

**Worksheet 3. “The Solitude of Latin America” Teacher’s Version**

Directions:

Read Gabriel García Márquez’s [lecture](#), “The Solitude of Latin America,” delivered on the occasion of his acceptance of the Nobel Prize in Literature (1982). Then answer the following questions:

1. What fantastic images did García Márquez use to open his speech drawing from an account by a navigator on Magellan’s circumnavigation of the globe? What other episodes from the era of exploration does he bring in? What is the main point of including these details in his speech?

These images serve as dramatic examples of how fantasy can be comingled with factual experience. Other examples shared include legendary experiences surrounding the quest of gold in the New World such as Eldorado and the Fountain of Youth. Such early chronicles from the era of exploration and the colonial period are full of details that seemed fantastical to European readers, but which nevertheless turned out to be true. He suggests that reality in Latin America is rather extraordinary.

2. What kinds of events have shaped modern Latin American history?

After independence, bizarre but real events continued, like the elaborate funeral held for General Antonio López de Santana’s right leg. In the modern era, there have been wars, civil disturbances, revolutions, and assassinations.

3. Discuss García Márquez statement describing the impression modern day European’s have of this reality characterized by “unearthly tidings of Latin America, that boundless realm of haunted men and historic women, whose unending obstinacy blurs into legend.”

Answers will vary

4. What does García Márquez mean when he suggests that European nations shouldn’t be “measuring us with the yardstick that they use for themselves”?

Modern nations can’t use the same rational measures for judging Latin America that they use for themselves. If they do, they are forgetting their own pre-modern past.

5. How does this speech contribute to your understanding of García Márquez use of magical realism?

Answers will vary.