
FRESCO VIRTUAL TOUR FOR EDUCATORS

EDUCATORS & PARENTS

Below are guidelines and a script for taking your students/learners through a virtual tour of the “Mundos de Mestizaje” fresco for the first time. A 360 degree image of the fresco is [here](#). Make sure you practice moving around the fresco before you introduce it to your students. Also spend some time familiarizing yourself with the fresco image guide.

Important!

This tour fosters **learning through engagement**: responding to student questions and responses rather than giving a lecture. It is based on learning theory that emphasizes the **learner’s critical role in constructing meaning** from prior experience and knowledge and new information.

Inquiry-Based Tour

Throughout this tour, **let student questions and comments guide the dialogue**. On a first visit, there is no need to try to address the over 200 images in this remarkable work of art. Instead, allow students to experience the overall experience of the fresco. Lesson plans and activities will take students further into the learning experience.

Script

“We are about to take a virtual tour of the world-famous ‘Mundos de Mestizaje’ fresco which is located at the National Hispanic Cultural Center.

‘Mundos de Mestizaje’ means ‘the worlds of mixing cultures, races, and/or ethnicities.’

The fresco was created by New Mexico artist Frederico Vigil and depicts thousands of years of Hispanic identity and history, from Europe to Mesoamerica and into the American Southwest. When people ask the staff at the NHCC what ‘Hispanic’ or ‘Latino’ means, this fresco is a kind of answer, in images.

The National Hispanic Cultural Center (NHCC) is in Albuquerque, New Mexico, U.S.A. and is dedicated to the preservation, promotion, and advancement of Hispanic culture, arts, and humanities. The center presents over 700 events and receives about 280,000 visitors each year. It is a busy place! One of the reasons why the NHCC receives so many visitors is that it has a History and Literary Arts program, a Performing Arts program, and a Visual Arts program. In 2020, the NHCC celebrated its 20th birthday.

continued

Begin Virtual Tour

The campus of the NHCC consists of 20 acres and 5 buildings. The fresco, "Mundos de Mestizaje," lives in one of these buildings, the torreón."

[Begin the [tour](#) by looking at the outside of the torreón.]

"Take a look at this building; it is modeled on the fortress and lookout towers built by the New World Spaniards in the colonial era. Inside, you're about to see the largest concave fresco in North America and the only one of its kind. Does anyone know what the word 'concave' means?"

Now, let's walk in and look around. For a few moments, let's just take some time to quietly soak it all in."

[Pause.]

Questions

"While you're looking, please think about these **three questions**:

1. How does the fresco make you feel?
2. Which images catch your eye, and why?
3. What does the fresco tell us about Latino/Hispanic identity and history?"

[Allow for 1-5 MINUTES OF LOOKING. If students start to ask questions while others are still looking quietly, gently remind them, "Thank you for your question. We're going to take a few more minutes and then talk together."

After the silent time, focus on the first two questions, allowing time for students to give responses and ask questions.]

1. "How does the fresco make you feel?"
2. Which images catch your eye, and why?"

[Discuss images.

If it helps, here are a few ways to help students orient their view of the fresco and help the group to locate an image that a student is referring to.]

- "Do you see the four columns? You can identify them by the four Virgins, the four Virgin Marys, or the four Marías, at the top of each column.
 - What makes the four Marías different? Can anyone identify any of the four Virgins?"
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With information from the image guide, you can help students identify each María separately.]

- “We can use the Marías to point to images between columns. For example, you can say, ‘I’m looking at the guy in the green robes who is kneeling. He’s between the Virgin of Extremadura and the Virgin of Guadalupe. Is that Christopher Columbus?’
- Look up to the ceiling. Do you see all the words that name the disciplines of human knowledge? You can also help us find images by saying things like, ‘I’m looking at the image of the big human heart is underneath the word ‘Paz.’ What’s that?’”

[As the tour guide, **you need not attempt to talk about every image in the fresco, especially on the first visit.** There are 220 images, many-too-many to talk about in students’ first experience.]

“Let’s finish our first look at the fresco by talking about the last question.

3. What does the fresco tell you about Hispanic/Latino identity and history?”

[Let student responses guide the discussion. If there is one idea to encourage in your students, it is to understand that Hispanic/Latinx/Chicanx history and identity are incredibly old, cross-cultural, cross-national, and cross-continental. The fresco introduces us to the breadth and depth of what is means to be “Hispanic.”

This tour is the first step in the NHCC K-12 curriculum. Next, you can turn to the lesson plans and activities and students will revisit the fresco many times.]