

Boulder County Latino History Project

Lesson Plans

Title: DBQ - Latinos and the KKK in Boulder County

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Overview

Lesson Overview	Students use primary sources to explore the role of the KKK in race relations with local Latinos. Topic: To what extent were race issues between white residents and Mexican migrants in Boulder County due to existing racial tensions? In the 1910s and 1920s, Mexican migrant workers came to Boulder County to work in the fields and to work in the coal mines. These immigrants maintained their cultural identity by speaking Spanish, keeping their Catholic faith, and by holding on to the customs and traditions of the Mexican people. These immigrants faced the challenge of fitting into a society that was decidedly “American,” and was supported by the Ku Klux Klan, an organization committed to the preservation of what they deemed were American ideals.
Author(s)	Martin Clark
Grade Level/ Course	High School, United States History, Colorado History, Boulder County History
Standards	<p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.3 Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8</p>



	Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.
Time Required	3 90-minute class periods
Topics	Culture/identity issues, Farm work/agriculture/ranching, Migrant workers, Mining, Racism/discrimination, Religion/churches Outline topic: Racism and the Ku Klux Klan
Time Period	1900s-1910s, 1920s-1930s
Tags (key words)	migrant labor, migrant worker, farmers, miners, racism, Ku Klux Klan, KKK, Boulder County, United States History, Colorado History, Boulder County History, Culture/identity issues, Farm work/agriculture/ranching, Migrant workers, Mining, Racism/discrimination, Religion/churches, lynching

Preparation (*Links to worksheets, primary sources and other materials*):

Materials	Data-based question and accompanying documents
Resources/Links	Document B: https://bocolatinohistory.colorado.edu/newspaper/ku-klux-klan-visit-boulder-1922 Document C: https://bocolatinohistory.colorado.edu/newspaper/the-klan-unmasked-cartoon-from-klan-newspaper Document D: http://bocolatinohistory.colorado.edu/document/a-summary-of-the-principles-of-the-knights-of-the-ku-klux-klan-p-1

Lesson Procedure (*Step by Step Instructions*):

<p>BOULDER COUNTY LATINO HISTORY PROJECT MINI-Q</p> <p>To what extent were race issues between white residents and Mexican migrants in Boulder County due to existing racial tensions?</p> <p>THE DOCUMENTS: Document A: <i>"I would rather be a Klansman"</i> Document B: Klan parade in Longmont Document C: The Klan Unmasked Document D: God Give Us Men!</p> <p>PART I - HOOK EXERCISE: RACISM The term racism can be defined in many ways and the definition is often times expanded with the description of racist activities. Racism is the belief that all members of a race possess characteristics, traits, and abilities that are exclusive to that particular race. These characteristics, therefore, distinguish the superiority or inferiority of one race over another. Some believe that</p>
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hereditary factors, such as the color someone's skin, determine the abilities and intellect of a race. These generalizations are applied to include hair and eye color, language and speech accents, mannerisms and behavior patterns, customs and traditions, and religious affiliations. Historically, in the United States, racial tension had been spurred by whites against African-American dating back to the 1600s when African slaves were introduced to North America by Dutch slave traders. Since that time, racism has been institutionalized and supported by all levels of government through Congressional legislation and court rulings upholding the constitutionality of such legislation (see *Plessy v. Ferguson, 1896*). The sentiment created by the legalization of racist doctrine in the United States was felt not only by African-Americans, but immigrants from around the world coming to America to seek a better life. People of color from around the world fled their homelands for the United States in hopes of finding a better life for themselves there. What many found was a complex, informal, and inconsistent system of norms and behavior rules that were guided by racism – the superiority of one race over another.

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

Below are two scenarios that individuals may find themselves in. Identify each as being either an example of racism, or not, and explain why you support your answer.

1. A Latino student shopping at the grocery store observes that a white patron standing in line at the checkout lane and the white checkout clerk greet one another and carry on a pleasant conversation as the clerk scans the patron's items. The clerk politely tells the patron the amount due. The patron pays, they wish each other a nice day, and the patron leaves. The Latino student is next in line. He is not greeted and no conversational exchange occurs between the two. The clerk, once completed scanning the purchased items, points to the total on the computer screen, and in a loud, slow, and over-exaggerated voice says, "NINE DOLLARS AND FIFTY EIGHT CENTS!"
 - a. Is the clerk being racist? Why or why not?
 - b. What circumstances may indicate a case of racism?
 - c. What circumstances may indicate this is not a case of racism?
2. Three couples walk into a local upscale restaurant to eat dinner. Two of the couples are white and the third couple is interracial. The three couples walk in at the same moment. All place their name on the waiting list with the hostess. The two white couples are seated first by the hostess. The interracial couple continues to wait for an open seat. As other couples enter the restaurant, they are seated immediately, and the interracial couple continue to wait. After having waited a considerable amount of time and observing other people being seated before them, the couple decides to leave.
 - a. Is the hostess of the restaurant being racist? Why or why not?
 - b. What circumstances may indicate a case of racism?
 - c. What circumstances may indicate this is not a case of racism?

PART II - BACKGROUND ESSAY: What was the climate of Boulder County that may have contributed to racial tensions?

Latinas/os living in Boulder County during the 1920s and 1930s experienced many forms of racism and discrimination. Their position was ambiguous in racial terms. They were not as dark-skinned as most African-Americans, but their "brownness" covered a wide range. A few appeared to be "white," with light skins and blue eyes, while others were darker and/or had strongly Native American features. In the eyes of most Anglos, however, they were lumped together as "Mexicans," a group distinct from the white race.

Colorado's leading Anglo residents generally came from Protestant backgrounds in Northern Europe. They were committed to an ethic of rugged individualism and a desire to get ahead. The



early Latino arrivals, by contrast, were Catholic, and most were poor and relatively uneducated. Although they wanted their children to go to school and have a better future, they might place family or community welfare above personal advancement. Many Anglos accepted, without question, the stereotype of Mexicans as dirty, lazy, and backward people who were likely to be law-breakers. As the number of Spanish-speaking people coming into Colorado began to rise in the 1910s, whether from Mexico or New Mexico, Anglo concern mounted. Anxiety was particularly strong if these immigrants showed signs of staying in the area, rather than being temporary workers.

In Boulder County racist attitudes and practices were comparatively mild until the early 1920s, though they took different forms in each of the towns we are considering. Evidence about discrimination in Lafayette is mixed. On the negative side, in 1911, during “The Long Strike,” a crowd tried to break into the building where Francisco Diaz and his three sons were being held. The men were accused of killing Teddy Wycherley, a Welsh miner who was part of the striking union. Wycherley was angry with the Diazes because they had crossed the picket lines to do scab work, and the men got in a fight with fists and knives outside a bar. When Wycherley was killed, the Diazes were put into temporary arrest in the town hall. A crowd then formed, numbering several hundred men and women, who shouted that they should be lynched. Only the intervention of Boulder County Sheriff Capp saved them and permitted their safe removal to the jail in Boulder. (The Diazes were later found not guilty of murder, because they had acted in self-defense.) This incident, the only mention of a possible lynching in Boulder County, apparently stemmed in part from pro-union/anti-scab sentiment. A more mild form of discrimination was described by Sally Martinez, who came to Lafayette in 1924, when her father began work at the Columbine Mine. She remembers that other children made fun of her for speaking Spanish and bringing tortillas for lunch. Some of the Mexican and Japanese children used to take their lunches down by the creek near the school to avoid being teased.

The Klan, an organization with a secret membership by invitation only, offered many of the same attractions as other men’s groups of the time: private handshakes and passwords, elaborate rituals, and special slogans and songs. Klansmen also wore a distinctive costume to events: a long white robe that covered everything except their feet, and a headpiece with eyeholes that covered their face and came to a high point above their head. That “regalia” meant that the men wearing the costumes could not be identified, though because the costumes were generally sewn from a sheet and pillowcase, their wives had probably helped to make them and were aware of the men’s participation.

The KKK differed from other fraternal groups because it openly preached a message of white male supremacy for Protestant men born in the United States or who had become naturalized citizens. The Klan promoted racial segregation, stressed a literal reading of the Bible, and advocated prohibition of liquor. In Colorado, the Klan directed its activities against Catholics, immigrants, and Jews, with secondary attention to the few African-Americans living in the state. Klan hatred in Boulder County was focused on “Mexicans,” all of whom were regarded as foreigners regardless of their background or citizenship. While the ceremonies and costumes of the Klan may seem childish or silly to us when viewed from a distance of 90 years or more, the threats of violence directed against its victims were deeply frightening at the time. The Klan was said to be stronger in Colorado than any other western state. At its peak, it had 30,000-50,000 Klansmen, with 81 chapters (called “Klaverns”). In Boulder County, the group tried to terrorize those whom it opposed, particularly Latinos who were acting too independently—who did not accept the natural and God-



given authority of the whites above them. If the Klan could not chase them out of the county, it could at least remind them that they were to remain subservient to whites.

Not all of the men who joined the KKK were virulent racists. Some members liked the organization's emphasis on patriotism, the importance of good moral training, and a fundamentalist interpretation of the Bible; others succumbed to peer pressure, a sense that all respectable men were joining. Such people may have chosen to ignore the Klan's bigotry and to avoid participating in certain activities. However, it was deeply racist men who led the local chapters and implemented its anti-Mexican agenda.

Although by 1925, the mainstream Boulder newspapers were starting to oppose the KKK, or at least make cautious fun of it (editor L. C. Paddock of the *Daily Camera* referred to it as the Komic Kapers Klub), a Klan paper, the *Rocky Mountain American*, was published in Boulder for six months in 1925. It spewed out false information and vicious attacks on Catholics, especially foreigners, including the statement that 15 million Catholics in the county were forming military organizations and arming themselves in order to make America Catholic. It argued that no foreign-language newspapers should be published in the U.S. and featured cartoons showing the Klan at work, such as keeping out undesirable immigrants and enforcing laws. The *Rocky Mountain American* encouraged its readers to buy products at local stores approved by the Klan. (It described the new chain stores that were beginning to appear as the work of "unscrupulous Jewish business magnates.") To demonstrate their support for the organization, business owners placed ads in the paper that described their goods or services in catchy phrases starting with K: "Klassy Kut Klothes," "Kash and Karry Shoe Shop," or "Klothing Karefully Kleaned." One store sold "Wizard Sheets" at 98 cents each and "Wizard Pillowcases" at 25 cents each. Source: Marjorie McIntosh, *Latino Life in Boulder County 1900-1980*.

BACKGROUND ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. What background differences did whites and Latino/as have that created a sense of superiority and inferiority?
2. Explain how the labels of being Catholic, poor, and relatively uneducated, could lead to conscious (purposeful) discriminatory practices.
3. Explain how the labels of being Catholic, poor, and relatively uneducated, could lead to subconscious (not fully aware or intended purposely) discriminatory practices.
4. Explain the role the Ku Klux Klan played in creating racial tensions in Boulder County. Provide specific examples and explain how their actions perpetuated hatred of Mexican citizens.
5. Define or explain each of these terms:

Discrimination

Racial segregation

Patriotism

Bigotry

PART III - UNDERSTANDING THE QUESTION

1. What is the analytical question being asked in this question?
2. What terms in the question need to be defined?
3. Rewrite the question in your own words.



PART IV - PRE-ANALYSIS

Directions: Using any clues from the mini-Q question, overview, hook exercise, and the background essay, what claims can you use to support the answer to the mini-Q? (A **claim** is your idea of what the answer to the question is). Write them below:

CLAIM 1

CLAIM 2

CLAIM 3

CLAIM 4

PART V – DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Document A

“I would rather be a Klansman
in a robe of snowy white,
Than to be a Catholic Priest
in a robe as black as night;
For a Klansman is AMERICAN
and AMERICA is his home,
But a priest owes his allegiance
to a Dago Pope in Rome.”

Rocky Mountain American, a Klan paper, April 24, 1925, as quoted in "Kolorado Klaverns of the Ku Klux Klan."

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

1. Why does the author use contrasting terms, i.e. snowy white v black as night?
2. Where does the allegiance of a Klan member belong? A Protestant? A Catholic?
3. What relationship does the author make between Catholics, priests, and Mexicans?
4. What pre-existing issues in Boulder County caused racial tensions between whites and Mexican migrants?

Document B

The scene was most impressive, as the procession, nearly half mile in length of robed Klansmen marched silently up through the main streets of the city. Thousands of spectators who had come from many other towns in autos lined both sides of the street, and standing at attention, showed their respect and admiration for the valiant Knights of the Ku Klux Klan as they marched silently by and in perfect order. The staunch, true, loyal Americans who have taken up the torch of patriotism, and pledged to hold it high to enlighten others in his country as to what real Americanism and service are, are more and more being looked upon and regarded as were the old crusaders of other days.

Rocky Mountain American, a Klan paper, June 9, 1925, as quoted in "Mammoth Klan Parade in Longmont Followed by Initiating Big Class." <https://bocolatinohistory.colorado.edu/newspaper/ku-klux-klan-visit-boulder-1922>

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

1. What conclusion does the author draw about the sentiments, feelings, and loyalties of the residents of Longmont?
2. How does the author come to the conclusion that the Klan are "true, loyal Americans"?
3. According to the author, what is *real* Americanism?



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4. Explain how the environment in Longmont contributed to tensions between the residents and Mexican migrants.

Document C

The Rocky Mountain American, Vol. I, no. 4, 02-27-1925, p. 1. Carnegie Branch Library for Local History, Boulder <https://bocolatinohistory.colorado.edu/newspaper/the-klan-unmasked-cartoon-from-klan-newspaper>

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

1. What are the key symbols used in this cartoon?
2. Explain what each of these symbols is used for and its purpose for use.
3. What is the artist suggesting is the relationship between America and the Klan?
4. Explain how a distorted view of patriotism contributed to tensions between the residents of Boulder County and Mexican migrants.

Document D

Carnegie Branch Library for Local History, Boulder, Vertical file for KKK
<http://bocolatinohistory.colorado.edu/document/a-summary-of-the-principles-of-the-knights-of-the-ku-klux-klan-p-1>

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

1. What traits do the Klan desire for its male members?
2. What traits are least desirable and how are they identifiable?
3. What is the “Invisible Empire”? What influence does the this “Empire” have upon the atmosphere of the Boulder County community?
4. How might this desperate plea for “model” men create racial tensions between white Boulder County residents and Mexicans?

PART VI - ANALYSIS: WRITING THE ESSAY

Review your documents. Place the letter of the document under your **claim** from the pre-analysis activity in Part IV. Each of these claims will be a paragraph in your essay.

CLAIM 1

CLAIM 2

CLAIM 3

CLAIM 4

THESIS DEVELOPMENT AND CLAIMS

On the lines below, write your thesis and your claims. Your thesis answers the mini-Q question and is supported by your justification for your answer. The claims are developed by your evidence and list the topics you will write about to answer the thesis question.

THESIS

CLAIM

#1 _____

CLAIM

#2 _____



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CLAIM

#3 _____

CLAIM #4 (if
necessary) _____

Mini-Q Essay Outline Guide

Working Title

Paragraph #1

Hook

Background

Stating the question with key terms defined

Thesis and roadmap

Paragraph #2

Introductory sentence for claim #1

Data: supporting detail from documents with document citation

Warrant: connecting evidence to the thesis

Paragraph #3

Introductory sentence for claim #2

Data: supporting detail from documents with document citation

Warrant: connecting evidence to the thesis

Paragraph #4

Introductory sentence for claim #3

Data: supporting detail from documents with document citation

Warrant: connecting evidence to the thesis

Paragraph #5 (if necessary)

Introductory sentence for claim #4

Data: supporting detail from documents with document citation

Warrant: connecting evidence to the thesis

Paragraph #6

Conclusion: Restatement of main idea along with possible insight or wrinkle

Evaluation/Assessment: *(Methods for collecting evidence of student learning)*



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