

MAKING NEW WORDS YOUR OWN

Lesson 22 **CONTEXT: Writers, Their Work, and Their Worlds**

Mexican American Voices

The United States is blessed with a population that is culturally diverse. Our literature reflects this diversity: The richness of all the cultural groups who live within our nation is given voice in American literature. Among the most interesting American literature is that created by Mexican American writers, storytellers, and poets. These men and women have made significant contributions to our literature.

In the following exercises, you will have the opportunity to expand your vocabulary by reading about Mexican American writers. Below are ten vocabulary words that will be used in these exercises.

bilingual	chronological	denounce	fluent	infamous
biographical	deficient	dissuade	galvanize	satirical

EXERCISE 1 *Mapping*

Directions. In the item below, a vocabulary word is provided and used in a sentence. Take a guess at the word's meaning and write it in the box labeled **Your Guess**. Then look the word up in your dictionary and write the definition in the box labeled **Definition**. In the **Other Forms** box, write as many other forms of the word, such as adjective and noun forms, as you can think of or find in your dictionary.

Then, following the same procedure, draw your own map for each of the nine remaining vocabulary words. Use a separate sheet of paper.

1. bilingual → Most Mexican American writers are **bilingual**, and their ability to speak two languages enriches their work.

↓

Your Guess:

↓

Definition:

← Other Forms:

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EXERCISE 2 *Context Clues* 

Directions. Scan the definitions in Column A. Then think about how the boldface words are used in the sentences in Column B. To complete the exercise, match each definition in Column A with the correct vocabulary word from Column B. Write the letter of your choice on the line provided; then write the vocabulary word on the line preceding the definition.

COLUMN A

_____ 11. word: _____

v. to condemn openly; to accuse formally; to inform against

_____ 12. word: _____

v. to arouse suddenly, as if by electric shock; to coat a metal with a thin layer of zinc to prevent corrosion

_____ 13. word: _____

adj. able to use two languages well; written or spoken in two languages

_____ 14. word: _____

adj. lacking some essential quality; defective; incomplete

_____ 15. word: _____

adj. having a bad reputation; famous for bad things; notorious

_____ 16. word: _____

adj. having to do with a person's life; giving the story of a person's life

_____ 17. word: _____

adj. using irony and wit to attack ideas, people, or customs; sarcastic

_____ 18. word: _____

v. to persuade someone not to do something; to discourage

_____ 19. word: _____

adj. able to use language easily and skillfully; flowing smoothly; effortlessly

_____ 20. word: _____

adj. arranged in the order in which things happen

COLUMN B

- (A) In his novel *And the Earth Did Not Devour Him*, Tomás Rivera (1935–1984) does not tell the story in **chronological** order. The reader doesn't always learn of events in the order that they occurred.
- (B) Rivera, who has great sympathy for the plight of migrant farm workers, uses his novel to **denounce** the injustices that these workers face.
- (C) Much of the work of Rolando Hinojosa-Smith (b. 1929) is designed to **dissuade** readers from accepting the official versions of history. He encourages readers to consider other possibilities.
- (D) Many famous contemporary Mexican American writers were active in the Chicano Movement of the 1970s. The movement **galvanized** many Mexican Americans into political action.
- (E) Many Mexican American writers make use of traditional Mexican American literature, such as the folk tale of the **infamous** Llorona, who murdered her children.
- (F) For many Mexican American writers, literature includes the oral tradition as well as written works. They would consider a definition of literature that did not include both of these elements to be **deficient**.
- (G) Jimmy Santiago Baca (b. 1952) has written a **satirical** poem, "So Mexicans Are Taking Jobs from Americans," in which he uses irony to attack a common complaint.
- (H) Juan Bruce-Novoa (b. 1944) is the author of two books about Mexican American writers. The books include much **biographical** information about each writer.
- (I) Bernice Zamora (b. 1938), who is **fluent** in both Spanish and English, enjoys blending words from both languages to make new words.
- (J) A **bilingual** author may write her story both in Spanish and English. Both versions may be included in the same book.

EXERCISE 3 *Sentence Completion* 

Directions. For each of the following items, circle the letter of the choice that best completes the meaning of the sentence or sentences.

21. Writers who are _____ find being _____ in two languages a true advantage.
 (A) biographical . . . fluent
 (B) biographical . . . bilingual
 (C) bilingual . . . satirical
 (D) bilingual . . . fluent
 (E) chronological . . . bilingual
22. Although Mexican American literature may have political purposes, it is not designed only to _____ injustice and _____ people to action. It is also true art.
 (A) denounce . . . galvanize
 (B) galvanize . . . dissuade
 (C) dissuade . . . denounce
 (D) galvanize . . . denounce
 (E) satirize . . . dissuade
23. Corridos are traditional Mexican ballads. Characters who may appear in corridos include courageous men wrongly accused of crimes, dishonest lawmen, and _____ outlaws.
 (A) bilingual
 (B) satirical
 (C) infamous
 (D) deficient
 (E) fluent
24. Although a corrido usually focuses on a significant and serious event, it may contain humorous and _____ references.
 (A) satirical
 (B) chronological
 (C) biographical
 (D) deficient
 (E) infamous
25. Because a corrido is a traditional type of narrative, it usually tells a story in _____ order.
 (A) bilingual
 (B) deficient
 (C) satirical
 (D) biographical
 (E) chronological
26. A corrido may include a lesson designed to _____ the listener from making a mistake or to _____ the listener into action.
 (A) dissuade . . . denounce
 (B) galvanize . . . denounce
 (C) dissuade . . . galvanize
 (D) denounce . . . galvanize
 (E) galvanize . . . dissuade
27. Many people today have a _____ understanding of the past. They don't realize that most parts of the Southwest were settled by Mexicans before pioneers from the eastern United States arrived.
 (A) bilingual
 (B) deficient
 (C) satirical
 (D) chronological
 (E) biographical
28. Mexican American writers make use of their own experiences in their works, and they frequently borrow _____ details from the lives of other people they have known.
 (A) biographical
 (B) chronological
 (C) satirical
 (D) deficient
 (E) infamous
29. Like many Mexican Americans, playwright Estela Portillo Trambley (b. 1936) is _____; she is _____ in both English and Spanish.
 (A) biographical . . . chronological
 (B) bilingual . . . fluent
 (C) chronological . . . biographical
 (D) satirical . . . fluent
 (E) fluent . . . bilingual
30. New voices in Mexican American literature help preserve the Mexican American literary tradition, just as a layer of zinc _____ steel.
 (A) denounces
 (B) dissuades
 (C) satirizes
 (D) galvanizes
 (E) inhabits

