

Amigos

A simulation of a race through Latin America developing awareness of its lands, people, and history

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Purpose

Latin America... how little most of us know about the countries that share our hemisphere to the south. They are lands of soaring peaks, burning hot deserts, tangled jungles, sophisticated cities and isolated Native American tribes.

Major changes have occurred in these countries since this simulation was originally written in 1983. Many of the countries were revolting against their leaders. Some had strong leanings toward communism. Over the intervening years, democracy has begun to prevail. But it is not the democracy we in the United States enjoy. Without an educated populace, the government will continue to be controlled by the elite and wealthy.

These countries have faced severe problems: overpopulation in the cities, lack of educational facilities for the general mass of the population, high rates of unemployment and inflation. Perhaps the most important problems, at least for those in the United States, has been questions of illegal immigration and the raising and smuggling of illegal drugs.

Daily our newspapers and TV news programs tell of their struggles to become important and valuable members of the world's nations. Our government is becoming increasingly involved in their internal affairs. It is of the utmost importance that our children become aware of these countries: their people, land, history, and customs.

This simulation is designed to help students learn and experience the following:

Knowledge

- Location
- Physical features
- Natural resources
- History
- Government and its effect on the lives of the people of the 29 Latin American countries.

Attitudes

- Enjoying and feeling empathy for peoples of differing cultures
- Appreciating the dynamics of group involvement



Purpose

Skills

- Using a variety of resource materials
- Organizing the information gathered
- Using our language correctly, both orally and in written form
- Developing imagination in the creation of the projects
- Becoming productive and cooperative members of a group
- Making decisions
- Enjoying the process of learning



Overview

Amigos simulates a race from El Paso, Texas, to the tip of South America, Tierra del Fuego. The students travel through each of the Latin American countries. The students are first given a **Pre-Test** and then divided into teams of four to six members.

The simulation is divided into three phases or rounds which are complete within themselves so they may be used separately or together.

- **Round 1:** Mexico and Central America (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama)
- **Round 2:** West Indies (Bahama Islands, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Trinidad/Tobago [already done as sample in the Student Guide], U.S. Virgin Islands)
- **Round 3:** South America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guiana, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, Venezuela)

Each round is divided into two parts:

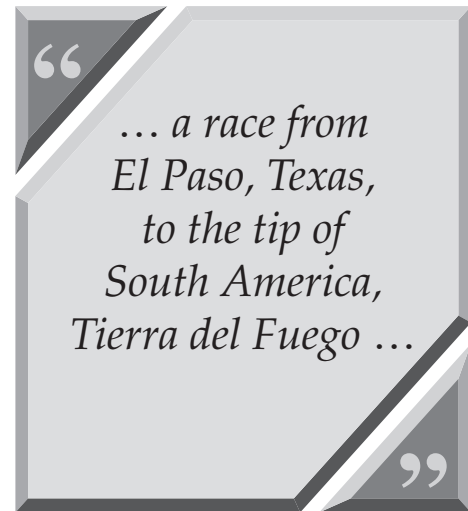
- **Part 1:** Research and preparation of report and projects
- **Part 2:** The race itself

In Part 1 of each round, the teams learn as much as they can about the countries involved. They complete one **Map** and one set of **Fact Sheet** (one **Fact Sheets** for each country involved constitutes one set) per student and one for the group. Obtaining the necessary information is a group process, and the answers found are to be shared. They gather their information from any available source. One short report and one project are required from each group, but additional credit will be given for more reports and projects.

During Part 2 of each round, the teams present their report and projects, draw question cards and answer them correctly, and then draw **Fate** cards. Points are received for successfully completing each task. The points determine their progress in the race. Each five points earned moves the team one space on the large Latin America map on the bulletin board.

Approximately two weeks are spent doing the research, report, and projects. One week is spent on the presentations and on the race itself. The time allotment will be determined by your class' needs. Round 2 and Round 3 are handled in the same manner, but the countries and cards are different.

This simulation is designed so that when one team arrives at the destination



Teaching tip

Each round may be studied separately—perhaps at different times of the school year. If you are planning to do all rounds eventually, save the Fiesta until you are finished. If only one round is studied, the fiesta can occur at that time.



Teaching tip

You may wish all teams to have to arrive before continuing on to the next round.

Overview

for that phase, that round is completed. When the groups arrive at Tierra del Fuego, after round 3, the fiesta is held. All groups should take part in its planning and preparation.

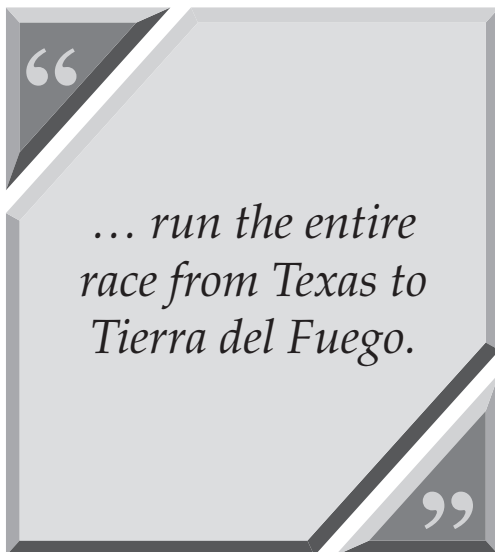
After the fiesta, the **Post-Test** is administered so the children become aware of what they have learned. An evaluation of the learning that has taken place during the simulation can be either a class discussion or a short written assignment.

Amigos may be changed to meet the needs and interests of your particular class. The forms, cards, plans, and Unit Time Chart are supplied as one way in which to do this simulation. Listed below are options that may work more efficiently with your group. Feel free to adapt this simulation to your own needs.

- **Option 1:** Lengthen (or shorten) the time for research to fit your available time allotment.
- **Option 2:** Eliminate the rounds. Do research for all 29 countries and then run the entire race from Texas to Tierra del Fuego.
- **Option 3:** Divide the class into three teams. Each team would complete the material for one round and race only through its area, but with all teams racing at the same time.
- **Option 4:** Shorten the simulation by limiting it to one area only (e.g., Mexico and Central America).
- **Option 5:** Several classrooms compete against one another, doing the simulation at the same time.

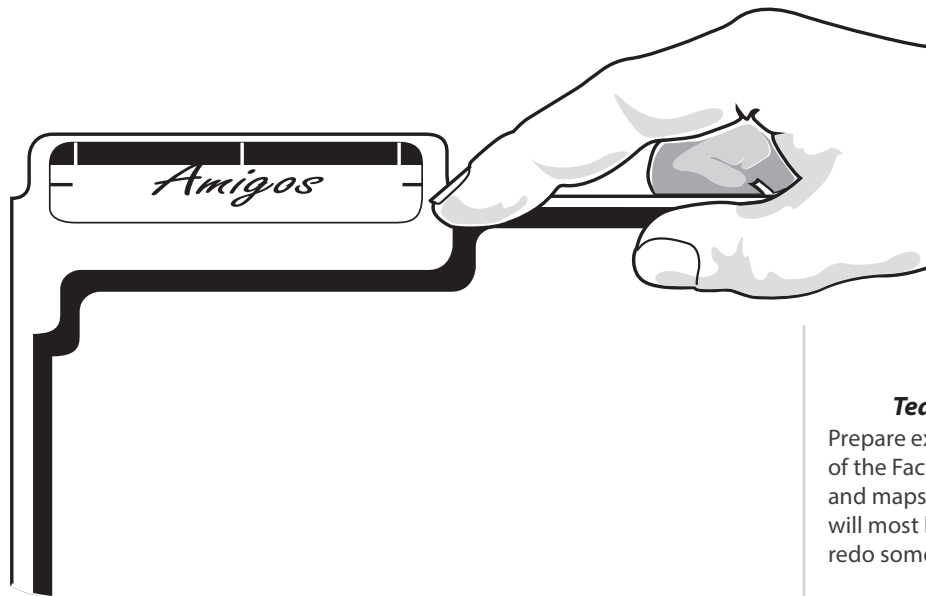
Teaching tip

Economic and political information included in the country Fact Sheet is correct as of the date of publication. Your students may conduct research via conventional resources or the Internet to learn the most current economic and political conditions of the country they are studying.



Setup Directions

- Duplicating forms:** Duplicate the following in the numbers given:
 - **Pre/Post-Test** and **Latin America** map (one per student—used for Pre/Post-Tests)
 - **Fact Sheets** (a set of fact sheets for each student for each round: Round 1, eight copies; Round 2, seven copies; Round 3, 13 copies)
 - **Mexico/Central America** map (one copy for each team and each team member for Round 1)
 - **West Indies** map (one copy for each team and each team member for Round 2)
 - **South America** map (one copy for each team and each team member for Round 3)
 - **Team ID Sheet** (one copy for each team for each round)
 - **Vocabulary Sheet** for each student
 - **Instructions for Projects** (one copy for each team—to be kept in team envelope)
- Duplicating/assembling “cards”:** Duplicate one copy of pages 34 to 47. You may want to duplicate different “cards” on different colored



paper. Laminating or glueing the cards on heavier tagboard before you cut them apart will also make them more permanent. Once you cut apart the cards, place them in categorized envelopes keyed to rounds.

- Organizing team envelopes:** Each team should have a large envelope or folder in which to store their papers, etc. Each envelope should be

Teaching tip

Prepare extra copies of the Fact Sheets and maps as the students will most likely need to redo some.



The teams can decorate their markers in any appropriate manner. They will be used to indicate progress on the classroom map at the end of each phase.

Setup Directions

labeled and include:

- one **Student Guide** per student
- one set of **Fact Sheets** for each round and 1 per student
- one appropriate **Map** for each round and 1 per student
- one team **ID Sheet** for each round
- one small piece of differently colored paper for the bulletin board **Map** and a T-pin

Pass out only the **Fact Sheets** and **Maps** needed for the round being done.



4. Creating a bulletin board: Use the Latin America map in this Teacher Guide to make a large bulletin board map. Decorate this map's borders with bright colors, serapes, sombreros, huge paper flowers, and appropriate pictures. If only small pictures are available for decorating, make montages of the various areas. Allow room for each team's ID card.

5. Gathering resource materials:

- Assemble the following items and place them on a table near the bulletin board: encyclopedias (several sets if possible), atlases (several copies), textbooks (current editions—one per student—as well as older editions—one or two per team), National Geographic magazines with appropriate articles marked, other magazines, library books, and any available appropriate objects (e.g., serapes, pottery objects, etc.).
- It is helpful to have colored strips of paper to match the team colors for use in indicating which group is presently using a particular resource.
- Order appropriate DVDs. Set up a viewing center for the DVDs.
- Canvas students, parents, and local groups for speakers who have visited any of the countries involved and arrange for them to visit

the classroom. Don't overlook the possibility of utilizing Latin American foreign exchange students attending a local high school or Americans who have lived with Latin American families.

- e. Obtain travel folders from travel agencies. Write to the tourist bureaus of the countries involved requesting information. Request information from the United Nations.

