

**Summary Description**

This is the second in a series of four lessons that introduces the student to Latin American history.

**Learning Objectives**

To have the student learn a few key facts about Cuban and Dominican American history and culture.

**Approximate Time for Lesson**

40 minutes

**Suggested Maturity Level for Instruction**

Student should be able to read simple words and perform simple addition and subtraction. Also, student should be able to sit still and engage in one-on-one conversation.

**References:**

"Cuban Americans", Sean Buffington, Multicultural America -  
<http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Bu-Dr/Cuban-Americans.html>

"Dominican Americans", Sean Buffington, Multicultural America -  
<http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Bu-Dr/Dominican-Americans.html>

**Materials Needed**

1. Internet Access - Pull up the following:
  - a. United States-Cuba-Dominican Republic Map (go to <http://maps.google.com/maps>)

**Preparation**

Make sure you have materials open, printed and/or available prior to beginning the lesson.

**Script**

*Introduction (5 minutes)*

1. Teacher: Last time we learned about the Mexican Americans who are the largest group of Latin Americans in the United States.
  
2. Teacher: Today, we're going to learn about not one but two Latin American peoples called the Cubans and Dominicans. The Cubans come from a country in the Caribbean Sea, called Cuba [[point to Cuba on the United States-Cuba-Dominican Republic Map](#)] and the Dominicans come from a country, which is located right near Cuba, called the Dominican Republic [[point to Cuba on the United States-Cuba-Dominican Republic Map](#) - you will have to click anywhere in the map and drag the map up to see a clearer view of the Dominican Republic - use the zoom function if necessary by clicking on the plus sign].
  
3. Teacher: So, are you ready to learn about the Cuban Americans and Dominican Americans? [[Get positive response from Student and begin lesson](#)].

*Lesson (30 minutes)*

1. Teacher: Great. Now, let's talk about the Cubans first. As I said, the Cubans come from the country of Cuba. And like Mexico, Cuba was claimed by Spain long ago, which is why Cubans speak Spanish. But then, the United States fought Spain to get control of Cuba. The United States won the war and took over Cuba. However, for a long time, the Cubans didn't like how the United States was running their country. So then, the Cubans got together and announced that they would now be in control of their own country. The leader of that group of Cubans was named Fidel Castro.
2. Teacher: Do you know what it's called when a group of people announce that they will start running the country from now on instead of the people who are actually running the country? It's called a "revolution". Think about this, do you think that the people already running the country will just let the new people run the country? [\[Engage the Student in conversation but come to the point that the existing government usually will not let the new group run the country\]](#).
3. Teacher: That's right - and sometimes, the people already running the country will fight with all their strength, calling on the country's army to help stomp out the revolution. And as you can imagine, when the army is called up to fight, then people will get hurt and some will even die. Revolution is really a serious thing.
4. Teacher: Well, when Fidel Castro led the Cuban revolution, a lot of the Cubans that actually didn't want to live with Fidel Castro running the country moved to the United States. Of course, the United States and Cuba then became enemies. But since these countries didn't want entire families to live apart from each other, both countries let Cubans and Cuban Americans travel back and forth between the United States and Cuba.
5. Teacher: Well, it was hard to make a living in Cuba and the Cubans heard that it was easier to make a living for their families in the United States. And so, Cubans started moving to the United States for better opportunity.
6. Teacher: Now, like the Cubans, the Dominicans also started out as part of Spain and so what language do you think the Dominicans speak? [\[Engage the Student in conversation but come to the point that Spanish is spoken in the Dominican Republic\]](#).
7. Teacher: That's right. The Dominicans speak Spanish. And something kind of similar happened to the Dominican Republic that first made Dominicans come to the United States. You see, the leader of the Dominican Republic got shot with a gun and that made two groups of Dominican people fight for the chance to become the new leader of the country. When two groups of people in the same country fight, this is called a civil war. And so, civil war happened in the Dominican Republic.
8. Teacher: Well, the United States then stepped into the civil war and acted as a referee to make sure that the next leader would be voted for by their people. And one person won and became the leader of the country. Well, some Dominicans didn't like the newly elected leader and so, they started to move to the United States instead.

9. Teacher: After that, and just like the Cubans, the Dominicans heard about how you could make more money doing the same work in the United States, so more Dominicans left their country for better opportunity. In fact, after the Mexicans, the Dominicans are the largest group of Latin Americans to move to the United States in recent times.
  
10. Teacher: The Dominicans moved to the States of New York and New Jersey [[point to New York and New Jersey on the United States-Cuba-Dominican Republic Map](#)] and some also live in Florida [[point to Florida on the United States-Cuba-Dominican Republic Map](#)]. Most of the Cubans live in Florida while some live in New York and New Jersey. Also, some Cubans live in California [[point to California on the United States Map](#)].
  
11. Teacher: So what have the Cubans and Dominicans given to the United States? Many things. Roberto Goizueta, a Cuban American, was once the long time leader of the Coca Cola Company. And Ralph Alvarez, another Cuban American, is one of the leaders of McDonalds Corporation, you know, the restaurant that makes Happy Meals.
  
12. Teacher: Famous Cuban American actors are Andy Garcia, who played the voice of Delgado the German Sheppard in the movie, Beverly Hills Chihuahua, and Cameron Diaz who is part Cuban, played the voice of Princess Fiona in the Shrek movies.
  
13. Teacher: As for the Dominican Americans, Oscar De La Renta is a famous fashion designer. A fashion designer is someone who thinks of ways for how clothes should look and decides which clothes people will want to wear. Also, professional baseball player Pedro Martinez, a Dominican American, is one of the best pitchers of his time.
  
14. Teacher: Actually, both Cuban and Dominican Americans work in all parts of American life, but these are only a few that I have talked about to give you an idea of some of the more popular names.
  
15. Teacher: OK - time for review. Get in front of the class. [[Have the Student stand in front of you \(consider inviting other members of the family also to set the stage\) and ask her the following:](#)
  - a. [Why did the first Cubans and Dominicans come to the United States? For Cuba, the reason was because of a revolution. For Dominican Republic, the reason was because of civil war. Later, both Cubans and Dominicans came to the United States for better opportunities to provide for them and their families.](#)
  
  - b. [Where did most of the Cubans and Dominicans usually live in the United States? Any one of the following: Florida, New York, New Jersey, California \(California is only for Cuban Americans\)](#)

[Teacher reviews any questions that the Student missed\].](#)

Wrap Up (5 minutes)

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**Lessons**

**People of America - Latin Americans Lesson 2 - Cuban and Dominican - Part I (4/29/09)**

Teacher: [\[Clapping\]](#) You did GREAT! Wonderful job! Are there any questions that you have regarding the Cuban Americans and Dominican Americans? [\[Engage in conversation with the Student and resolve further questions by researching the Internet\]](#).