

# Corridos and Culture

*The Life and Death on the Border 1910-1920* exhibition at the Bullock Museum explores the little-known story of some of the worst racial violence in US history. The conflict between the Texas Rangers and the Mexican American community shaped the culture and history of South Texas. The search for justice inspired a renaissance of Tejano literature, art, and music, and influenced the creation of the Mexican American civil rights movement.

## Grade Level:

Middle and High School

## Learning Goal(s):

- Students will analyze lyrics of traditional corrido songs to understand the history and culture of the Mexican American community in South Texas at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- Students will explain what emotions are invoked by lyrics and how songs play an important role in society.

## Materials:

- Overview on corridos (below) and a more extensive handout
- Background information on Gregorio Cortez
- Spanish and English lyrics of “El corrido de Gregorio Cortez”
- Audio recording of “El corrido de Gregorio Cortez”  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QtE\\_bSrOuO4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QtE_bSrOuO4)
- Analyze a Primary Source Worksheet
- Spanish lyrics of “El corrido de Sandra Bland”

## Instructions:

- Teachers should become familiar with corridos and Gregorio Cortez using the attached resources.
- Present information to students about the style and history of corridos
- Pass out copies of the Analyzing a Primary Source handout. This sheet can be used as a basis to analyze many different types of primary sources; today we are analyzing song lyrics.
- Display the lyrics for “El corrido de Gregorio Cortez” - hand out or reproduced on smart board.
- Work in groups to analyze “El corrido de Gregorio Cortez” and discuss as a class its meaning.
- Extension for older students: Compare/contrast “El corrido de Gregorio Cortez” with a modern day corrido. What is similar or different about the musical styles, lyrics, and topics?

## Extension Activities

- Write a review for “El corrido de Gregorio Cortez” for *Rolling Stone* magazine; must include specific examples from the lyrics to back-up your opinions
- Design an illustration for a CD cover for the corridos
- Choose someone you consider a hero—write a corrido about that person
- Find the literary devices in the lyrics and analyze as a poem

# Corrido Overview

The corrido in its usual form is a ballad of eight-syllable, four-line stanzas sung to a simple tune in fast waltz time, now often in polka rhythm. Corridos have traditionally been men's songs. They have been sung at home, on horseback, in town plazas by traveling troubadours, in cantinas by blind *guitarreros* (guitarists), on campaigns during the Mexican Revolution (1910–30), and on migrant workers' journeys north to the fields. Now they are heard frequently on recordings and over the radio.

The corridos along the border are of the lower Rio Grande and South Texas had a separate and perhaps earlier development than elsewhere. Events in Texas between 1836 and 1848 resulted in the colonization of the lower Rio Grande area by white empresarios. The gradual displacement or subjugation of the Mexican people there provided the basis for more than a century of border conflict between the Anglos and the Mexicans. During the struggle against the Anglos, the corrido form developed in the area and became extremely popular.

The border corrido developed after 1848 and reached its peak at the height of cultural conflict between 1890 and 1910, at least ten years before the zenith of the Mexican corrido during the Mexican Revolution. The border corridos, in short, dramatic form, picture a heroic struggle against oppression and rival the Mexican corridos in quality, if not in quantity. Border heroes such as Ignacio and Jacinto Treviño and Aniceto Pizaña are depicted in corridos of this time defending their rights against the Americans. But the epitome of the border corrido hero was Gregorio Cortez. Despite Cortez's notoriety among South Texas Anglos, the ballads portray him as a peaceful Mexicano living in South Texas at the turn of the century. When Cortez's brother is shot, allegedly for no good reason, Cortez is pursued over South Texas by as many as 300 *rinches*, or Texas Rangers. Following the pattern, the corridos picture Cortez goaded into action, fighting against "outsiders" for his own and the people's independence.

# CORRIDOS

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**CORRIDOS.** The corrido in its usual form is a ballad of eight-syllable, four-line stanzas sung to a simple tune in fast waltz time, now often in polka rhythm. Corridos have traditionally been men's songs. They have been sung at home, on horseback, in town plazas by traveling troubadours, in cantinas by blind *guitarreros* (guitarists), on campaigns during the [Mexican Revolution](#) (1910–30), and on migrant workers' journeys north to the fields. Now they are heard frequently on recordings and over the radio.

These ballads are generally in major keys and have tunes with a short—less than an octave—range. [Américo Paredes](#), the preeminent scholar of the corrido of the lower Rio Grande border area, remarked: "The short range allows the corrido to be sung at the top of the singer's voice, an essential part of the corrido style." In Texas this singing has traditionally been accompanied by a guitar or *bajo sexto*, a type of twelve-string guitar popular in Texas and northern Mexico.

In its literary form the corrido seems to be a direct descendent of the *romance*, a Spanish ballad form that developed in the Middle Ages, became a traditional form, and was brought to the New World by Spanish conquistadors. Like the *romance*, the corrido employs a four-line stanza form with an *abcd* rhyme pattern. Paredes surmised that corrido is ultimately derived from the Andalusian phrase *romance corrido*, which denoted a refrainless, rapidly sung romance. With the noun dropped, the participle corrido, from a verb meaning "to run," itself became a noun.

The corrido, like the romance, relates a story or event of local or national interest—a hero's deeds, a bandit's exploits, a barroom shootout, or a natural disaster, for instance. It has long been observed, however, that songs with little or no narration are still called corridos if they adhere to the corrido's usual literary and musical form.

Besides its music, versification, and subject matter, the corrido also employs certain formal ballad conventions. In *La lírica narrativa de México*, Vicente Mendoza gives six primary formal characteristics or conventions of the corrido. They are: (1) the initial call of the *corridista*, or balladeer, to the public, sometimes called the formal opening; (2) the stating of the place, time, and name of the protagonist of the ballad; (3) the arguments of the protagonist; (4) the message; (5) the farewell of the protagonist; and (6) the farewell of the *corridista*. These elements, however, vary in importance from region to region in Mexico and the Southwest, and it is sometimes difficult to find a ballad that employs all of them. In Texas and the border region, the

formal opening of the corrido is not as vital as the balladeer's *despedida* (farewell) or formal close. Often the singer will start the corrido with the action of the story to get the interest of the audience, thus skipping the introduction, but the *despedida* in one form or another is almost never dropped. The phrase *Ya con esta me despido* ("With this I take my leave") or *Vuela, vuela, palomita* ("Fly, fly, little dove") often signals the *despedida* on the first line of the penultimate or ultimate stanza of the song.

In the middle to late 1800s several ballad forms—the *romance*, *décima*, and *copla*—existed side by side in Mexico and in the Southwest, and at this time the corrido seems to have had its genesis. By 1848, however, the remote outposts of northern Mexico already belonged to the United States as a result of the Texas Revolution, the Mexican War, and the [Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo](#). The *romance* tradition in California dwindled with the Anglo-American migration and takeover, and a native balladry did not develop there until the corrido form was imported by Mexican immigrants in this century. New Mexico, on the other hand, remained somewhat isolated from modern Mexican and Anglo-American currents and retained much of its archaic Spanish tradition.

The border area of the lower Rio Grande and South Texas, however, was different. There the corrido seems to have had a separate and perhaps earlier development than elsewhere. Events in Texas between 1836 and 1848 resulted in the colonization of the lower Rio Grande area by white empresarios (see [EMPRESARIO](#)). The gradual displacement or subjugation of the Mexican people there provided the basis for more than a century of border conflict between the Anglos and the Mexicans. During the struggle against the Anglos, the corrido form developed in the area and became extremely popular. In Paredes's words, the borderers' "slow, dogged struggle against economic enslavement and the loss of their own identity was the most important factor in the development of a distinct local balladry."

The border corrido developed after 1848 and reached its peak at the height of cultural conflict between 1890 and 1910, at least ten years before the zenith of the Mexican corrido during the Mexican Revolution. The border corridos, in short, dramatic form, picture a heroic struggle against oppression and rival the Mexican corridos in quality, if not in quantity. Border heroes such as Ignacio and Jacinto Treviño and [Aniceto Pizaña](#) are depicted in corridos of this time defending their rights against the Americans. But the epitome of the border corrido hero was Gregorio Cortez<sup>qv</sup>. In *With His Pistol in His Hand*, Paredes discusses the legend, life, and corridos of Cortez. Despite Cortez's notoriety among South Texas Anglos, the ballads portray him as a peaceful Mexicano living in South Texas at the turn of the century. When Cortez's brother is shot, allegedly for no good reason, Cortez is pursued over South Texas by as many as 300 *rinches*, or Texas Rangers<sup>qv</sup>. Following the pattern, the corridos

picture Cortez goaded into action, fighting against “outsiders” for his own and the people's independence.

The border ceased to be a distinct cultural area in the early 1900s. Improved communications and means of travel linked the south bank of the Rio Grande more with the interior of Mexico and the north bank more with Texas and the United States. The idea of a boundary caused the borderer to begin to see himself as a Mexican or American. Corridos in Mexico embodied epic characteristics during the revolutionary period. Although these corridos were known in Texas, few if any new corridos of border conflict were composed after about 1930. With the borderer's loss of identity went the *corrido* of border strife. The *corrido* tradition itself did not die in Texas, however; it merely changed during and after the 1930s.

At the same time that border strife was waning, labor demands of developing agribusiness in Texas were pulling more and more Texas-Mexican borderers into migrant farmwork. The decades of the 1920s through the 1950s were particularly frustrating for Texas Mexicans, who held the lowest status in the economy of South Texas. In these years hundreds of corridos were composed and sung about bad working conditions, poverty, and the hopelessness of the Texas-Mexican migrant agricultural worker.

In the late 1940s and in the 1950s, as Texas-Mexican music in general became commercialized, so did the corrido. With local *guitarreros* and *conjuntos* (musical groups), the new Texas-Mexican recording companies produced many corridos. These recorded songs, however, were usually about such sensational subjects as barroom shootings or drug smuggling. Corridos about migrant work were never recorded, for they were considered too politically inflammatory for fledgling recording companies and new radio stations.

Not until the [Kennedy assassination](#) did Texas-Mexican corridos have a subject that would reinvigorate the genre. During the months following John Kennedy's death, dozens of Kennedy corridos were composed, recorded, and broadcast on Spanish-language radio stations in Texas and across the Southwest. In contrast to the usual commercial corridos of the time, those about Kennedy often resembled the older, heroic corridos. The new ballads spoke for Mexican Americans who identified with what they saw as Kennedy's struggles and ideas. After the mid-1960s and the beginnings of the Chicano movement, corridos continued to thrive. Their subjects were Chicano leaders and ideals of economic justice and cultural pride.

From the 1970s and into the twenty-first century the biggest factor in corridos in Texas, across the southwestern United States and in northern Mexico was the rise of

the genre of *narcocorridos*. Following the early-1970s release of *Contrabando y traición* by the popular group Los Tigres del Norte, the exploits and profits of drug smugglers such as Camelia “la tejana” were chronicled in hundreds of corridos, and this trend shows no signs of tapering off. In the 1980s and 1990s some corridos circulated about famous Texans—some promoted the political aspirations of Henry Cisneros, for instance—and there were outpourings of sadness in *tragedias* about the killing of the popular singer Selena<sup>qv</sup>. Disasters over the years such as the space shuttle *Challenger* explosion spawned a few corridos. The 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001 received the greatest expression from *corridistas*; at least three corridos about the event circulated in San Antonio, and many more were composed and recorded throughout the Southwest on both sides of the border. In a new development, by the early twenty-first century some corridos were diffused through Internet sites. The Internet has less impact than recordings played on the radio, but also less censorship.

See also [MÚSICA NORTEÑA](#), [TEXAS-MEXICAN FICTION](#), [TEXAS-MEXICAN CONJUNTO](#).

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## GREGORIO CORTEZ LIRA (1875–1916)

Gregorio Cortez, who became a folk hero among Mexican Americans in the early 1900s for evading the Texas Rangers during their search for him on murder charges, was a tenant farmer and vaquero who was born on June 22, 1875, near Matamoros, Tamaulipas, to Román Cortez Garza and Rosalía Lira Cortina, transient laborers. In 1887 his family moved to Manor, near Austin.

From 1889 to 1899, he worked as a farm hand and vaquero in Karnes, Gonzales, and nearby counties on a seasonal basis, and this transiency provided him with a valuable knowledge of the region and terrain. Around that time he owned two horses and a mule. He had a limited education and spoke English. On February 20, 1890, he married Leonor Díaz, with whom he had four children. Leonor began divorce proceedings against Gregorio in early 1903, alleging as part of her petition that Gregorio had physically and verbally abused her during the early years of their marriage and that she had remained with him only out of fear. Her divorce was granted on March 12, 1903. On December 23, 1904, Cortez married Estéfana Garza of Manor while in jail.

He was married again in 1916, perhaps to Ester Martínez. According to folklorist Américo Paredes, before his encounter with Sheriff Morris on June 12, 1901, Cortez was considered "a likeable young man," who had not been in much legal trouble. Historian Richard Mertz, however, interviewed acquaintances of the Cortezes who claimed that in the 1880s Gregorio, his father, and brothers Tomás and Romaldo were involved in horse theft, an act Chicano historians have typically interpreted as resistance to racial oppression. A charge of horse theft against Romaldo around 1887 was dropped due to lack of evidence, and a similar charge against Tomás about the same time ended with an executive pardon from Governor Lawrence S. Ross. Paredes has noted, however, that in the early 1900s Tomás was sentenced to five years in the penitentiary for horse theft.

The event that propelled Cortez to legendary status occurred on June 12, 1901, when he was approached by Karnes county sheriff W. T. "Brack" Morris because Atascosa county sheriff Avant had asked Morris to help locate a horse thief described as a "medium-sized Mexican." Deputies John Trimmell and Boone Choate accompanied Morris in their search, and Choate acted as the interpreter. Choate questioned various Kenedy residents, including Andrés Villarreal, who informed them that he had recently acquired a mare by trading a horse to a man named Gregorio Cortez. Morris and the deputies then approached the Cortezes, who lived on the W. A. Thulmeyer ranch, ten miles west of Kenedy, where Gregorio and Romaldo rented land and raised corn. According to official testimony, Choate's poor job of interpreting led to major misunderstanding between Cortez and Choate. For instance, Gregorio's brother Romaldo told Gregorio, "*Te quieren*" ("Somebody wants you"). Choate interpreted this to mean "You are wanted," suggesting that Gregorio was indeed the wanted man the authorities were seeking. Choate apparently asked Cortez if he had traded a "*caballo*" ("horse") to which he answered "no" because he had traded a "*yegua*" ("mare"). A third misinterpretation involved another response from Cortez, who told the sheriff and deputies, "*No me puede arrestar por nada*" ("You can't arrest me for nothing"), which Morris understood as "*A mi no me arresta nadie*" and translated as "No white man can arrest me." Partly as a result of these misunderstandings Morris shot and wounded Romaldo and narrowly missed Gregorio. Gregorio responded to the sheriff's action by shooting and killing him. Cortez fled the scene, initially walking toward the Gonzales-Austin vicinity, some eighty miles away. His name was soon on the front page of every major Texas newspaper. Shortly after the incident, the San Antonio *Express* lamented the fact that Cortez had not been lynched. Meanwhile, Leonor and the children, Cortez's mother, and his sister-in-law María were illegally held in custody while posses mobilized to catch Cortez.

On his escape, Cortez stopped at the ranch of Martín and Refugia Robledo on Schnabel property near Belmont. At the Robledo home Gonzales county sheriff Glover and his posse found Cortez. Shots were exchanged, and Glover and Schnabel were killed. Cortez escaped again and walked nearly 100 miles to the home of Ceferino Flores, a friend, who provided him a horse and saddle. He now headed toward Laredo. The hunt for "sheriff killer" Cortez intensified. Newspaper accounts portrayed him as a "bandit" with a "gang" at his assistance. The *Express* noted that Cortez "is at the head of a well organized band of thieves and cutthroats." The Seguin *Enterprise* referred to him as an "arch fiend." Governor Joseph D. Sayers and Karnes citizens offered a \$1,000 reward for his capture. Cortez found it more difficult to evade capture around

Laredo since Tejanos typically served as lawmen in the region. Sheriff Ortiz of Webb County and assistant city marshal Gómez of Laredo, for instance, participated in the hunt. While anti-Cortez sentiment grew, so did the numbers of people who sympathized with the fugitive. Tejanos, who saw him as a hero evading the evil *rinches*, also experienced retaliatory violence in Gonzales, Refugio, and Hays counties and in and around the communities of Ottine, Belmont, Yoakum, Runge, Beeville, San Diego, Benavides, Cotulla, and Galveston. By the time the chase had ended at least nine persons of Mexican descent had been killed, three wounded, and seven arrested. Meanwhile, admiration of Cortez by Anglo-Texans also increased, and the San Antonio *Express* touted his "remarkable powers of endurance and skill in eluding pursuit." The posses searching for Cortez involved hundreds of men, including the Texas Rangers. A train on the International- Great Northern Railroad route to Laredo was used to bring in new posses and fresh horses. Cortez was finally captured when Jesús González, one of his acquaintances, located him and led a posse to him on June 22, 1901, ten days after the encounter between Cortez and Sheriff Morris. Some Tejanos later labeled González a traitor to his people and ostracized him.

Once he was captured, a legal-defense campaign began and a network of supporters developed. The Sociedad Trabajador Miguel Hidalgo in San Antonio wrote a letter of support that appeared in newspapers as far away as Mexico City. Pablo Cruz, the editor of *El Regidor* of San Antonio, played a key role in the defense network, which was located in Houston, Austin, and Laredo. Funds were collected through donations, *sociedades mutualistas*, and benefit performances to provide for Cortez's legal representation. B. R. Abernathy, one of his lawyers, proved to be the most committed to attaining justice for him. Cortez went through numerous trials, the first of which began in Gonzales on July 24, 1901. Eleven jurors, with the exception of juror A. L. Sanders, found him guilty of the murder of Schnabel. Through a compromise among the jurors, a fifty-year sentence for second-degree murder was assessed. The defense's attempt to appeal the case was denied. In the meantime a mob of 300 men tried to lynch Cortez. Shortly after the verdict, Romaldo Cortez, whom Sheriff Morris had wounded, died in the Karnes City jail. On January 15, 1902, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals reversed the Gonzales verdict. The same court also reversed the verdicts in the trials held in Karnes and Pleasanton. In April 1904 the last trial was held in Corpus Christi. By the time Cortez began serving life in prison for the murder of Sheriff Glover, he had been in eleven jails in eleven counties. While in prison he worked as a barber, an occupation that he probably pursued throughout his years of incarceration. Cortez also enjoyed the empathy of some of his jailers, who provided him the entire upper story of the jail as a "honeymoon suite" when he married Estéfana Garza.

Attempts to pardon him began as soon as he entered prison. After Cruz died, Col. Francisco A. Chapa, the politically influential publisher of *El Imparcial* in San Antonio, took up the Cortez case; he has been considered the person most responsible for his release. Ester Martínez also petitioned Governor Oscar B. Colquitt for his release. The Board of Pardons Advisers eventually recommended a full pardon. Even Secretary of State F. C. Weinert of Seguin worked for Cortez's pardon. Colquitt, who issued many pardons, gave Cortez a conditional pardon in July 1913. Once released, Cortez thanked those who helped him recover his freedom. Soon after, he went to Nuevo Laredo and fought with Victoriano Huerta in the Mexican Revolution. He married for the last time in 1916 and died shortly afterwards of pneumonia, on February 28, 1916. His story inspired many variants of a *corrido* (see *CORRIDOS*) called "El Corrido de Gregorio Cortez," which appeared as early as 1901. The ballad was similar to those that depicted Juan Nepomuceno Cortina and Catarino Garza. Américo Paredes popularized the story of Gregorio Cortez in *With His Pistol in His Hand: A Border Ballad and Its Hero*, which was published by the University of Texas Press in 1958. Between 1958 and 1965 the book sold fewer than 1,000 copies, and a Texas Ranger angered by it threatened to shoot Paredes. In subsequent decades, however, the book has been recognized as a classic of Texas Mexican prose and has sold quite well. Cortez's story gained further interest when the movie *The Ballad of Gregorio Cortez* was produced in 1982.

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## “El Corrido de Gregorio Cortez” 1901

En el condado del Carmen  
miren lo que ha sucedido:  
murió el Cherife Mayor,  
quedando Román herido.

Otro día por la mañana  
cuando la gente llegó,  
unos a los otros dicen:  
"No saben quien lo mató".

Se anduvieron informando,  
como tres horas después  
supieron que el malhechor  
era Gregorio Cortez.

Insertaron a Cortez  
por toditito el estado:  
"Vivo o muerto que se aprehenda  
porque a varios ha matado".

Decía Gregorio Cortez  
con su pistola en la mano:  
"No siento haberlo matado,  
al que siento es a mi hermano".

Decía Gregorio Cortez  
con su alma muy encendida:  
"No siento haberlo matado,  
la defensa es permitida".

Venían los americanos  
que por el viento volaban  
porque se iban a ganar  
tres mil pesos que les daban.

Tiró con rumbo a González,  
varios cherifes lo vieron,  
no lo quisieron seguir  
porque le tuvieron miedo.

Venían los perros jaunes,  
venían sobre la huella,  
pero alcanzar a Cortez  
era alcanzar a una estrella.

Decía Gregorio Cortez:  
"¡Pa' qué se valen de planes,  
si no pueden agarrarme  
ni con esos perros jaunes!"

Look what has happened  
in the county of Carmen:  
the Major Sheriff has died  
and Román has been wounded.

The next morning,  
when people arrived,  
they said to each other:  
"Nobody knows who killed him."

They investigated  
and about three hours later  
they discovered that  
Gregorio Cortez was the wrongdoer.

A warrant for Cortez's arrest  
was issued throughout the state:  
"Bring him in dead or alive,  
he is wanted for murder."

Gregorio Cortez said,  
with his pistol in his hand:  
"I'm not sorry for killing him,  
my concern is for my brother."

Gregorio Cortez said,  
with his soul ablaze:  
"I'm not sorry for killing him,  
self-defense is justifiable."

The Americans were coming  
as fast as the wind,  
because they would earn  
a reward of 3,000 pesos.

He fled toward González.  
Several sheriffs saw him  
but they didn't want to pursue him  
because they were afraid.

The hound dogs were coming,  
following his trail,  
but catching Cortez  
was like reaching for a star.

Gregorio Cortez said:  
"Why do you even try?  
You can't even catch me,  
even with those hound dogs."

## “El Corrido de Gregorio Cortez” 1901

Decían los americanos:  
"¿Si lo vemos qué le haremos?  
si le entramos por derecho  
muy poquitos volveremos".

En el redondel del rancho  
lo alcanzaron a rodear,  
poquitos más de trescientos  
y allí les brincó el corral.

Allá por el Encinal,  
asegún por lo que dicen,  
se agarraron a balazos  
y les mató a otro cherife.

Decía Gregorio Cortez  
con su pistola en la mano:  
"No corran rinches cobardes,  
con un solo mexicano".

Giró con rumbo a Laredo  
sin ninguna timidez:  
"¡Síguenme rinches cobardes,  
yo soy Gregorio Cortez!"

Gregorio le dice a Juan  
en el rancho del Ciprés:  
"Platicame qué hay de nuevo,  
yo soy Gregorio Cortez".

Gregorio le dice a Juan:  
"Muy pronto lo vas a ver,  
anda háblale a los cherifes  
que me vengán a aprehender".

Cuando llegan los cherifes  
Gregorio se presentó:  
"Por las buenas si me llevan,  
porque de otro modo no".

Ya agarraron a Cortez,  
ya terminó la cuestión,  
la pobre de su familia  
la lleva en el corazón.

Ya con esta ahí me despido  
con la sombra de un Ciprés,  
aquí se acaba cantando  
la tragedia de Cortez.

The Americans said:  
"What shall we do if we find him?  
In an open confrontation  
only a few of us will make it back."

By the corral of the ranch  
they surrounded him.  
There were more than 300 men,  
but he jumped through their ring.

Around El Encinal,  
according to what they say,  
they had a shoot out  
and he killed another sheriff.

Gregorio Cortez said,  
with his pistol in his hand:  
"Don't run you cowardly Rangers,  
from one lone Mexican."

He turned toward  
Laredo without any fear:  
"Follow me, you cowardly Rangers,  
I am Gregorio Cortez."

Gregorio says to Juan,  
at the ranch of the cypress:  
"Tell me, what's new?  
I am Gregorio Cortez."

Gregorio says to Juan:  
"You will soon find out.  
Go and call the sheriffs,  
tell them to come and arrest me."

When the sheriffs arrived  
Gregorio turned himself in.  
"You can take me only on my terms,  
no other way."

They caught Cortez  
and the case is closed.  
His poor family  
is always in his heart.

I now take my leave,  
by the shade of a cypress tree.  
Here I end singing  
the tragedy of Cortez.

# Analyzing a Primary Source

Type of Source

Newspaper  
 Letter  
 Broadcast  
 Map

Press Release  
 Advertisement  
 Congressional record  
 Song

Film  
 Telegram  
 Census Report  
 Other

Title of Source

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Author of Creator of Source

Year of Source

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What is the central message(s) of this source?

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List three things the author said that you think are important:

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Why do you think this source was written?

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What evidence in the source helps you know why it was written? Circle on the source and explain below:

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# Analyzing a Primary Source

List two things the source tells you about life in the United States at the time it was written

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What is the tone or mood of this source? Circle the word choice that gives you this evidence and explain below:

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Who was the intended audience of this source?

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How does it make you feel?

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Consider the effectiveness of the source in communicating its message. As a tool of communication, what are its strengths and weaknesses?

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Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the source:

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