

Chicana Punk and the Chicano Movement

Est. Time: 90-120 minutes

Subjects: History, Social Studies, General Music

Age Range: High School

See the full lesson [here!](#)

★ *TEACHROCK* ★

What is Chicana Punk, how does it relate to the Chicano Movement, and how did it transform the Punk music scene?

In this lesson you will:

- Explore the careers, musical work, and activism of Chicana Punk musicians Alice Bag and Teresa Covarrubias
- Identify the connection between Chicana Punk and the Chicano Movement
- Examine the terms related to the sociopolitical activism promoted by Chicana Punk musicians Alice Bag and Teresa Covarrubias

What is Chicana Punk?

Read and complete [this handout](#) to learn more about the history and importance of Chicana Punk.



Watch this [YouTube video “The Very Latinx History of Punk”](#) from 2:26 - 4:30.

After watching, consider or ask a partner:

- How does the video expand your knowledge of Punk music and the Latin history of Punk?
- What does Alice Bag say about what is valued in Punk?
- Why might Alice Bag have felt she fit into the Punk scene in Los Angeles?



Watch this [YouTube video “Eastside Punks -- A Screening and Conversation”](#) from 4:48 - 6:04

After watching, consider or ask a partner:

- How does the video expand your knowledge of Punk music and the Latin history of Punk?
- What are some of the reasons Covarrubias might have been interested in the LA Punk scene?
- What does Teresa Covarrubias say influenced and contributed to her lyric writing?



How does Chicana Punk relate to the Chicano Movement?

Read and complete [this handout](#) to learn more about the Chicano Movement and how Chicana Punk relates to it.

Then consider or ask a partner:

- In your own words, what was the Chicano Movement?
- What did the Chicano Movement advocate for?
- What is a Chicana? What is their relationship with the Chicano Movement?
- What might be meant by “Third Space”?



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Read this poem by Gloria Anzaldúa.

Then consider or ask a partner:

- Who was Gloria Anzaldúa? (Hint: look at the previous handout, “Chicanas and the Chicano Movement”).
- What might Anzaldúa be referring to in this poem?
- What might “me raja” mean?
- What do you think this poem is about?
- What comparison is she making?
- How might this poem reflect the ideas behind the Chicano Movement?
- What might a “Third Space” be in the context of this poem?

**“1,950 mile-long open wound
dividing a pueblo, a culture,
running down the length of my body,
staking fence rods in my flesh,
splits me splits me
me raja me raja.
This is my home
this thin edge of barbwire.”**

-Gloria Anzaldúa

How do Alice Bag and Teresa Covarrubias identify with Punk?

Examine the pictures and quotes on [this handout](#), and use [this graphic organizer](#) to take notes on what you observe.

Then consider or ask a partner:

- According to the quotes, how might the Punk scene have been a liberating space for Chicana Punks?
- As described by Bag and Covarrubias, in what ways might have Punk been a “Third Space”?

How do Alice Bag's and Teresa Covarrubias' lyrics reflect their Punk convictions?

Open this [Handout - Chicana Punk Primary Source Analysis](#) and pick one of the primary sources to analyze, Primary Source A OR Primary Source B.

After you pick and analyze the primary source, answer the questions below it. Then, answer the final questions on page 8 of the document.

If you are working with a partner, choose one primary source each, and share what you learned with your partner!

SUMMARY

- Alice Bag and Teresa Covarrubias redefined Punk culture and used music for social activism. While experiencing marginalization as Mexican American women, they used Punk culture to create identities that drew from the Chicano Movement.
- The Chicano Movement was a U.S. civil rights movement led by Mexican Americans that started in the 1940s. The movement called attention to the systemic discrimination and marginalization Mexican Americans faced in American society. For Mexican American women, gender created another layer of marginalization. Chicana artists created a new, “third” space to highlight the intersectionality of patriarchy, racism, classism, and colonialism in efforts to liberate Chicanas.

BE CREATIVE

- Compose original music to accompany the “current issue” lyrics. Students can create a song with lyrics and music either using musical instruments or with a digital audio workstation (DAW) like GarageBand or FL Studio. If the opportunity is available, have students perform their song or play their recording of it.
- Storyboard a music video for the song. The StoryboardThat website (<https://www.storyboardthat.com/storyboard-creator>) could be a beneficial tool for the activity. While creating a storyboard, consider how the visuals of a music video might also reflect the issue the lyrics address.
- Listen to Chicana Punk music from this playlist: <http://bit.ly/ChicanaPunkPlaylist>

BE CURIOUS

Now, create and draw your own pedal. It can be:

- Compose original music to accompany the “current issue” lyrics. Students can create a song with lyrics and music either using musical instruments or with a digital audio workstation (DAW) like GarageBand or FL Studio. If the opportunity is available, have students perform their song or play their recording of it.
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