ronald Reagan called the grape boycott "immoral"? Do you agree with him?

LESSON THREE: In the National Spotlight

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS continued

4. Which do you think was more important in ending the grape strike — whether politicians supported or opposed the UFW, or whether consumers stopped buying grapes? Is there an issue important to you that politicians have supported or opposed?

Personal Sacrifice in the Struggle for Social Justice

1. Where did Cesar get the idea for the fast? Do you know any of historical precedents for fasting?

2. Why do you think Cesar's fast had such a strong effect on farmworkers and union supporters?

3. What did Cesar's fast represent? ...in religious terms? ...in practical terms? What is the connection between the two?

4. What did farmworkers sacrifice by going on strike? Why do you think they decided to strike anyway? Do you know anybody who has ever been on strike? What was it like for them?

5. Have you ever not eaten for one or two days, or longer? How did it make you feel? Why did you do it?

ACTIVITIES

Debating the Grape Strike

Create a panel whose purpose is to discuss the grape boycott and develop a proposal to end it. Select four UFW representatives and four Delano grape growers. The moderator (teacher) states the ground rules: only one speaker from a side at a time, each speaker gets two minutes to state their side of the problem, no yelling, no interrupting, and no name calling. The moderator must make sure that speakers take turns and follow the ground rules, and keep the activity moving. After the panelists are done speaking, have the audience ask questions for about 5 minutes. After the speakers are done, ask participants if anything the other side said

changed their minds about the issue. Ask them to define the issues as they see them. Applaud their performances.

Coalition Building

Ask for volunteers to pretend they are a historical figure going to visit the fasting Cesar Chavez (played by another volunteer). Let them choose between Dolores Huerta, Gilbert Padilla, Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Jesse Jackson, Robert F. Kennedy, Ethel Kennedy, or another person of their choice. Give them 3-4 minutes to figure out what they might say to Cesar, then have them act out the conversations.

LESSON THREE: In the National Spotlight

The Picket Line

Divide the class in half for a skit. One half are striking farmworkers on the picket line who are trying to get the other half, playing scabs, to stop working and join the strike. The only ground rules are that there must be no physical contact or name calling. After 5 minutes, stop the action and ask participants how they felt. Then have the groups switch roles and continue the skit. After 5 minutes, stop and ask how they felt in their new roles.

How did participants feel during the skits?
What reasons might a worker have to choose to be either a striker or scab?
Which role were participants more comfortable in?

Getting Attention

Pretend that the class is a group that wants to have a new Community Youth Center built. The group needs to raise money, design the center, and get other people to support the project. Brainstorm with students to come up with some things they might do. Potential activities include: designing posters, planning a rally or march, writing an article or press release, and contacting the media to share your ideas with others.

Leadership Skills

Develop a list with the class of the different types of people and skills it takes to build a movement. Skills that might be needed include: writing, typing, researching, performing, painting, public speaking, etc. How could we find or develop these kinds of talents? What does it take for these talents to surface?

RESEARCH TOPICS

1. Read the Constitution of the United States of America and find parts that relate to the UFW or other struggles for social justice.

2. Examine the connections between the Civil Rights Movement and the Farmworkers Movement. Compare and relate these social movements in terms of their goals, principles, methods of protest, political strategies, views of non-violence, coverage by the media, etc. How did each influence public opinion and shape American society? What are your parents' and grandparents' views?

3. Research the life of Robert F. Kennedy and analyze how his political and social views changed over the course of his life — from the period when he was an aide to Senator Joseph McCarthy, to the time he served as Attorney General of the United States, to the period when he supported the farmworkers movement.

4. Research the life of Ronald Reagan, and analyze how his political and social views changed over the course of his life — from the time when he was the head of the Screen Actors Guild, to the period in which he served as Governor of California, to when he served as President of the United States.

LESSON THREE:

In the National Spotlight

RESEARCH TOPICS continued

5. Research the role and use of fasting among different religions and by political movements such as the Irish Republican Army.

6. The period from 1965 to 1970 was a time of growing public opposition to U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. Research the connections between the farmworkers movement and the anti-war movement, and the Defense Department's support of grape growers by shipping large amounts of grapes to Vietnam.

7. How did the philosophy of the Sanctuary Movement in the 1980's compare with the non-violent strategies of Cesar Chavez?

8. Research and examine the connection between consumer decisions (e.g. the choices people make when shopping) and things like working conditions and the environment. Focus on other consumer boycotts like the South African boycott, the boycott against Farah, and the Campbell soup boycott.

LESSON FOUR:

Violence in the Fields and the Rule of Law

Time Period: 1970-1977

Length: 21:48 min., 1:17:00 to 1:38:48

Companion Book: Chapters 6 and 7

THEMES

Growers Fight Back —
Farmworkers on the Defensive

Using the Law to Solve
the Farmworkers' Problems

SYNOPSIS

In 1970, Salinas lettuce growers signed contracts with the Teamsters union to keep their workers from joining the UFW. The farmworkers responded with a general strike and lettuce boycott. Growers got court injunctions to stop the strike and boycott, and Chavez was jailed for refusing to call off the boycott. Chavez was finally released and the courts later decided that growers signed Teamster contracts without their workers' approval.

When the UFW's grape contracts expired in Coachella in 1973, the grape growers also signed Teamster contracts to avoid dealing with the UFW. The wave of strikes that moved up California, from Coachella to Delano and Fresno, was unprecedented in its violence. Teamsters and police attacked UFW picketlines, and county sheriffs arrested thousands of UFW members and supporters. The AFL-CIO supported the UFW with a \$1.6 million strike fund. When two UFW strikers were killed during the violence, Cesar called off the strike.

In 1974 the UFW supported Jerry Brown for governor of California. His first priority after election was to pass the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act, which gave farmworkers the right to vote on union representation for the first time. When the law went into effect in 1975, farmworkers overwhelmingly elected the UFW to represent them. It looked as if the UFW had finally won its struggle for justice in the fields.

LESSON FOUR:

Violence in the Fields and the Rule of Law

VOCABULARY

AFL-CIO

alliance

bargaining agent

California Agricultural Labor Relations Act

injunction

retaliate

sweetheart contract

Teamster

vigil

DEFINITIONS

AFL-CIO

The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations is the national federation of labor unions. The AFL began as an organization of “craft” unions. The CIO was formed in the 1930’s to organize workers by industry rather than by craft or specific job skill. The two organizations merged in the 1950’s.

alliance

The union of two or more parties or groups in an effort to achieve common goals. The growers formed an alliance with the Teamsters Union. Growers wanted to keep the UFW from representing their workers, and knew that the Teamsters Union would not represent the workers as aggressively as the UFW. In exchange, the Teamsters Union would receive dues from farmworkers who were forced to join their organization.

bargaining agent

The organization that a group of workers in a factory, store or farm selects to represent them to bargain with their employer on wages, benefits, and working conditions. Under the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act, a union must win an election to be recognized as the bargaining agent for the workers on a farm or ranch.

California Agricultural Labor Relations Act

Enacted in California in May 1975, the law gave farmworkers the right to organize and vote in secret ballot elections to select a union for the first time. The law requires growers to bargain in good faith with the union chosen by farmworkers, but does not require growers to sign a contract with the union.

injunction

A judicial order requiring the persons or organization to whom it is directed to refrain from doing an act or set of acts. During strikes, growers frequently obtain injunctions to prohibit or limit picketing, prevent the use of bullhorns, or other activities.

retaliate

To seek revenge or try to “get back at someone” for a perceived injury, loss, or attack. Growers retaliated against the UFW by signing contracts with the Teamsters. Cesar did not want farmworkers to retaliate against the police or Teamsters when they were the victims of violence on the picket lines.

LESSON FOUR:

Violence in the Fields and the Rule of Law

sweetheart contract

A contract between a labor union and an employer that either offers favorable terms to the employer, or is not enforced.

Growers signed sweetheart contracts with the Teamsters Union in Salinas and Coachella in order to avoid signing contracts with the UFW.

Teamster

A member of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the union representing truckers, packers, and movers of materials.

The Teamsters Union was expelled from the AFL-CIO in the 1950's. The current Teamsters president Ron Carey led the movement to reform the corrupt practices of the union, which has now rejoined the AFL-CIO.

vigil

A process of prayer and silent demonstration of faith. UFW supporters organized a vigil when Cesar was put in jail in Salinas.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Growers Fight Back — Farmworkers on the Defensive

1. Why did growers in Salinas and Coachella sign contracts with the Teamsters Union instead of the UFW? Did they consult their workers before making this decision? What was at stake for the growers? For the UFW?

2. What were growers trying to accomplish during the early 1970's? What were their goals, resources, and strategies? Were they effective?

3. What was the role of the police during the strikes covered in this section? Was this a new role? How about the courts?

LESSON FOUR:

Violence in the Fields and the Rule of Law

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS continued

4. What did the Teamsters Union have to gain by being involved in the violent confrontations in Salinas and Coachella?

5. Why was Cesar put in jail in 1970 in Salinas? Why was he released?

6. In the film a lettuce grower says that when Ethel Kennedy visited Cesar in jail, "...it was strictly a political move for the Kennedys' political advancement..." Do you agree or disagree with this statement. What do you think of her decision to visit Cesar?

7. Why did the AFL-CIO give the UFW \$1.6 million for their strike fund? Why would the AFL-CIO support the UFW, while the Teamsters were attacking it?

8. Why did Cesar called off the 1973 strike after the two UFW strikers, Nagi Daifullah and Juan de la Cruz, were killed? Do you think the strike should have continued?

Using the Law to Solve the Farmworkers' Problems

1. In 1974 the UFW decided to work to get a law passed that would allow farmworkers to vote in union elections. Why did the UFW choose a legislative solution? Why did the growers, the supermarkets, and the public support this new approach?

2. Do you think it is sometimes necessary to change laws and policies in order to solve problems in society?

3. How was the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act supposed to help farmworkers? What rights did it give them? What was the immediate effect of the law? Why did Governor Brown support the law?

4. Can you think of other laws that have been enacted to give people more rights? Who supported those laws? Who opposed them? How do you think individuals and groups influenced the political and legislative process?

ACTIVITIES

Debating the Issue

Create a scenario in which four students represent each side in a strike — workers and employers. Have two other students represent the local Police Chief and the Mayor. Ask these two officials to mediate the event. Ask them to set ground rules and establish what type of outcomes they want to see. Proceed without teacher intervention. Each group should be able to present its side of the story uninterrupted.

Discuss with the class. Did each side have good points? Did the two sides follow the ground rules? Did the Police Chief or Mayor favor one side or the other?

Write a Law!

Split the class into thirds, representing the three primary parties involved in forming the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act — the UFW, the growers, and state officials (governor and legislators, elected by the farmworkers and growers).

LESSON FOUR:

Violence in the Fields and the Rule of Law

The state officials are to write the law, with input from the UFW and growers. Start by giving the UFW some time to propose everything they want in the law to the state officials (officials make a list on the board). Then give the growers an equal amount of time to make their counter-proposal (officials make another list). Then have the state officials decide what provisions the law will include. The officials should ask questions of either side and discuss amongst themselves.

Discuss the process and the outcome with the entire group. Which side was more persuasive and effective in shaping the law? Were the state officials listening to both sides? Is this a fair process?

A Symbolic Altar

Using a Day of the Dead book, make an altar similar to the one set up for the vigil when Cesar was in jail during his fast. The altar may be centered around the Virgin of Guadalupe, Cesar, or another person who is important to you.

Write a Poem or Song!

Write a poem or a corrido (song) about the two UFW strikers who were killed in August 1973 — Nagi Daifullah and Juan de la Cruz. Daifullah died after being hit over the head with a flashlight by a police officer and then hitting his head on the pavement. Juan de la Cruz was shot while on a picket line (the shooter stood trial but was not convicted).

RESEARCH TOPICS

1. Read the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act. What are its major provisions? How is it supposed to be enforced? What do you think should be added to the law, or taken out?
2. Compare the National Labor Relations Act and the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act. How are they similar and/or different? Why was the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act enacted? How much of each law is open to interpretation?
3. Explore the history of rivalry and conflict between the AFL-CIO and the Teamsters during the 1960's and 1970's.
4. Research the Teamsters Union and their connection to organized crime. How have they changed and reformed over the years?
5. Research important civil rights laws and court cases that occurred during Cesar's lifetime — e.g. Brown vs. Board of Education (1954), the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965. How did these laws and cases come about? Who supported them? Who opposed them? How did they change American society? How did they influence Cesar and the UFW?

LESSON FIVE:

The Struggle Continues

Time Period: 1978 to the present

Length: 18:00 min., 1:38:48 to end

Companion Book: Chapters 8, 9, and Epilogue

THEMES

Old Dilemmas — New Challenges

The UFW Changes Its Focus

Cesar Chavez' Legacy of Empowerment and Non-Violence

The UFW Today

SYNOPSIS

The California Agricultural Labor Relations Act, which had seemed like the solution to the farmworkers problems, was not effective for farmworkers in the long run. Growers learned to use the legal provisions of the law to slow down the process of certification and bargaining, and election victories did not translate into new contracts for the workers. When Republican George Deukmejian was elected governor of California in 1982, he appointed pro-grower members to the board that administers the law, and effectively blocked enforcement of the law. Even before Dukmejian was elected, the UFW had changed course. Chavez' focus changed from organizing in the fields to media campaigns and direct mail outreach, and many key organizers left the organization. During the 1980's the entire country became more conservative and less supportive of causes like the farmworkers. President Reagan had set the tone for the decade when he fired the nation's striking air traffic controllers in 1981.

The UFW continued to take their case to the American public, emphasizing the dangers of pesticides to consumers, as well as to farmworkers. In 1988 Cesar conducted his last public fast, a "Fast for Life," to focus attention on the pesticide poisoning of farmworkers and consumers. In 1992, the death of Cesar's old friend and mentor Fred Ross brought current and former members of the movement together to celebrate Ross' vision and perseverance. Cesar Chavez died in San Luis, Arizona, in 1993, a few miles from where he was born. Over forty thousand people gathered in Delano to pay their last respects to the farmworker leader.

Cesar Chavez has become widely recognized as a true hero of the common man — a leader who never wavered in his belief that farmworkers deserve decent working and living conditions, and a sense of their own dignity. Streets, schools, plazas, and parks have been named after Cesar and there is talk of a national holiday to celebrate his birth. Since Cesar's death the UFW has begun new organizing campaigns and achieved significant new victories for farmworkers. Under the leadership of Arturo Rodriguez, Cesar's son-in-law, the UFW has continued to follow Cesar's principles of non-violent activism to improve the lives of farmworkers. It is clear that the UFW's story is far from finished.

LESSON FIVE:

The Struggle Continues

VOCABULARY

direct marketing

hero

momentum

pesticides

DEFINITIONS

direct marketing

A method of outreach which makes use of large-scale mailings to deliver a message to citizens and consumers. These mailings are targeted to reach people or groups who are most likely to be receptive to the message.

hero

A person who demonstrates the best qualities within ourselves and acts in a true and idealistic manner usually requiring great integrity. In 1968, Robert Kennedy called Cesar Chavez ‘one of the most heroic figures of our time’ because of his unwavering commitment to the farmworker cause.

momentum

The force that a moving body develops when it is going in a given direction, and which keeps it going in the same direction. The UFW built a great deal of “momentum” during the 60’s and 70’s. However, much of this “momentum” was lost during the 80’s when the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act was not enforced, the country started moving in a more conservative direction, and farmworker organizers were less visible in fields or on picket lines.

pesticides

Chemicals sprayed on fruits and vegetables to kill “pests” (insects or fungi) that can damage crops. The use of pesticides increases crop yields, but also can pose a health threat to those who come into contact with these chemicals.

LESSON FIVE:

The Struggle Continues

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Old Dilemmas — New Challenges

1. Did the California Agricultural Labor Relations Act protect the farmworkers right to choose their own union?
2. How did the enforcement of the CALRA change? Why? What did this mean for the growers, for the UFW, and for workers in the fields?
3. Did farmworkers need a law to guarantee their right to union representation? Was the law enough by itself? If not, what else might have been needed?
4. What are some problems that farmworkers faced in the 1930's that resurfaced in the 1980's? What might be done to solve these problems?

The UFW Changes Its Focus

1. In the 1980's George Deukmejian was elected Governor of California and Ronald Reagan was elected President of the United States. What kind of change in the political and social climate do you think was indicated by these elections? How did these changes affect the UFW?
2. When the UFW was founded in the early 1960's, what was its overall mission, its goals, strategies, size, and structure? In what ways had it changed by the 1980's, and why?
3. Can you think of organizations or movements that changed their focus over the years? How did they change, and why?

LESSON FIVE:

The Struggle Continues

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS continued

Cesar Chavez' Legacy of Empowerment and Non-violence

1. What do you consider to be the most important lessons to be learned from the life of Cesar Chavez?
2. What did Cesar Chavez teach farmworkers and other poor people about empowerment?
3. What is the relationship between having a sense of empowerment, and gaining real power? Which do you think comes first? How can you develop one or the other?
4. Do you know of any communities or groups that are empowered? Do you know of any communities or groups that lack a sense of empowerment? Will these communities be able to make positive changes without a sense of empowerment?
5. Why was non-violence such an important part of Cesar's teaching?
6. How did the work done by Cesar Chavez, Dolores Huerta, and others involved in the farmworkers' movement change the United States? How did it change the individuals involved in the struggle?

7. Cesar and the UFW had a set of goals before having a clear plan for reaching them. They were able to develop creative strategies to build a movement and gain support for their cause. What does their story teach you about pursuing your own goals or dreams?

8. There are many places around the country named after Cesar Chavez (schools, parks, etc.). Do you know of any of these places? Do you think it is a good idea to name these types of things after people in order to honor them and remind ourselves of their accomplishments?

9. Do you consider Cesar Chavez to be a "hero?" Do you think heroes are perfect people in all ways, or can they have their flaws like other people? Who are some of your heroes, and why?

The UFW Today

1. The UFW is currently organizing farmworkers who pick strawberries in an effort to obtain improved wages and working conditions. Are you familiar with this campaign? Would you stop eating strawberries to support the strawberry workers if the UFW called a boycott? Explain your answer.

LESSON FIVE: The Struggle Continues

ACTIVITIES

¡Teatro!

Have students write a skit about any aspect of Cesar’s life. Divide the students into 3-5 groups if necessary (it’s OK if more than one group chooses to dramatize the same thing). Have students present their skits to the entire class.

Timeline

Make a timeline from 1920 to the present time that is divided into 10-year blocks. Write in important events in the life of Cesar Chavez and the UFW — e.g. family history, organizing efforts, strikes, boycotts, marches, laws, etc. Discuss how the different events are related to each other. Add other events from the Civil Rights Movement and your own family history. Discuss ways in which your family was influenced by these social movements?

Sun Mad Raisins

Do the lesson on “Sun Mad Raisins” included in the Appendix. The poster by Ester Hernandez and lesson outline are provided.

View Related Videos

View the UFW films “No Grapes” which talks about the terrible effects of pesticide poisoning in the fields, and/or “Strawberries, Five Cents for Fairness” which addresses the current strawberry campaign.

Show Off Your Work!

Arrange an exhibition, performance, or presentation to showcase all the work students have done. Display your work in a way that makes it clear and understandable to others. Include descriptions of what your work reflects or represents.

RESEARCH TOPICS

1. Investigate Cesar Chavez’ values, particularly his commitment to empowerment and non-violent activism. Where and how did he develop an understanding of these principles? Who were his role models, and what had they done? How were his spiritual beliefs related to his views of social justice? How did he strengthen and nourish his commitment?
2. Identify groups or individuals that are working to make positive changes in your community. What are their goals and strategies? Is their approach based on the ideas and work of other people or groups? Are they familiar with Cesar Chavez?
3. Find out more about what the UFW is currently doing. What are their current goals and strategies? What factors have helped the organization to survive and continue its work over the years? Is there currently a grape boycott?

LESSON FIVE:

The Struggle Continues

RESEARCH TOPICS continued

4. Use newspaper and magazine photos and articles to put together a presentation about the April, 1997, march in Watsonville organized by the UFW.

5. Research has shown that pesticides can have serious health effects on people exposed to them. Look in medical journals and UFW literature to learn about pesticide usage and its effects on farmworkers, communities near the fields, and consumers. What are some of these effects and what is being done to address them?

6. Make a chart of toxic chemicals that are used in agriculture, and their effects on people and animals.

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The Fight in the Fields Study Guide

Appendices

Bakers Dough, Glue Dough, Bead Clay

These recipes can be used to make earrings, medallions, ornaments to hang on trees, diorama figurines, etc..

BAKERS DOUGH

3 cup flour
1 cup salt
1 1/4 cup warm water
food coloring
large mixing bowl

1. Pour salt into a large bowl. Add water and stir until the salt is dissolved.
2. Add flour, mix and then knead until smooth and firm.
3. Separate into four balls and mix in desired food colors.
4. Use a rolling pin to prepare dough for flat objects (1/4 inch maximum) or model using a toothpick base. The dough may be stored in an air-tight container in the refrigerator for up to one week
5. Bake for 1 hour in a 250 degree oven. Larger items take more time, so be careful. Items should be light golden brown when done.
6. May be painted and shellaced.

GLUE DOUGH

1cup flour
1 cup cornstarch
food coloring
1/2 cup white glue
water as needed
mixing bowl

1. Stir flour, cornstarch glue, and food coloring in a bowl. Add 1 tsp water as needed to hold the ingredients together. Add water to bring to consistency of shiny bread dough.
2. Knead until workable (can be easily modeled).
3. Model and let dry overnight.
4. Paint as desired.

The Fight in the Fields Study Guide

Appendices

BEAD CLAY

3/4 cup flour
1/2 cup salt
1/2 cup cornstarch
warm water
toothpicks
string (for beading)
paint
sealant (optional)

1. Mix flour, salt & cornstarch in bowl.
2. Add warm water gradually until mixture forms a solid shape.
3. Knead until smooth.
4. Make object. Pierce with toothpick and allow to dry overnight.
5. Paint if desired.

The Fight in the Fields Study Guide

Appendices

DE COLORES

De colores, de colores se visten los campos en la primavera,
De colores, de colores son los pajaritos que vienen de afuera.
De colores, de colores es el arco iris que vemos lucir,

Y por eso los grandes amores de muchos colores,
 me gustan a mí,
Y por eso los grandes amores de muchos colores,
 me gustan a mí!

Canta el gallo, canta el gallo con el quiri, quiri, quiri, quiri, quiri!
La gallina, la gallina con el cara, cara, cara, cara, cara.
Los pollitos, los pollitos con el pió, pió, pió, pí!

Y por eso los grandes amores de muchos colores,
 me gustan a mí,
Y por eso los grandes amores de muchos colores,
 me gustan a mí!

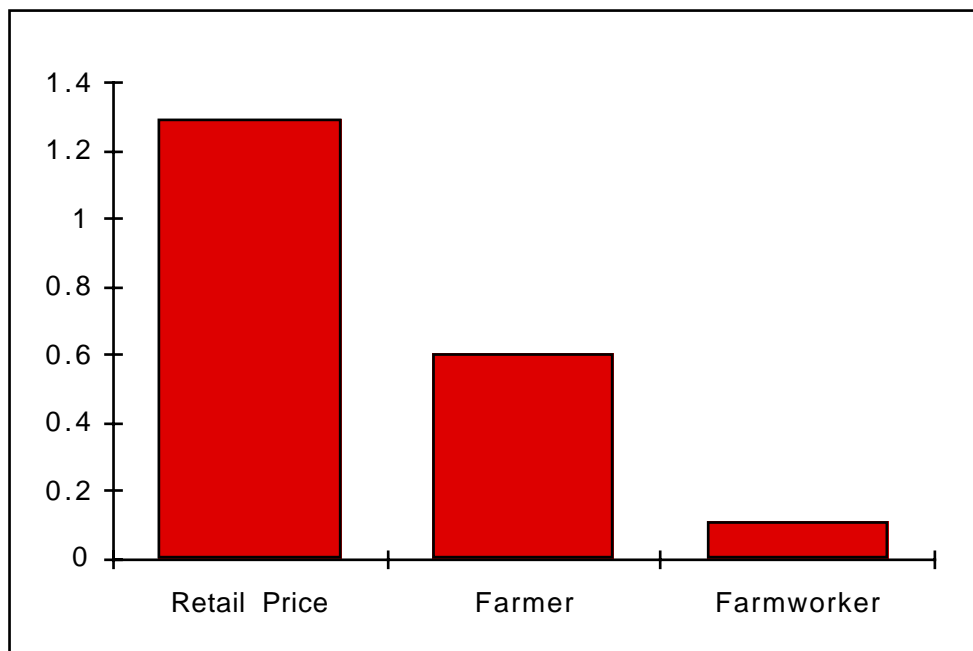
De colores, de colores se visten los campos en la primavera,
De colores, de colores son los pajaritos que vienen de afuera.
De colores, de colores es el arco iris que vemos lucir,

Y por eso los grandes amores de muchos colores,
 me gustan a mí,
Y por eso los grandes amores de muchos colores,
 me gustan a mí!

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THE COST OF A BASKET OF STRAWBERRIES

Average Retail Price	\$1.29
Average price paid to farmer	\$.60
Average price paid to farmworker	10.5 cents



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LESSON PLAN FOR “THE KITTEN”

“The Kitten” is one of the very first episodes in *Black Boy*, written by Richard Wright in the early 1940s. It is partly autobiographical, and this particular story is so true to life that students are sure it really happened. It takes place in the early 1900s, maybe 1910, in Memphis, Tennessee. The young Richard Wright has just moved to the “big city” from the rural South and is very frightened to venture out into the world. The sum of his existence is a tiny tenement apartment where he is a virtual prisoner. It is here he learns one of the most important lessons of his young life.

This story lends itself to a Reader’s Theater presentation. Select five students; four to read the parts of the boy, the brother, his father, and his mother. The fifth will read everything except the dialogue of the other characters. It is beautifully written and easily understood, but stop for clarification if you think anything is not understood. There is a description of the father as “guzzling a bucket of beer.” Tell students that it was much cheaper to fill your own pail with beer than to stay in the bar and pay for it by the glass. Most people took their beer home to drink. Compare the type of discipline used then and now. Ask students how they feel about the father. Was he really evil? He was working nights to support his family and he did need to sleep. Ask students if they or their parents have ever worked nights and had to sleep during the day.

There are two conflicts in this story: one between the boy and his father and the second between the boy and his mother. The question also needs to be asked, “What would have happened to Richard if his mother hadn’t decided to step in and make sure he understood what he did?”

Fill out the Short Story Study Form and then have students read their answers.

Finish by using the Power Matrix. Ask “Who in your family is the person everyone goes to for help with a problem? Who do you go to if you want to get your way?”

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POWER MATRIX FOR “THE KITTEN”

This sheet should be duplicated and given to each group of four students. After reading “The Kitten,” students in their groups will discuss the characteristics of each character and place that character’s name on the grid in the block that best describes his/her “goodness” and “power.” The Teacher should draw a large matrix on the chalkboard/chart paper and have one person from each group tell the entire class their reasons for each placement.

	very powerful	powerful	neither	weak	very weak
very bad					
bad					
neither					
good					
very good					

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SUN MAD RAISINS

Ester Hernandez was born and raised in the small town of Dinuba in the San Joaquin Valley of California, one of the richest agricultural areas in the world. Her parents were farmworkers, and she and her five brothers and sisters often worked alongside their parents in the fields. She remembers that art was always a part of her life. Her mother and grandmother stitched beautiful embroidery in the style of their home town in North Central Mexico, her father was an amateur photographer and a visual artist, and her grandfather was a master carpenter and wood sculptor. “I had my first art exhibit in Kindergarten. I was totally supported by my family and community and I have been an artist all my life,” she proudly states.

Ester had just graduated from high school when she and her family saw a performance by El Teatro Campesino as part of the United Farmworkers March on Sacramento in 1966. They loved El Teatro’s satirical look at the relationship between farmworkers and growers. Her father became the first person in their town to join the UFW, and Ester was soon using her enormous talent to make leaflets and posters to support the UFW cause.

She went on to study and perfect her art, and eventually joined “Las Mujeres Muralistas,” women artists who painted murals on buildings, fences and walls because they believed art should be out on the streets for everyone to enjoy.

Perhaps her single most famous piece associated with the farmworker struggle is *Sun Mad Raisins*, created by Ester in 1982. She comments on this work in the following passage:

Sun Mad has to do with going home to visit my mother in 1979. My mother saved articles out of the newspaper and notices from the mail that talked about the water contamination by pesticides in the San Joaquin Valley, especially in our barrio. For two years I thought about it. Then my mind went back to the work that I did when I was a farmworker and to the work that was still going on in that immediate area- growing grapes for the raisin industry. I focused on something personal, the “Sun Maid Raisin” box. Slowly I began to visualize how to transform the “Sun Maid” and unmask the truth behind the wholesome figures of agribusiness. Sun Mad evolved out of my anger and my fear of what would happen to my family, my community and to myself.

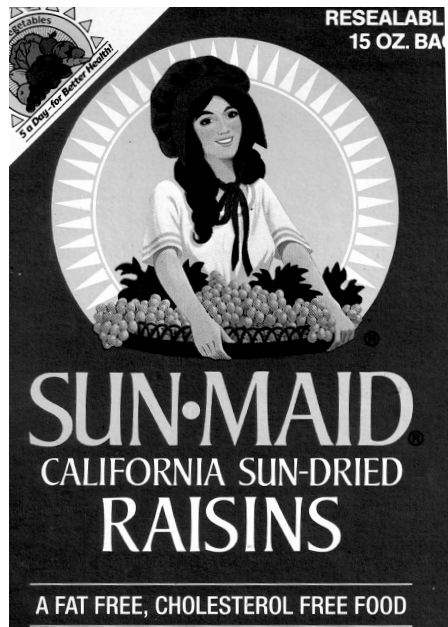
Sun Mad is on display at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C., where “national treasures,” or important pieces of American culture are displayed. It was chosen because of its powerful statement against environmental poisoning, the spraying of pesticides on crops that has seriously affected the health and lives of farmworkers. Ironically, Ester has never been allowed to exhibit it in her own home, the San Joaquin Valley, because curators of museums located there do not want to anger the powers of agribusiness.

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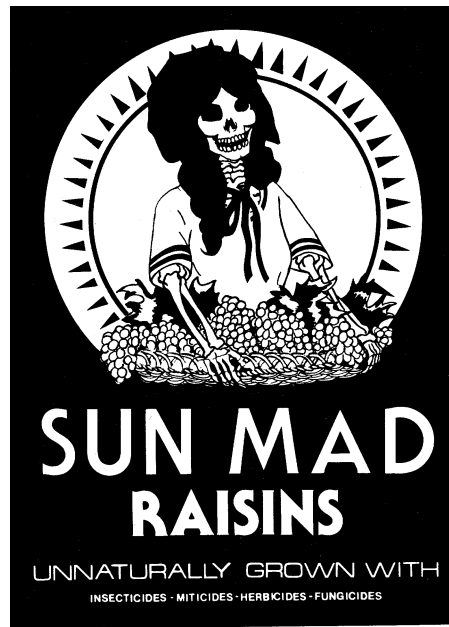
Lesson: Sun Maid or Sun Mad?

Photocopy or make an overhead of the *Sun Mad* and *Sun Maid* images. Pass out to students or place on an overhead projector so that students can see the the two images clearly.

1. Look at both pictures. Study them for details. What are some of the things you see?
2. These are two pieces of art done by two different artists with differing points of view. What was each trying to say about raisins? What images do they use?
3. Why do you think Ester Hernandez picked this particular package cover to make into a calavera (skeleton)?

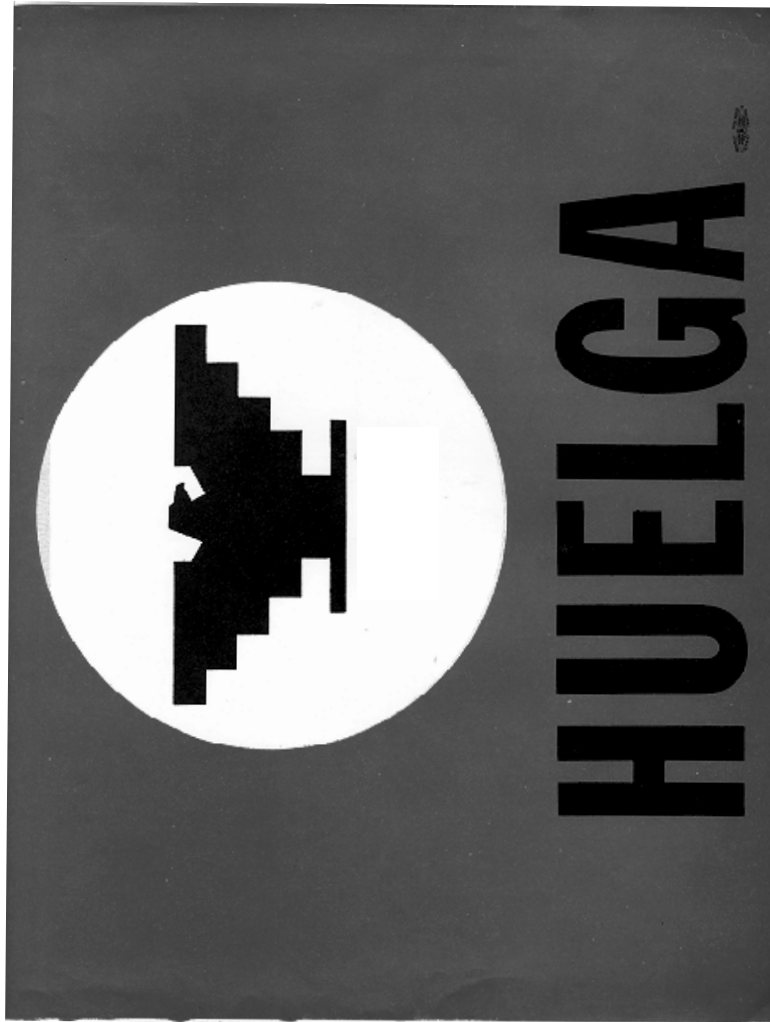


Sun Maid Raisin Box



Sun Mad Raisin Poster

FARMWORKER FLAG



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