

DOLORES HUERTA DAY

April 10th

Teacher's Guide & High School Lesson Plans

www.doloreshuerta.org



Dolores Huerta. © Glamour Magazine Women of the Year, October 13, 2020.
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**DOLORES
HUERTA
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Teacher's **Guide to** **Dolores Huerta Day** High School Lesson Plans



*Dolores Huerta Speaks at United Farm Workers (UFW) Rally.
Photo courtesy © Cathy Murphy, used with permission.*

Dolores Huerta has worked for civil rights and social justice for over 60 years. She attributes her passion for community organizing and building leadership to being an active member of the Girl Scouts from age eight to eighteen years old. She met community organizer Fred Ross (1910-1992) in 1955. Ross founded the Community Service Organization (CSO) and inspired Huerta in the founding of the Stockton Chapter of the CSO. They utilized the “house meeting” model to civically engage members of its underserved community and to provide direct services to those in need. During the early years of CSO, she met Cesar Chavez who was organizing for the CSO in San Jose, California.

Under the auspices of the CSO, Dolores recruited Larry Itliong to help organize Filipino farm workers. Together they founded the Agricultural Workers Association, which later became the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee made up of primarily Filipino farm workers. Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta resigned from the CSO when the CSO chose to not support their bid to further farm worker organizing efforts.

In 1962, they founded the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA), the predecessor of the United Farm Workers (UFW) union. She served as Vice President and played a critical role in many of the union’s significant accomplishments for four decades.

Dolores Huerta was the first Latina lobbyist in Sacramento working to eliminate discriminatory laws against people of color. She was also the first Latina inducted into the National Women’s Hall of Fame, in 1993. In 2002, she received the Puffin/Nation \$100,000 prize for Creative Citizenship which she used to establish the Dolores Huerta Foundation (DHF). She has received numerous awards over her remarkable life, among them The Eleanor Roosevelt Human Rights Award from President Clinton in 1998. President Obama bestowed Dolores with the 2011 Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the United States.

On July 18, 2018, Governor Jerry Brown of California signed Assembly Bill 2644, designating April 10th as Dolores Huerta Day. The bill was introduced by Assemblymember Eloise Reyes

(AD-47). Dolores Huerta is the first and only living person to hold this honor.

On April 8, 2025, the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors also declared April 10th Dolores Huerta Day in honor of her 95th birthday.

To learn more about Dolores Huerta and her many accolades, please go to <https://doloreshuerta.org/dolores-huerta/>.

Purpose of Teacher's Guide and Lesson Plans

This teacher's guide and lesson plans provide teachers with accessible materials to introduce high school students to civil rights activist Dolores Huerta and learn from her example as a social justice leader for the last 60 years. The lesson plans provide various themes all of which focus on how to identify and solve problems in our communities using Dolores Huerta's exceptional history as a guiding light.

This set of high school lesson plans are based on California State Standards and the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. The high school lesson plans reflect Dolores Huerta's emphasis on the importance of the role of education in creating social change. The lesson plans center aspects of Dolores Huerta's vast work and impart knowledge to young people.

Format of Lesson Plans

The lesson plans and corresponding materials are separated into folders according to the themes (1) Labor Organizing, (2) Civic Engagement, (3) Climate Justice, and (4) Arts and Healing. Within each theme, there are one-day lesson plans and corresponding five-day units available for teachers to choose to engage with the material at different capacity levels. There are also accompanying PDF of presentation slides for each lesson/unit. The accompanying slides in PDF are meant to facilitate teachers' ability to teach this material. We have included political history that is relevant to California, and we hope teachers find and include policy and local context that is relevant to your own state and local community to supplement the material provided here.

About Photos and Art in the Presentation Slides:

The photos from all of the slides should not be used in any way for purposes unrelated to teaching these lesson plans. Permission for the photos are exclusive to the Dolores Huerta Foundation and for the sole purpose of these Lesson Plans. Any further use of the photos would require license use from the photographers, artists, their agents, or individual photo owners.



From the perspective of Dolores Huerta, it is of utmost importance for young people to recognize their own power and to know that their voice, especially in community with others, has the power to create social change and impact policy. It is our hope that in these lesson plans, the need for action and to be engaged in the community is emphasized and encouraged.

Additional Resources for Teachers

We encourage teachers to expand their own knowledge about Dolores Huerta's life and legacy before teaching these lessons/units. While Dolores Huerta is most well known for her work in labor organizing and the UFW, her activism spans across many areas, which are represented in the various themes of these lesson plans. In the Additional Resources folder, there is a list of books on Dolores Huerta for K-12 students (and teachers) as well as a separate resource spreadsheet of videos and articles used throughout the lesson plans.



*September 24, 1965, Dolores Huerta on the Grape Strike picket line in Delano, California.
Photo by Harvey Richards, © Paul Richards, Estuary Press, used with permission.*

Lesson Plans can be accessed at <https://doloreshuerta.org//lesson-plans>.

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Dolores with students. Photo courtesy © David Bacon, used with permission.



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Overview of Lesson Plans

A brief description of the contents of each theme folder is listed below. All lesson plans can be accessed at <https://doloreshuerta.org//lesson-plans>.

Lesson 1: Labor Organizing

Origin of ¡Sí Se Puede!

This lesson plan and unit introduces students to Dolores Huerta's life and legacy through her labor organizing work with the United Farm Workers and the origin of her famous slogan ¡Sí se puede! Students will explore how slogans reflect the values of a social movement and work in groups to create their own slogans.

- One-Day Lesson Plan
- Five-Day Unit
- PDF of Presentation Slides
- PDF of Presentation Slides with Instructor Notes

Delano Grape Strike

This lesson plan and unit introduces students to Dolores Huerta's life and legacy through her labor organizing work with the United Farm Workers and the historic Delano Grape Strike, through which farm workers secured important contract rights regarding health and safety. Students examine different ways to engage in their communities through creating their own product boycotts or contributing to local actions.

- One-Day Lesson Plan
- Five-Day Unit
- PDF of Presentation Slides
- PDF of Presentation Slides with Instructor Notes

Labor Organizing and Social Class

This lesson plan and unit introduces students to Dolores Huerta's life and legacy through her labor organizing work with the United Farm Workers and the relationship between social class and union organizing. Students will examine different ways that organizing builds power and engage in their communities through various civically-engaged actions such as writing letters to local legislators, protest, boycotts, or volunteering in the community.

- One-Day Lesson Plan
- Five-Day Unit
- PDF of Presentation Slides
- PDF of Presentation Slides with Instructor Notes

Lesson 2: Civic Engagement

Women of Color Activism

This lesson plan and unit introduces students to Dolores Huerta's life and legacy through her identity and public role as a woman of color activist. Students will examine intersectionality and understand the unique challenges and strengths of women of color.

- One-Day Lesson Plan
- Five-Day Unit
- PDF of Presentation Slides
- Social Identity Wheel handout
- PDF of Presentation Slides with Instructor Notes

Reproductive Rights

This lesson plan and unit introduces students to Dolores Huerta's life and legacy through her extensive work as a feminist and reproductive rights activist. Students will consider the history of reproductive rights in the United States and develop critical literacy skills in order to make informed decisions about what is presented in the media regarding heated topics like abortion.

- One-Day Lesson Plan
- Five-Day Unit
- PDF of Presentation Slides
- Social Identity Wheel handout
- PDF of Presentation Slides with Instructor Notes

Marriage Equality in California/LGBTQ+ Rights

This lesson plan and unit introduces students to Dolores Huerta's life and legacy through her extensive activist work as a feminist and LGBTQ ally. Students will consider the history of LGBTQ rights in the United States and examine concepts of implicit bias and stereotyping when considering how to support the LGBTQ community through civically-engaged action.

- One-Day Lesson Plan
- Five-Day Unit
- PDF of Presentation Slides

- Social Identity Wheel handout
- PDF of Presentation Slides with Instructor Notes

Lesson 3: Climate Justice

Environmental Racism

This lesson plan and unit introduces students to Dolores Huerta's life and legacy through her extensive activist work towards climate justice and combating environmental racism. Students will explore how environmental racism impacts their local communities and take steps to engage in their communities through various civically-engaged actions such as writing letters to local legislators, protest, boycotts, or volunteering in the community.

- One-Day Lesson Plan
- Five-Day Unit
- PDF of Presentation Slides
- PDF of Presentation Slides with Instructor Notes

Lesson 4: Arts and Healing

How Art and Music Further a Political Movement

This lesson plan and unit introduces students to Dolores Huerta's life and legacy through her support and appreciation for the arts and its role in furthering political movements and providing healing for activists and community members. Students will explore political graphic art and protest songs and have the opportunity to create their own in support of their values and commitments to social change.

- One-Day Lesson Plan
- Five-Day Unit
- PDF of Presentation Slides
- Huelga en General lyrics handout
- PDF of Presentation Slides with Instructor Notes

Additional Resources

- List of Books, Audio, Videos for High School



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Thanks to this wide-ranging support, the Dolores Huerta Foundation is proud to make these lesson plans publicly available for educators in California and beyond

A woman with dark hair, wearing a grey t-shirt and dark pants, is holding a large black sign with the word "ORGANIZE" in white capital letters. She has a determined expression on her face. The background is a solid dark blue.

ORGANIZE

The Dolores Huerta Foundation passionately advocates for social justice, focusing on empowering marginalized communities through grassroots organizing, civic engagement, and education initiatives. To learn more go to www.doloreshuerta.org

