

NEWS RELEASE



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Free Online Resources at Thinkfinity.org Help Educators Bring National Hispanic Heritage Month Studies to Life

*Resources Help Students Learn About Hispanic Culture; Provide Assistance for
English Language Learners Through Thinkfinity Literacy Network*

NEW YORK – From the musical history of Mexican Corridos, to stories of the California Gold Rush to the expeditions of Juan Bautista de Anza that led to the colonization of San Francisco, Hispanic Heritage Month offers a unique opportunity to delve into and celebrate the diverse history and important contributions Latinos have made to American culture.

To help educators introduce their students to Hispanic-American history and celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month, from Sept. 15 – Oct. 15, Thinkfinity.org will offer a rich collection of free lesson plans and educational resources to educators on a special section of its home page.

Thinkfinity.org is the Verizon Foundation's comprehensive program and online portal to 55,000 standards-based, grade-specific, K-12 lesson plans and other educational resources provided in partnership with many of the nation's leading educational and literacy organizations.

Among the resources in the Thinkfinity Hispanic Heritage section are:

- The Music & Meaning of Mexican Corridos, an interactive lesson developed by ARTSEEDGE, a program of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Students examine the historical and cultural significance of corridos, Mexican folk ballads that originated in the mid 1800s, and have an opportunity to compose lyrics to a corrido. Historically, the songs were written to communicate news of actual events, often focusing on heroes or individuals fighting unjust authorities. Two classroom lessons, along with audio samples of corridos are available at <http://www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/3772/>.
- EDSITEMent's National Hispanic Heritage Month Feature provides an overview and explains why Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated from Sept. 15 to Oct 15. (The 31-day period begins on Independence Day for Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.) More information is available at http://edsitement.neh.gov/monthly_feature.asp?id=20.
- Timeline Games and Mexican History to Improve Comprehension, a lesson plan created by the International Reading Association's ReadWriteThink.org. In this lesson, elementary students study the basic elements of Mexican history and use online resources to gather information to create an illustrated timeline. More information is available at http://www.readwritethink.org/calendar/calendar_day.asp?id=293
- Web de Anza, a Web site funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities is listed among EDSITEMent's Blue Ribbon sites. This resource provides students and scholars with primary source documents and multimedia resources covering Juan Bautista de Anza's two overland expeditions from the Sonoran desert to northern California, leading to the colonization of San Francisco in 1776. More information is available at <http://anza.uoregon.edu/default.html>.

“The true diversity of culture and ideas reflected across the American landscape is among our nation's greatest strengths,” said Verizon Foundation President Patrick Gaston. “Hispanic Heritage Month provides a perfect opportunity to reflect on the wonderful contributions of Hispanic-Americans, and we're proud that Thinkfinity.org can play a role in sharing these important lessons with the next generation.”

In addition to resources in connection with Hispanic Heritage Month, Thinkfinity.org also offers an abundance of resources for English language learners through the Thinkfinity Literacy Network. Many of the resources on the TLN are available in both English and Spanish.

Among the resources available in Spanish are:

- Los Elementos de la lectura, which includes a variety of activities for parents or volunteers to help children improve reading skills.
http://literacynetwork.verizon.org/fileadmin/popups/elements_spanish.htm
- Lectura en voz alta para grupos de niños, edades recién nacidos a 8 años, which helps parents guide their children to gain confidence in reading aloud.
http://literacynetwork.verizon.org/fileadmin/popups/reading_aloud_sp.htm

Content for Thinkfinity is provided through a partnership between the Verizon Foundation and 11 of the nation's leading organizations in the fields of education and literacy: the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the International Reading Association, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, National Center for Family Literacy, National Council on Economic Education, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Council of Teachers of English, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, National Geographic Society, ProLiteracy Worldwide and the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.

Thinkfinity is the Verizon Foundation's signature educational and literacy program and includes the program formerly known as Verizon MarcoPolo and the Verizon Literacy Network. Thinkfinity combines authoritative educational content and robust professional development with research and evidence-based resources and practices for literacy across the lifespan.

The Verizon Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Verizon Communications, is committed to improving literacy and K-12 education; fostering awareness and prevention of domestic violence; and promoting the use of technology in health-care delivery. In 2006, the

foundation awarded more than \$69 million in grants to nonprofit agencies in the United States and abroad. The foundation also matched charitable donations from Verizon employees and retirees, resulting in \$29 million in combined contributions. Under the foundation's Verizon Volunteer initiative, one of the nation's largest employee-volunteer programs, company employees and retirees have also contributed nearly 3 million hours of community service since Verizon's inception in 2000.

For more information on the foundation, visit www.verizon.com/foundation.

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