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## Granville, Paris, Eugenia Porello, and Priscilla Russel. *Mitos del mundo azteca*.

Washington: Language Shaping Solutions, 2005. Includes: Textbook, DVD, and flashcards. ISBN: 0-9718678-9-5.

Today's educational pendulum swing finds many schools faced with the challenge of teaching reading across the curriculum so that students are better prepared to meet state requirements for the standardized tests that have followed in the wake of No Child Left Behind legislation. What is increasingly recognized today is that World Language classrooms are pioneers in the areas of differentiated instruction and reading across the curriculum. As the ACTFL 5 "C's" are implemented in many curricula, it is important that new materials and texts provide all of the necessary tools to further develop and reinforce skills that have already been conceptualized.

*Mitos del mundo azteca* is a thematic unit that provides not only instruction, but also detailed activities and step-by-step directions on how to effectively utilize the material in a Spanish course, whether at the high school or elementary level. Divided into three sections — *Pre-Reading*, *Reading*, and *Post-Reading* — the materials allow teachers to engage students and thereby ensure understanding and implementation of the 5 C's.

For many teachers, adding a thematic unit to the curriculum may not be feasible due to time constraints and pre-determined expectations; however, *Mitos del mundo azteca*, while most effective if utilized in its entirety, can be presented to students in a piecemeal format. With a linguistic level of novice-mid to intermediate-low, this thematic unit effectively makes use of authentic readings as a medium through which to teach reading skills, comprehension, and written expression. The opportunity to read stories of ancient cultures is unique and interesting from a cultural vantage point. Students are more likely to make an effort and remain engaged when they are able to relate to what they are learning in class. The variety of activities provided will permit students to explore the readings and their own culture in a variety of ways.

Another strength of *Mitos del mundo azteca* is the accompanying DVD, which includes readings with visuals for the various stories, as well as a review

of vocabulary for the story *El sol y la luna*. What I found most interesting about the DVD was that a group of students was given vocabulary terms and asked to mime their meaning. Demonstrating this ability in class not only will allow students to feel comfortable with their peers, but will also provide them with a visual image related to the words that are being said in Spanish.

Overall, this thematic unit will effectively teach students history, culture, vocabulary, grammar, and much more, all through authentic stories in Spanish. Moreover, everything is presented in a very user-friendly manner. Students and teachers alike are sure to reap the benefits of using *Mitos del mundo azteca* in the Spanish language classroom.

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