CULTURAL CHANGE IN LATIN AMERICA

Course - 6th Grade World Cultures

TEKS* - Driving Content: 6(1)A, 6(3)B, 6(15)A, 6(15)D
Driving Skills: 6(19)B, 6(19)C
Emergent Understanding: 6(2)A, 6(2)B, 6(13)A, 6(13)B, 6(13)C

Introduction - Review the definition of cultural diffusion with your students. *Cultural diffusion is the spread of cultural traits from one person, group, or region to another*. Have students brainstorm the various ways that cultural diffusion can happen: *migration, social media, music, education, etc.* Briefly introduce the Columbian Exchange as background before starting the gallery walk.

Gallery Walk** - Display each poster around the classroom and give each student (or pair of students) the chart (p. 10). Have students visit each poster to examine cultural change in Latin America through six different case studies - Catholicism, Día de los Muertos, Capoeira, Barrio Chino, Tango, and Language. At each station, students should complete the chart. Keep in mind that a trait may or may not have changed in each case study, so some boxes may be left blank.

Assessment - After completing the chart, have students synthesize what they learned by responding to the three discussion questions (p. 11).

*Driving Content refers to TEKS that are explicitly taught and assessed as part of the lesson while Emergent Understanding refers to concepts developed through the lesson but that are not explicitly taught or assessed.
**AI tools were used to adjust reading selections to an appropriate sixth-grade reading level.*

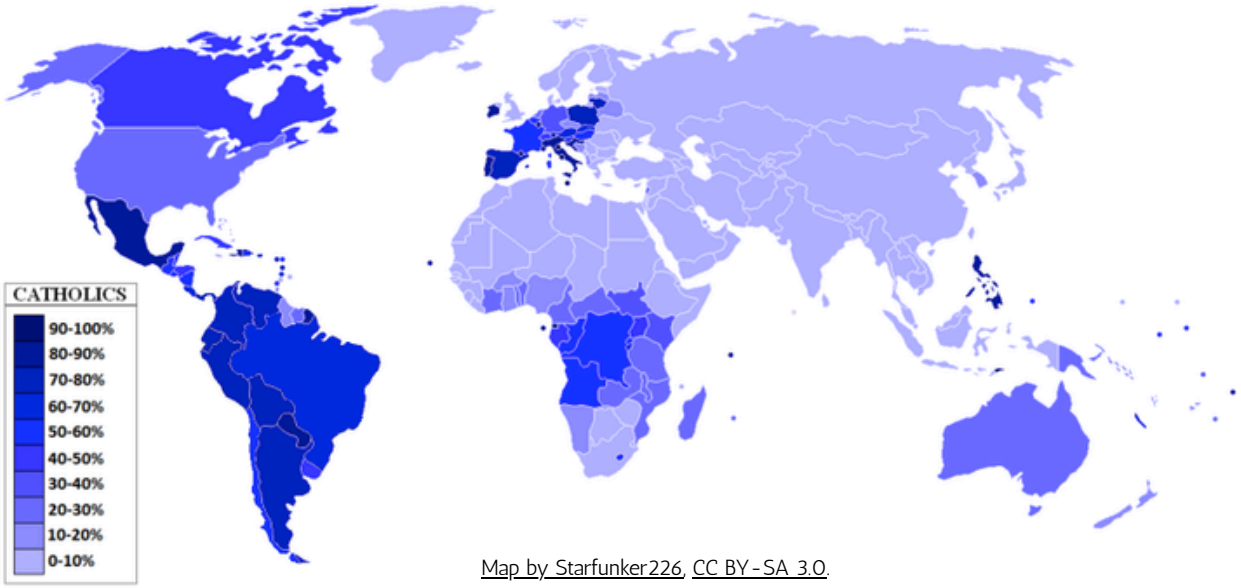
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CATHOLICISM

Roman Catholicism is the main religion in most countries in Latin America. When Spain and Portugal colonized the region, they brought Catholicism with them and converted many Indigenous people to the religion. Today, about 46% to 67% of adults in the six most populated countries in Latin America identify as Catholic. Religion continues to play an important role in daily life. Many people believe in God, and prayer is common.



Mexico City Metropolitan Cathedral
Photo by Alejandro Simon on Unsplash



Map by Starfunker226, CC BY-SA 3.0.



Ruínas de São Miguel - St. Michael of the Missions - Rio Grande do Sul - Brazil 01, CC BY-SA 4.0

The ruins of São Miguel das Missões in Brazil and four other Catholic missions in Argentina are located in tropical forests. These missions were built in the lands of the Guarani people during the 1600s and 1700s. Today, their remains show what life was like in these communities.

UNESCO Description, CC-BY-SA IGO 3.0
Revised for relevance and grade-appropriate language

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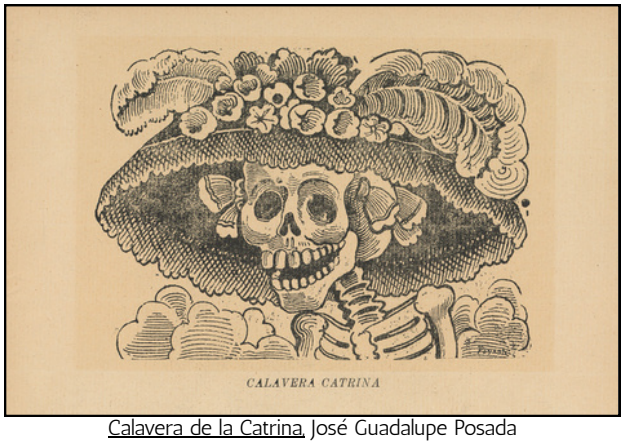
DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS

Many people connect Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) with Mexico, but the holiday is also celebrated in other parts of Latin America. Its roots go back to the Aztecs, who honored the dead long before the Spanish arrived.



Mictlancihuatl 3, Codex Borgia

The Aztecs honored Mictēcacihuātl, known as the Lady of the Dead, whom they believed protected the bones of people who had died. They believed these bones helped create new life. The Aztecs held celebrations to honor her and show thanks for her protection.



Calavera de la Catrina, José Guadalupe Posada

When the Spanish came, they began combining the Catholic holidays of "All Saints Day" and "All Souls Day" with the indigenous traditions of honoring the dead. The Catholic festivals were celebrated by bringing food to and decorating graves. Eventually, Mictēcacihuātl was replaced with la Catrina. Her image features a skeleton woman wearing a European hat adorned with flowers and feathers.



Today people commonly wear skull masks and face paint, spend time with family at their loved ones' gravesites, create *ofrendas* to invite their loved ones back, and share meals with family.

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CAPOEIRA

Capoeira is a Brazilian martial art that combines fighting moves, dance, music, and acrobatics. Enslaved Africans developed capoeira as a way to defend themselves against Portuguese slaveholders.

From the beginning, Portuguese slaveholders and officials tried to stop people from practicing capoeira. Eventually, it became illegal in Brazil in the late 1800s. To keep the tradition alive, they made capoeira look like a dance, using music from instruments such as the berimbau, which has African roots.

In the 1930s, capoeira became legal in Brazil and was recognized as an important part of the country's culture. Today, people practice capoeira throughout Brazil and in many other parts of the world, including the United States.



Capoeira Scene, Brazil, 1820 - 1824, Augustus Earle





Photo by Sebastián Brito on Unsplash

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BARRIO CHINO

Barrio Chino is a Chinese neighborhood in Lima, the capital of Peru. Chinese immigrants began arriving in Peru in the mid-1800s to work on farms and build railways. In 1849, 75 Chinese immigrants settled in Lima and created a community that reflected their culture and traditions. Today, Barrio Chino's Chinese heritage is seen through its food, festivals, and architecture.

Chifas serve dishes that combine Chinese and Peruvian cooking, including the popular *lomo saltado*.



A Chinese-style arch, built in 1971, marks the entrance to the neighborhood.



Photo by David Berkowitz, CC BY 2.0

People also visit the neighborhood to celebrate Chinese New Year.



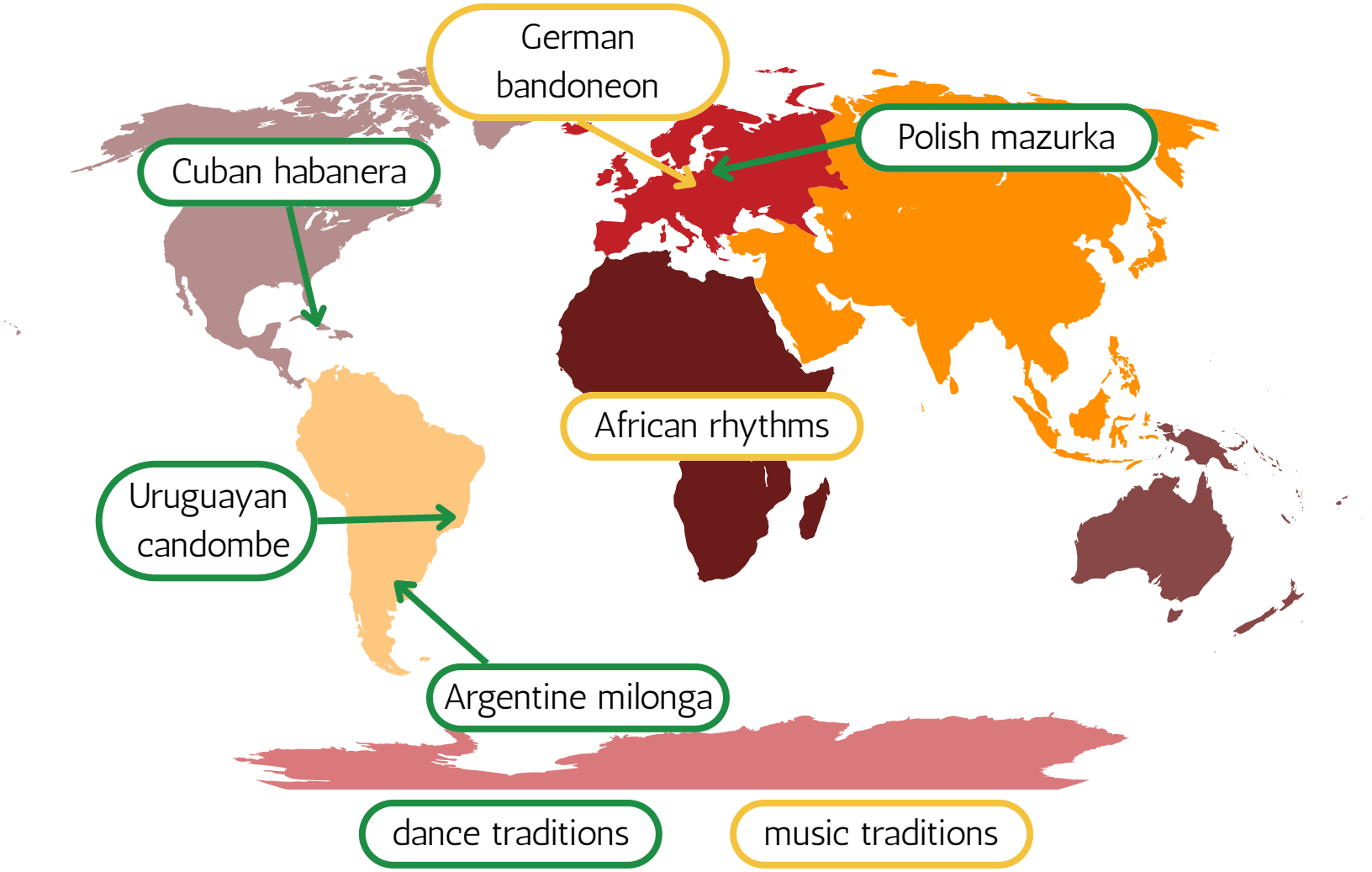
Chinese neighborhoods can also be found in other Latin American cities, including Havana, Cuba; Buenos Aires, Argentina; and Mexico City, Mexico.

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TANGO



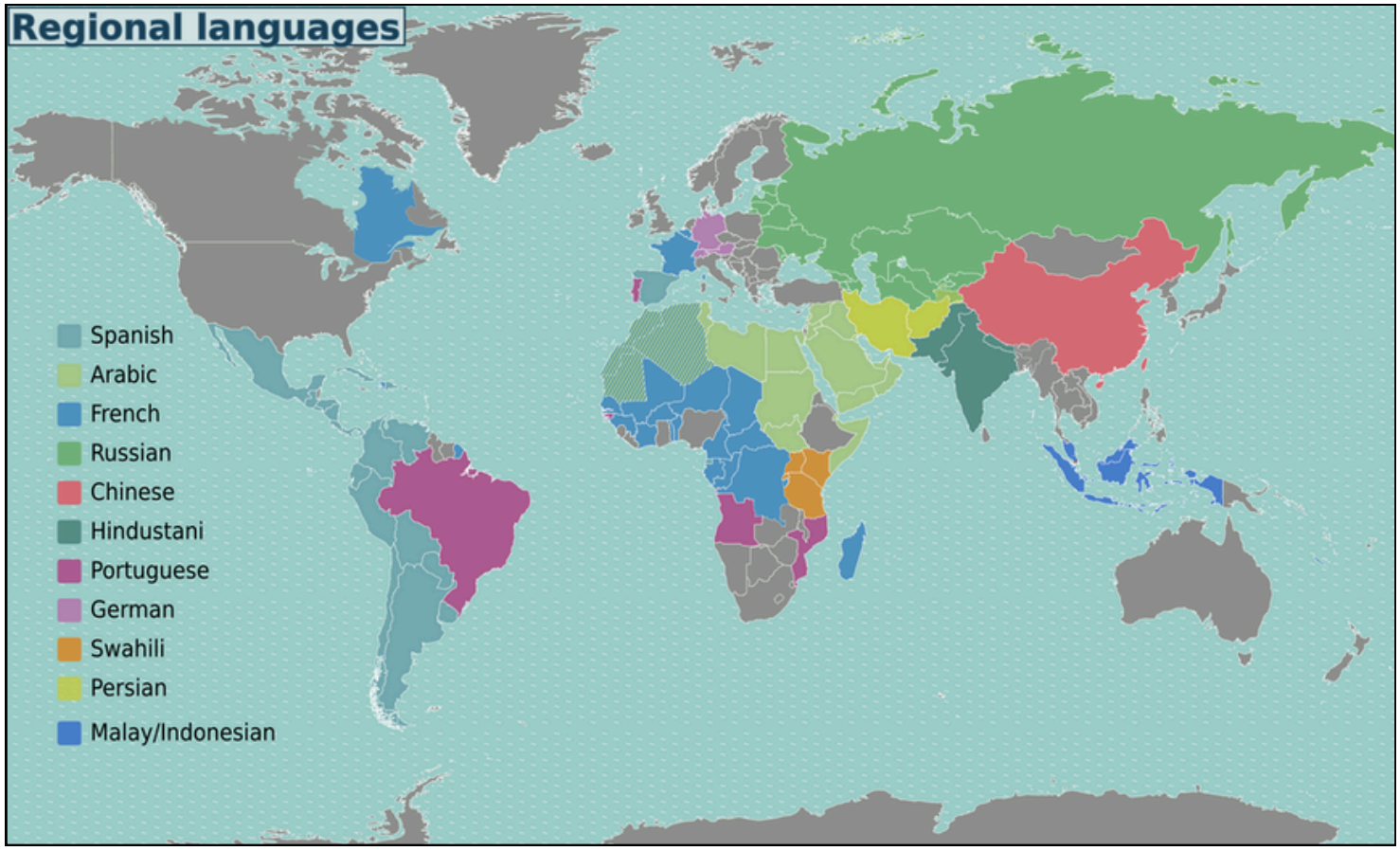
Tango is a style of dance and music that began in Buenos Aires, Argentina. It developed from a mix of African, European, and Latin American music and dance traditions. As people from different cultures came together, they shared their music and dances, helping create the tango. Tango music often features the bandoneon, an instrument similar to an accordion that European immigrants brought to the region. Tango later became popular in France, especially among wealthy people, and eventually spread around the world.



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LANGUAGE

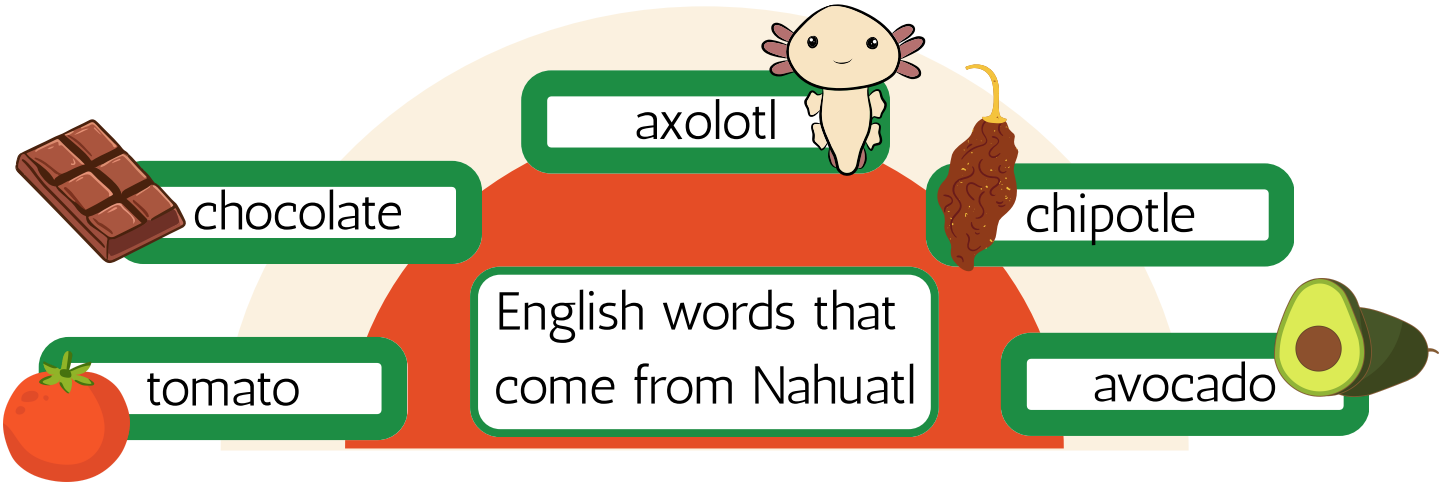
Most countries in Latin America and the Caribbean speak Spanish as their main language. Spanish spread throughout the region when Spain colonized many areas. However, some Caribbean countries mainly speak English, French, or Dutch, while Brazil's main language is Portuguese. Indigenous languages, such as Nahuatl and Quechua, are also still spoken today.



World Regional Languages Map by Felipe Menegaz and Peter Fitzgerald, CC BY-SA 4.0

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LANGUAGE



Languages sometimes borrow words from other languages without changing them. This often happens when a word describes something that is native to a region, such as the *axolotl*, an amphibian found in lakes near Mexico City. Both English and Spanish have borrowed words from Nahuatl.



Map by Eddo, CC BY-SA 3.0

Tlaxcala means "place of maize tortilla" in Nahuatl.

Michoacán comes from the Nahuatl word *michhuahcan*, which means "the place of the fisherman.

Chiapas is believed to come from a Nahuatl name that means "the place where the chia sage grows."

Place names can tell us about the cultures that have shaped an area. In Mexico, several state names come from Nahuatl, the language spoken by the Aztecs.

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Define cultural diffusion in your own words:			
Cultural Characteristic	How has the tradition stayed the same?	How has the tradition changed?	How did this traidtion or idea spread?
Day of the Dead			
Catholicism			
Capoeira			
Barrio Chino			
Tango			
Language			

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1. How have events in the past, such as colonization, immigration, and trade, shaped the culture of people in Latin America?

2. How has the movement of people from one place to another shaped the characteristics of places in Latin America?

3. What are the different ways cultural traits spread to Latin America? Use specific examples in your answer.

4. How has cultural diffusion impacted the people of Latin America? Use specific examples in your answer.

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