



## Modern México

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México's culture is a mixture of Spanish and indigenous influence, which becomes apparent in the arts, foods, language, traditions, and religion of the country.

### Population

According to the 1990 census, México's population has been at a steady growth rate, with the exception of the Revolutionary period when the population decreased. Approximately 60% of the population can be found in large urban cities, specifically those in the State of México with México City having the highest population.

México's high infant mortality rate is a result of lack of medical services, poor hygiene, malnutrition, and respiratory or gastrointestinal diseases. The infant mortality rate in rural areas is much higher than in urban areas. The government continues to improve health, economic and educational conditions in rural communities by providing medical services, family planning and constructing more schools.

### Family Life

The family in the Mexican culture is a very strong social unit. The family generally includes parents and children but also extends to grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and godparents of baptisms, confirmations and weddings. This family network usually lives near one an-

other and is available in times of crisis. However, many family networks have faltered as a result of families immigrating to urban cities seeking employment. For the most part, the father is considered the head of the household and is expected to support the family. The mother is responsible for raising the family. However, the woman's role is changing dramatically. More and more mothers are working outside of the home in order to increase the family's income. Many children's early years are spent with the members of the extended family.

Families tend to come together in their homes for special occasions such as: birthday celebrations, weddings, funerals, religious celebrations or national holidays. One specific celebration is the *quinceañera*, the coming of age party for fifteen-year-old young ladies. An elaborate party is planned in advance. The young lady wears a dress similar to a wedding dress. She has a court which consists of young ladies and gentlemen. On the celebrant's day, a mass is said in her honor. After mass, family members and friends hold a dinner party often as elaborate as that of a wedding.

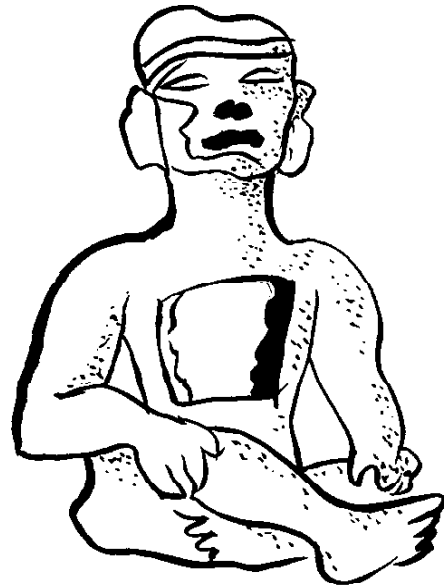
Birth is also celebrated distinctively by Mexicans. Before the birth of a child, parents choose who will be the child's godparents. The godparents or *padrinos* will play an important role in the raising of the child. *Padrinos* are invited to the child's birthdays or other family celebrations.

When a family member dies there are certain rituals that a family follows. Usually, a black ribbon is hung outside the door of the home, indicating that a person has passed away. Close family members, especially women, wear black for at least three to six months. Novenas are said for nine days in a row in the home of the deceased. On *All Souls Day*, family members visit cemeteries, setting up altars in remembrance of their deceased loved ones.

There are a number of religious, national and regional celebrations, which are celebrated throughout México. One in particular is the *charreada*, or Mexican style rodeo. They are popular in the northern part of the country. There is a dress code for a *charro* or *charra*. Horses are decorated elaborately. In a *charreada* there is music, fireworks and the ringing of church bells. The streets are filled with refreshments and food stands fill the main plaza. Street vendors or craftsman offer their goods, such as: clay pottery, leathered goods, woods carved toys or instruments. The prices that a consumer pays range widely, depending on the consumer's bargaining skills.

### Education

It is mandated that children between the age of six through fourteen attend school. The government provides a free public education. The government also promotes literacy programs in order to increase its lit-



**Above:** Mexican artisans create works of art using clay. This has long been a tradition since Pre-hispanic times. Clay figurines such as this one are sold in small shops and by street vendors throughout México.

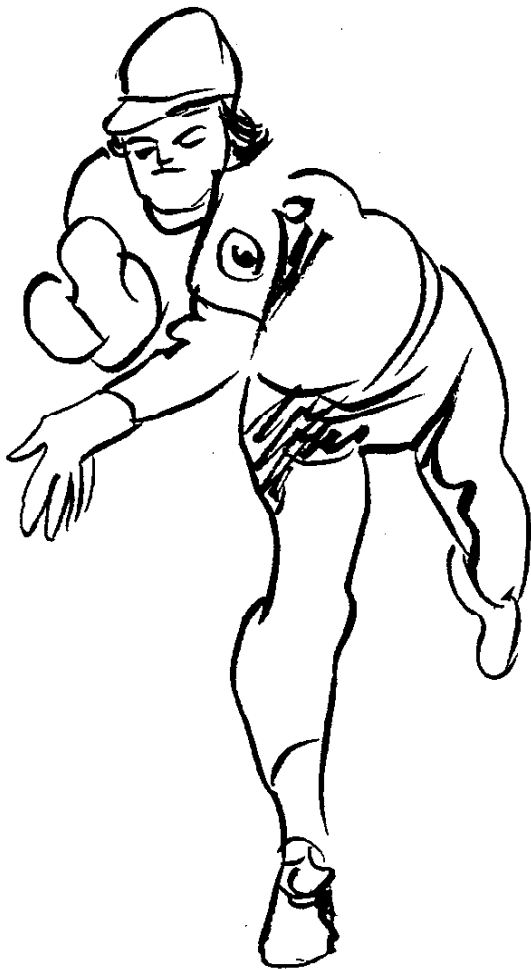
eracy rate. According to the 1990 census, 87% of México's population from ages six to fourteen know how to read and write.

In rural indigenous communities the government has promoted and expanded their educational program, following the belief that higher educational levels will result in better living conditions.

### Sports

México's most popular sport is soccer. Mexicans of all ages and across gender play this popular sport. México has hosted the World

Cup twice, in 1970 and 1986, but has never won. Bullfighting and Jai Alai are two popular sports in México with a Spanish influence. Jai Alai is a fast handball game similar to squash. Bullfighting is considered a spectacle and an art rather than a sport. Bullrings can be found in most major cities. México City has the largest bullfighting ring in the world.



#### Baseball

As a result of United States influence baseball and football have become

popular sports and there are more Mexican players who have played in major United States leagues.

#### Art and Literature

México is rich in architecture. One can still visit Mesoamérica architecture with its magnificent pyramids, temples, patios and civic buildings throughout México.

During the Spanish colonization period, Spanish architecture impacted and influenced the construction of beautiful colonial cities, churches, schools, and government buildings throughout México. The rich Baroque style with its gold inlays was typical of the era and can still be admired in churches. Their majestic construction and detail has led to their placement on the national monument protection registry.

In the fine arts, México has received international recognition for its contributions. Specifically, the contributions of its three famous muralist painters; Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco and David Alfaro Siqueiros.

Diego Rivera was born in 1886 in the state of Guanajuato. He painted many murals in México and the United States. His creations decorate the walls of México's presidential residence, the *Palacio Nacional*. He is most famous for his monumental murals depicting the lives of the Aztecs and the Mexican Revolution. Diego Rivera died in México City in the year 1957.



### **Diego Rivera**

In literature, México's wealth consists of vast treasures from the Prehispanic times of the códices and Náhuatl literature to the colonial Mexican literature that includes Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. In the modern era, literary writers include Manuel Gutiérrez Najera, Ramon López Velarde, Salvador, Díaz Mirón, Manuel José Othón, and Amado Nervo. Writers famous for their works about the revolutionary period include: Mariano Anzuela, Martín Luis Guzmán, José Vasconcelos, Nellie Campobello, Gregorio López y Fuentes.

At present, México's literary world is at a high peak. Mexican writers and novelists such as Carlos Fuentes, Octavio Paz, and Alfonso Reyes, are using modern narrative techniques to create a distinctively Mexican style.

### Labor

The Constitution of 1917 guaranteed all workers an eight-hour day. It permits workers the right to organize freely, to bargain collectively, and the right to strike. Laws provided for minimum wages and compensation. Child labor prohibited. Furthermore, it guaranteed a social security program to assist all workers with medical and financial assistance.

### Economics

In recent years, México has undergone much social and economic turmoil. Specifically, during the discovery of new oil fields at a time when oil prices were at a high peak. México borrowed funds and spent money believing that the oil price would not fluctuate. However, the price of oil fell and México was unable to pay or meet its external debts and loans with foreign countries.

By 1982, during Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado's presidency, México had fallen in a deep economic depression. De la Madrid attempted an innovative economic reform, a risk not taken since the revolutionary period. The Mexican government took over the banking sector and initiated new economic reforms.

In 1988, Carlos Salinas de Gortari became president. Salinas undertook the strong economic reform initiative begun by his predecessor. Salinas focused his atten-

tion on the business and industrial sectors of México. Under his leadership, the banks and telephone companies became privatized. Foreign investment was elicited to invest in the country. These foreign investors set up factories along the United States and México border. These factories, also called *maquiladoras*, were largely owned by United States companies that assembled small unit production which they later brought into the United States free of import tax. After assembly, the manufactured goods were re-exported to the United States, paying only a small tax fee. As a result, México has benefited by boosting its economy on the border as well as providing more jobs to its people. The United States has profited from the Mexican labor pool and taken advantage of México's proximity because United States companies are able to hire manual labor at a low cost to make their products. The economies of both the United States and México have become intertwined. The United States has become México's largest trading partner.

In 1993, México, the United States, and Canada all signed a historic agreement called the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA. NAFTA is a free trade agreement that allows the three countries to eliminate trade and investment barriers, for fifteen years. There was much controversy on all sides about approving the trade agreement. Mexican opponents felt that the treaty would only benefit the United States and Canada. The

United States union labor unions opposed the trade agreement for fear that large corporations would move their manufacturing plants only to México because of the low wages and lax labor policies. Americans were fearful that they would lose their jobs. For those who favored NAFTA they perceived an increase in trade among the three countries would result in stronger economies for all involved.

It is difficult to predict the long-term effects that this agreement may bring, however, México and the United States have much to offer one another.

### Immigration

In the last thirty years, México has had to transform its educational system, health care, and economic and cultural affairs. The population in México City is one of the highest in the industrial world. Every day, more people move from their homes located in rural areas to the large urban communities resulting in high unemployment, poor housing and the increased migration of Mexicans into the United States. As more and more Mexican nationals migrate to the United States, their language and culture is affected. Families have to learn to adapt and be flexible in their new surroundings. Most families desire to learn English so that economic plight is enhanced. Parents are interested in having their children attend school and learn English in order to better their social status and increase their income.

**Activity Title:** Create a Biographical Timeline

**Time Frame:** 1-3 days

**Background Information:**

Folklore and traditions are passed on from one generation to another. One source of the rich traditions of México is the family. Mexican families are an important part of Mexican culture because they maintain strong ties to one another. Grandparents live with their children and grandchildren. Aunts and uncles usually maintain a close proximity with their siblings. There is richness in their experiences and the older family members tell of how things were to the younger members of the family. In the following activity, create a biographical timeline with members of your family or special people you know.

**Content Area(s):** Social Science and Language Arts

**State Goals:** Social Science #16; Language Arts #5

**Materials:**

Interview questionnaire

4 X 6 index cards

Sample timelines found in books or magazines

**Procedure:**

1. Explain to students what biographies are and that biographies contain facts about people's lives. Show examples of timelines found in books or magazines.
2. Ask students to think about someone they know that they would like to write about. The person they choose can include family members, friends or classmates, etc.
3. Have the children interview the person. Determine the questions that will be asked beforehand or use an interview worksheet you are familiar with. The questions should also ask interviewees to give the date (day/month/year) when important events in their lives occurred.
4. Each student will record each fact on index cards. Students unable to write independently may draw the facts and events.
5. When completed, students should arrange the cards in order by sequencing the events and making sure they record the date each event took place as identified in their interview.
6. Display the timelines around the classroom. You may want to arrange all the cards into one large classroom timeline.

**Activity Title:** Create an *Ofrenda*

**Time Frame:** 1 day

**Background Information:**

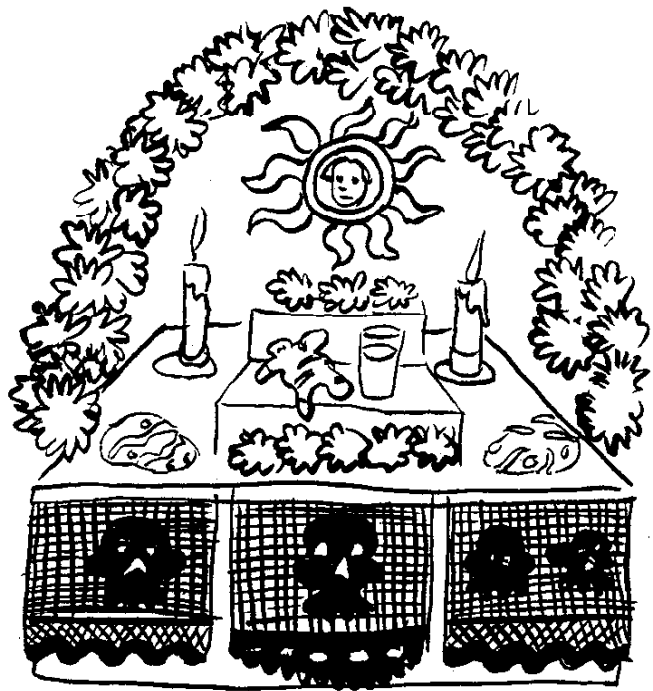
An *ofrenda*, or offering, is an altar set up to commemorate a deceased loved one on the *Day of the Dead* in November. The altar is typically set up inside the home or at the burial site. Adornment varies according to village and regional traditions.

**Content Area(s):** Social Science and Language Arts

**State Goals:** Social Science  
#18; Language Arts #4

**Materials:**

Books about the Day of the Dead  
Black fabric or Mexican serape  
Photographs of the deceased  
*Cempaxochitl* (marigold) flowers  
*Copal* incense in a censer  
Candles  
Toy fruits/vegetables  
Sugar skulls  
Glass of water  
Small toys/gifts  
*Papel picado*  
*Pan de muerto*



**Procedure:**

1. Familiarize yourself with books about the Day of the Dead.
2. Set aside a table in the classroom for your *ofrenda*. Cover the table with black fabric or colorful Mexican serapes.
3. Instruct students to bring a photograph to school of a deceased loved one.
4. Lay the candles (do not light), toy fruits and vegetables and photographs all around the *ofrenda* table. Place a glass of water on the table along with the incense and *pan de muerto*.
5. Put the *papel picado* around the base of the altar and also to create an arch over the *ofrenda*.
6. Enjoy sharing the stories that students will tell about their memories of their relatives who have passed away.

**Activity Title:** Crepe Paper Flowers

**Time Frame:** 50 minutes

**Background Information:**

Crepe Paper Flowers are traditional flowers made for festive occasions such as Mother's Day, Independence Day or Christmas Holidays. In Xochimilco, a city located on the outskirts of México City, people use real flowers to decorate their boats called *chalupas*. The colors and arrangements they use are spectacular examples of the creative and artistic soul of the Mexican people.

**Content Area(s):** Art

**State Goals:** Art #25-27

**Materials:**

Brightly colored crepe paper (cut in 5 X 13 cm in length)  
Scissors  
Twist ties or pipe cleaners  
Petal template

**Procedure:**

1. Provide each student with 2 sheets of crepe paper and twist ties.
2. Have the children fold the crepe paper in four equal parts.
3. Provide a petal template for them to trace over the paper or have them cut their own petals.
4. Spread out and overlap the petals.
5. Grab all the petals by the bottom stem with one hand.
6. Fasten them with the twist tie.
7. Once the tissue paper is fastened, spread the leaves evenly to shape your paper flower.

**Activity Title:** Different Land Forms

**Time Frame:** 50 minutes

**Background Information:**

México is a country with a variety of natural landforms, such as, oceans, tropical rainforests, mountains and plains.

**Content Area(s):** Social Science and Art

**State Goals:** Social  
Science # 17

**Materials:**

Different colored clay  
Butcher paper  
Map of México with  
land formations  
Crayons or markers



**Procedure:**

1. Discuss what the four different types of land forms found in México are:
  - Mountain* – high level of land with an abundance of trees and animals
  - Plain* – a flat piece of land good for cultivating plants and crops
  - Ocean* – a large body of saltwater with a diversity of plants and marine animals
  - Tropical rainforest* – jungle-like forest with high levels of humidity and moisture
2. Place four large signs around the classroom with the words: mountain, plain, ocean and rainforest, one word on each sign.
3. Divide the class into four groups, each group will pretend to live in one of the four areas identified above. Have them stand with their group in that area of the classroom. Once the groups are established, give students large butcher paper and clay. Each group should have their own colored clay.
4. Use crayons or markers to create the background for each land form. Use the clay to give the land formation scenery a three-dimensional look. Groups should identify where they would live, what they would eat and how they would protect themselves.
5. Allow students to share and discuss their project with the class.

**Activity Title:** Foil Art

**Time Frame:** 30 minutes

**Background Information:**

Vivid and always colorful art is present in Mexican paintings and murals. Create a wonderful Mexican craft following these simple instructions.

**Content Area(s):** Language Arts and Art

**State Goals:** Art #25-27

**Materials:**

Heavy aluminum foil  
Poster board 11 X 14  
Transparencies or acetate 8 X 10  
Permanent markers  
Staples and stapler

**Procedure:**

1. Handle the aluminum foil lightly.
2. Give each child a piece of aluminum foil making sure it is long enough to cover the poster board.
3. Cover the sturdy poster board with the aluminum foil and set aside.
4. Distribute a transparency sheet or acetate sheet to each child.
5. Draw and color a design using the permanent markers on the clear plastic surface. The markers you use must be permanent markers. Water-based markers will bleed on the plastic surface of the transparency or acetate.
6. Place the transparency with the ink on the inside in the center of the construction paper that was covered with aluminum foil.
7. Use a stapler to secure the transparency with staples.

**Activity Title:** Make a Mural

**Time Frame:** 60 minutes

**Background Information:**

The Mayas of ancient México decorated their religious centers, public buildings and personal artifacts with wonderful pictures and designs. Most of their artwork was very colorfully detailed and also told a story. In modern México there are three popular muralists: Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros and José Clemente Orozco. Their murals are also very colorful and each of them tells the story of an event from México's rich history.

**Content Area(s):** Art, Social Science, and Language Arts

**State Goals:** Art #25-27; Social Science #18; Language Arts #4

**Materials:**

Butcher paper  
Crayons or markers  
Assorted color tempera paints  
Paint brushes

**Procedure:**

1. Students will create and design murals of their family, homes, parks and city.
2. Divide the class into small groups, each with four students.
3. Distribute a large piece of butcher paper to each group and instruct them to create a mural. Each group can choose what their mural will be about given the four choices in step 1.
4. Use crayons, markers or paints to illustrate their mural.
5. When murals are complete, have each group explain their mural to the class.

**Activity Title:** Mirror plate

**Time frame:** 1 hour

**Background Information:**

Bright colors boast the beauty of nature. Colors abound in Mexican arts and crafts. This popular art form of México uses yarn and a mirror to create an extraordinary and beautiful decoration.

**Content Area(s):** Art

**State Goals:** Art #25-27

**Materials:**

Sturdy 9-inch paper plate  
Round mirror (5 inches in diameter)  
Three or more different colored yarn  
Damp sponge

Scissors and glue  
Toothpick  
Pencil  
Yarn needle w/large eye

**Procedure:**

1. Glue the small round mirror to the center of the sturdy 9-inch paper plate. Let dry. Design a border around the plate with a pencil.
2. Glue yarn around the rim to fill in your design. Use the toothpick to press and guide the yarn in place. Cut the yarn where the ends meet and press the ends together to make a flat seam. In the same manner, glue yarn around the edge of the mirror so that the mirror's edges are covered.
3. Within your borders draw bold, simple designs with a pencil. Outline the main design areas with yarn.
4. Fill in the small areas, one at a time, by winding a single piece of yarn inward from the border to the center. Use a variety of colors to fill in the individual spaces. Apply glue as needed.
5. Use a clean, damp sponge to remove any excess glue. Continue this procedure until the plate is completely covered.
6. When dry, turn the plate over and cover the backside with yarn.
7. Begin at the center of the plate and spin the yarn in a spiral design out to towards the edge. Allow the plate to dry overnight.
8. To hang your mirror plate, thread a piece of yarn with the yarn needle through two ends of the mirror and tie a knot. Display your mirror in a special place within the classroom or give them as special gifts.

**Activity Title:** Monarch Butterflies

**Time frame:** 30 minutes

**Background Information:**

Monarch butterflies are very distinctive because of their orange and black colors. In the United States, monarch butterflies only live in Texas. However, monarchs are the only butterflies that migrate and can travel as far north as Canada and far south as the state of Michoacan in México.

**Content Area(s):** Art

**State Goals:** Art #25-27

**Materials:**

Black construction paper 8x10  
Orange tissue paper  
Yellow tissue paper  
Hole punch

String  
Glue sticks  
Scissors  
X-Acto knife

**Procedure:**

1. Fold the short width of the black construction paper in half.
2. Trace a butterfly wing design so that when you open the paper, the complete butterfly is shown.
3. Use scissors or an X-Acto knife to cut long slender holes inside the butterfly wing. Cut the yellow and orange tissue paper in slender strips to fit over the holes made with the X-Acto knife.
4. Distribute one butterfly to each child. Give each child enough strips of tissue paper to fill the butterfly wings.
5. Instruct students to use glue sticks to carefully glue the tissue paper to fill the openings on the butterfly wings and allow plenty of drying time.
6. Use a hole puncher to make a hole in the middle section of your butterfly.
7. Tie a string from the hole and hang as a decoration. Enjoy your monarch butterflies as they beautify your classroom and enrich your lessons about México.

**Activity Title:** Mother's Day Basket

**Time frame:** One day

**Background Information:**

Mother's Day is a special holiday celebrated in México every year on May 10<sup>th</sup>. Moms are honored with songs, dances and special gifts created just for them. This Mother's Day Basket is a very popular Mexican craft.

**Content Area(s):** Art

**State Goals:** Art #26

**Materials:**

Newspaper - twelve half sheets per students  
Nescafé ground coffee - one jar per 20 students  
Cardboard oval or rectangle – approximately 4 x 6 inches  
Glue  
Brushes  
Staples and staplers

**Procedure:**

1. Before class, mix the ground coffee and the glue together to make a brown soup. Count and distribute twelve half-sheets of newspaper per student.
2. First, students will fold one half sheet of newspaper in a diagonal, then, fold the paper several times and twist the paper into tight strips of rolled newspaper. Follow the same procedure for each half sheet until you have all the strips tightly twisted.
3. Students should coil one paper strip around the circumference of the cardboard base. Continue to coil and pile each strip directly over the first strip, and so forth, until ten strips of newspaper are piled one on top of another to form the basket. Save the two extra strips to use as a handle.
4. Take the two extra strips and braid them together.
5. Glue or staple onto the basket.
6. Distribute a paintbrush and the cardboard base to each child. Instruct the children to brush the dark brown mixture all over one of their strips.
7. Allow time to air dry. Apply more mixture to cover any gaps or exposed areas of the newsprint. Again allow plenty of time for the basket to dry completely.
8. Decorate the basket with a ribbon tied into a bow or embellish it with flowers and present it as a gift for Mother's Day.

# Mother's Day Basket

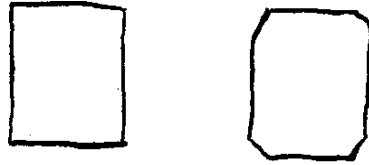


Fig. 1 Count and distribute the twelve newspaper halves to each child.

Fig. 2 Fold each sheet of newspaper into long strips.

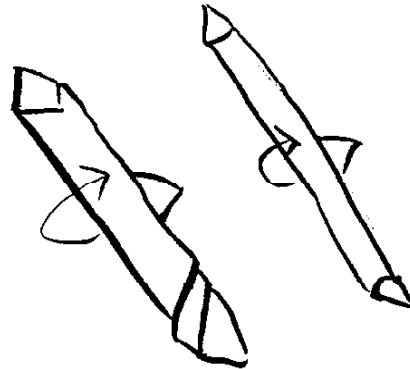
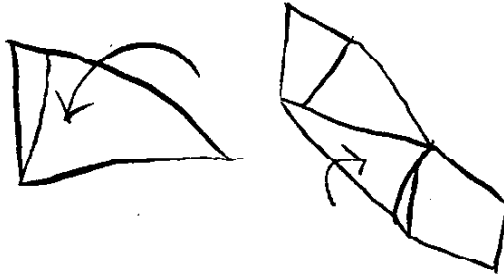


Fig. 3 Twist each paper strip tightly.

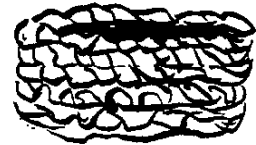
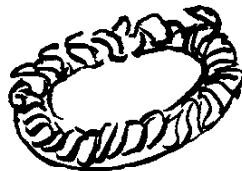
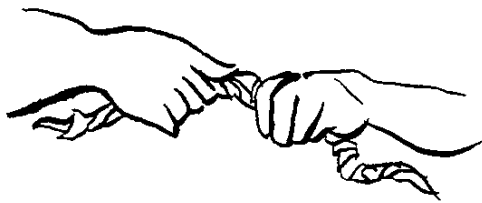


Fig. 4 Begin to coil the strips around the base. One at a time, and one on top of another, until the basket shape is formed.

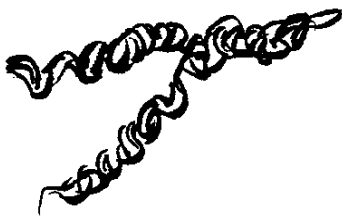


Fig. 5 Create a handle for your basket using two strips of newspaper. Attach the handle and paint the basket with the Nescafé and glue mixture. Allow plenty of drying time and decorate with ribbon or flowers.

**Activity Title:** Paper Skeleton

**Time Frame:** 30 minutes

**Background Information:**

In México, the *Day of the Dead* celebration held on November 1<sup>st</sup> pays homage to deceased loved ones. The day is also known as *All Saint's Day*, or *Los Angelitos*. An altar is set up in people's homes or at the burial site. Toys to entertain the young visiting souls are also laid at the altar offering. Make this Day of the Dead skeleton to decorate your classroom altar.

**Content Area(s):** Art

**State Goals:** Art #26

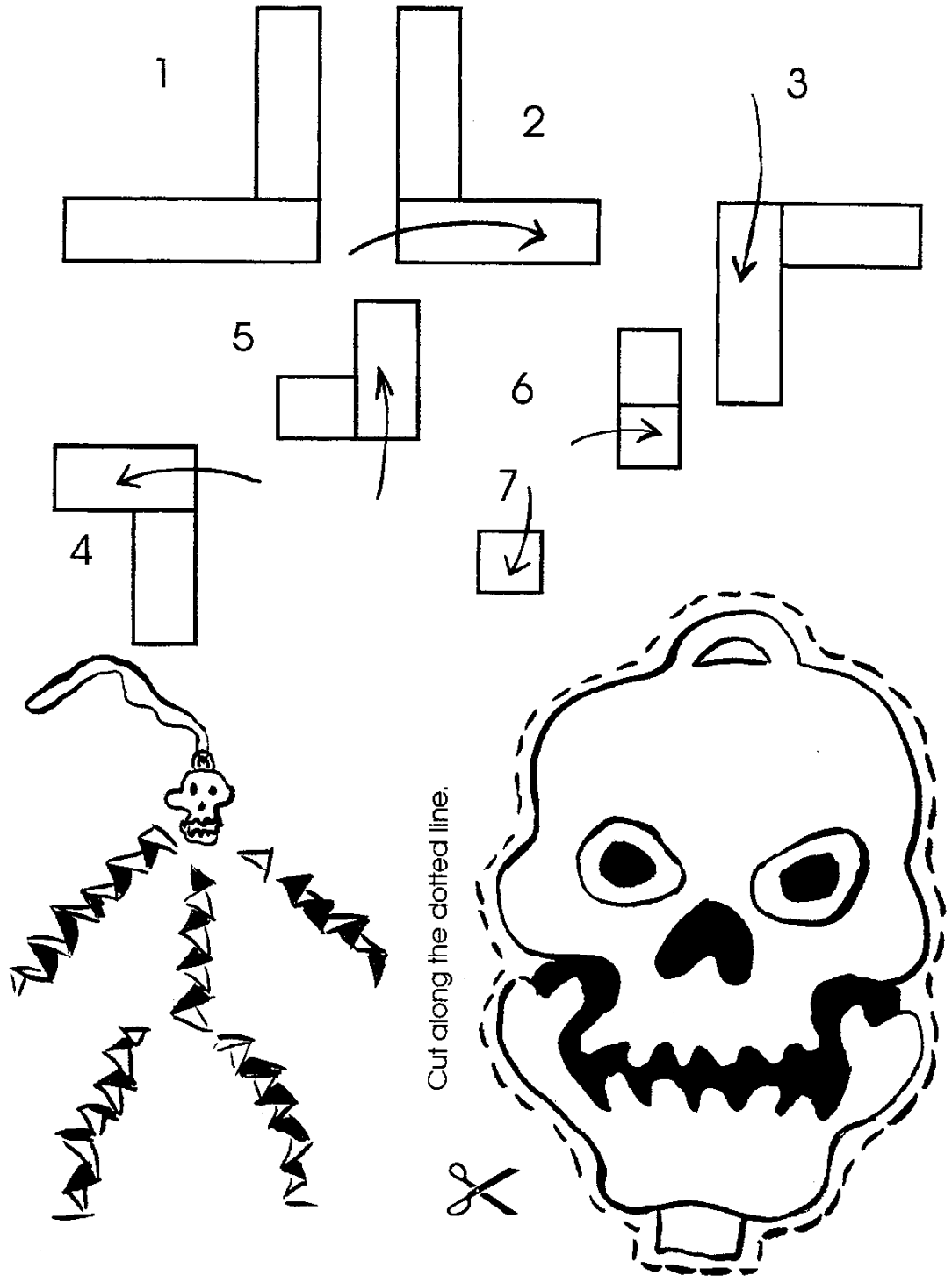
**Materials:**

12 X 18 inch black construction paper  
White construction paper  
Hole punch  
Yarn  
Scissors  
Glue

**Procedure:**

1. Cut construction paper in long slender strips to make the arms, legs and neck for your puppet. Each student needs: four strips, 1 X 6 inches long for the arms; two strips, 1 X 18 inches long for the legs; and two smaller strips, 1 X 6 inches long needed to make the puppet's neck.
2. Copy and cut the head for your puppet out of white construction paper.
3. Your skeleton will need catstep limbs. To make the catstep limbs, lay the ends of two same size paper strips at a right angle to one another. Put a small drop of glue at the top where the two strips meet, then fold back and forth until you come to the end of the strips. They should look interwoven and resemble a winding staircase. Glue the two ends together at the end.
4. Repeat step three to assemble all the arms, legs and neck for your puppet.
5. Glue the neck to the skeleton head. Glue the two arms and the two legs to the end of the neck.
6. Use a hole punch to make a hole at the top of the skeleton's head. Cut yarn the length you desire and tie it to the skeleton. Hang the skeleton near your Day of the Dead *ofrenda*.

# Paper Skeleton



**Activity Title:** String Puppet

**Time Frame:** 2 hours

**Background Information:**

Children in México enjoy making and playing with puppets. Follow the instructions below on how to make your own unique string puppet.

**Content Area(s):** Art

**State Goals:** Art #25-27

**Materials:**

Two nine inch paper plates  
Two smaller size paper plates  
Construction paper 12 X 18  
Pencil  
Scissors  
Glue  
Stiff cardboard

Crayons or Markers  
Hole puncher  
Yarn  
String  
Ruler  
Yarn needle w/large eye  
Two long wooden dowel rods

**Procedure:**

1. Cut construction paper in long slender strips to make the arms, legs and neck for your puppet. Each student needs: four strips, 1 X 6 inches long for the arms; two strips, 1 X 18 inches long for the legs; and two smaller strips, 1 X 6 inches long needed to make the puppet's neck.
2. Cut feet and hands for your puppet out of stiff cardboard.
3. Your puppet will need catstep limbs. To make the catstep limbs, lay the ends of two same size paper strips at a right angle to one another. Put a small drop of glue at the top where the two strips meet, then fold back and forth until you come to the end of the strips. They should look interwoven and resemble a winding staircase. Glue the two ends together at the end.
4. Repeat step three to assemble all the arms, legs and neck for your puppet.
5. To make the head of your puppet, glue one end of the catstep neck to the bottom rim of the small plate gluing it on the inside, or eating side.
6. Carefully put glue around the inside rim of the second small plate. With the eating sides facing each other, glue both paper plates together to hide the top edge of the neck.
7. To make the puppet's body, glue the other end of the neck to the inside rim of the 9 inch paper plate.
8. Position the arms and legs where you want them and glue those to the inside rim of the 9 inch paper plate as well.

9. Carefully put glue around the inside rim of the second 9 inch plate. With the eating sides facing each other, glue both paper plates together to hide the edges of the arms and legs.
10. Glue the hands and shoes at the end of the arms and legs respectively.
11. Color or paint the face, hands, body and shoes.
12. To make the hair, punch holes around the edge of the face, reserving one hole at the top for hanging. Push a loop of doubled yarn through each hole from back to front. Draw the ends through the loop and tighten. Style the hair as desired.
13. To make your puppet movable, thread yarn through a yarn needle. Run it through the hole you have reserved and tie a knot at the end closest to the puppet's head.
14. Make a crossbar to maneuver your puppet by gluing two long wooden dowel rods together in an "X" shape. Secure the joint between the rods with string for added strength. Connect the head to the crossbar with the string tied to the puppet's head.
15. If the crossbar is long enough, you may want to attach the arms and legs to the wooden dowel rods to make your puppet dance. Simply measure the string length you need with a ruler. Cut the string to length. Use the yarn and yarn needle to thread it through one hand. Tie the top of the string to the crossbar and then secure the string to the hand with a tight knot. Repeat this step for each hand and foot.
16. To operate your string puppet, move the crossbar up, down and sideways.
17. Enjoy your creation by putting on a play using the puppets your class has created!

**Activity Title:** Make a Three King's Crown

**Time Frame:** 30 minutes

**Background Information:**

Three King's Day, or, *Día de Los Reyes Magos*, is widely celebrated in Latin America and in México. This day commemorates the biblical story of Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus. It was written long ago that three kings saw a shining star in the sky indicating that a great event had occurred on earth. The three kings, Melchor, Gaspar and Balthazar, came bearing gifts from their far away lands and were being led by the shining star. They arrived at a stable in the small town of Bethlehem 12 days after the birth of baby Jesus. That is why, Three King's Day is celebrated every year on January 6<sup>th</sup>, exactly twelve days after Christmas. On this special day, children put their shoes outside their doors or window ledges and await the gifts and treats the Three Kings will have left for them.

**Content Area(s):** Social Science and Art

**State Goals:** Art #26-27

**Materials:**

Sentence strips  
Crayons or markers  
Scissors  
Stapler and staples  
Glitter  
Clear tape

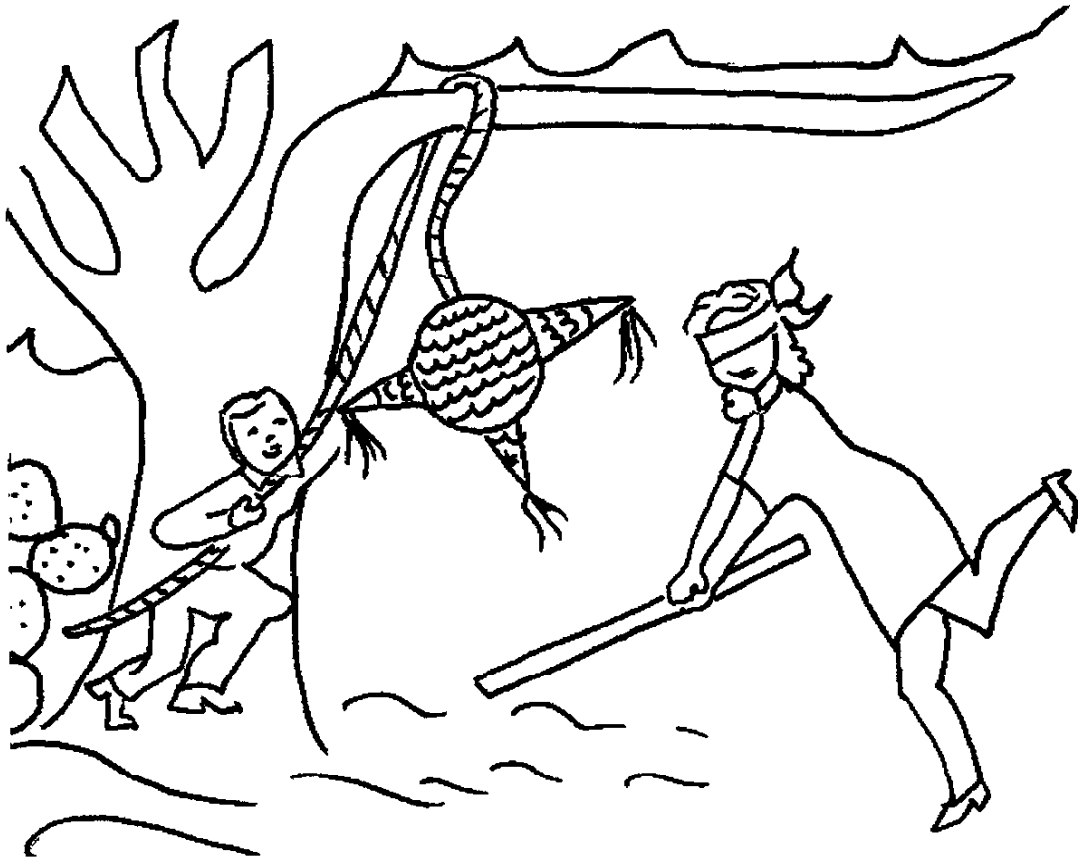
**Procedure:**

1. Use one sentence strip for each child.
2. Create the crown by zig-zagging the top edge of the sentence strip.
3. Adjust the sentence strip to fit the child's head and cut to length. Use strong tape or staples to secure the crown.
4. Use crayons, markers and glitter to decorate.

# Las Posadas



# La Piñata



# Word Search

Find the words associated with Modern México

D	O	R	O	Z	C	O	S	E	C
I	A	R	T	A	L	L	I	V	A
A	C	A	L	L	E	S	Q	S	R
Z	A	P	A	T	A	Q	U	L	D
N	M	U	R	A	L	S	E	I	E
R	E	V	O	L	U	T	I	O	N
O	P	O	S	A	D	A	R	N	A
K	Z	T	A	M	A	Y	O	X	S
N	A	M	A	T	E	O	S	P	Y

ART

CALLES

CÁRDENAS

DÍAZ

MATEOS

MURALS

OROZCO

POSADA

REVOLUTION

SIQUEIROS

TAMAYO

VILLA

ZAPATA



# Songs

# A la Rueda de San Miguel

C F C F  
A la rue - da <sup>(rueda)</sup> de San Mi - guel, <sup>(San Miguel)</sup> to - dos

C G7 C F  
tra - en su ca - ja de miel. A lo ma -

C F C F  
du - ro, a lo ma - du - ro, que se vol -

C G7 rit. C  
te - e (Pan - cho) de bu - rro

# Para Quebrar la Piñata

## Verse



1. En las no - ches de po - sa - da, la pi -  
 2. Se rom - pió ya la pi - ña - ta a ho - ra



ña - ta es lo me - jor, y los ni - ños más a -  
 sí vá - yan - se yen - do, pe - ro no va - yan di -



le - gres le pe - gan con gran fer - vor.  
 cien - do: "A mí na - da me to - có."

## Refrain



Da - le, da - le, da - le, no pier - das el ti - no,  
 A ho - ra sí mu - cha - chos, vá - yan - se a dor - mir,



mi - de la dis - tan - cia, que hay en el ca - mi - no.  
 pa - ra que ma - ña - na los de - jen ve - nir.



Que si no le das de un pa - lo - te pi - no,  
 A ho - ra sí mu - cha - chos, vá - yan - se a dor - mir,



por - que tie - nes ca - ra de pu - ro pe - pi - no.  
 pa - ra que ma - ña - na los de - jen ve - nir.

# Las Mañanitas

F C7  
És-tas son las ma - ña - ni - tas que can -

F B♭ F  
ta - ba\_el Rey Da - vid, a las mu - cha-chas bo -

Dm F Gm C7  
ni - tas se las can - ta - mos a -

F C7 F  
sí: Des - pier - ta, mi bien, des - pier - ta, mi -

C7 F B♭  
ra que ya\_a-me - ne - ció, Ya los pa - ja - ri - tos

F Gm C7 F  
can - tan, la lu - na ya se me - tió.

# Los Pollitos

C G C

1. Los pol - lli - tos di - cen:  
 2. La ga - lli - na bus - ca  
 3. Ba - jo sus dos a - las,

F G7 C

"Pí - o, pí - o, pí - o."  
 el ma - íz y el tri - go,  
 a - cu - rru - ca - di - tos,

G7 C

cuan - do tie - nen ham - bre,  
 les da la co - mi - da  
 has - ta el - ot - ro dí - a

G7 C

cuan - do tie - nen frí - o.  
 y les pres - ta\_a - bri - go.  
 duer - men los po - lli - tos.

# Noche de Paz



1.No-che de paz, no-che de\_a-mor, to-do duer-me\_en  
 2.No-che de paz, no-che de\_a-mor, to-do duer-me\_en  
 3.Si - lent night, Ho - ly night, all is calm



re - de - dor, En - tre los as-tros que es - par - cen su luz,  
 re - de - dor, So - bre el San - to Ni - ño Je - sús,  
 all is bright, Round yon vir - gin mo - ther and child,



vie-ne an-nun-cian-do al Ni - ño Je - sús, Bri-lla la es-tre-lla de  
 un - na es - tre - lla es par - ce su luz, - Bri - lla so - bre el  
 Ho - ly in - fant so ten - der and mild, Sleep in hea - ven - ly



paz, \_\_\_\_\_ Bri - lla es - tre - lla de paz.  
 Rey, \_\_\_\_\_ Bri - lla so - bre el Rey.  
 peace, \_\_\_\_\_ Sleep in hea - ven - ly peace.

# Vamos a la Mar



1. Va - mos a la mar, tum tum,  
2. Va - mos a la mar, tum tum,



a co - mer pes - ca - do, tum tum;  
a co - mer pes - ca - do, tum tum;



bo - ca co - lo - ra - da, tum tum,  
fri - ti - to y\_a - sa - do, tum tum,



fri - ti - to y\_a - sa - do, tum tum.  
en sar - tén de pa - lo, tum tum.

# El Lobo

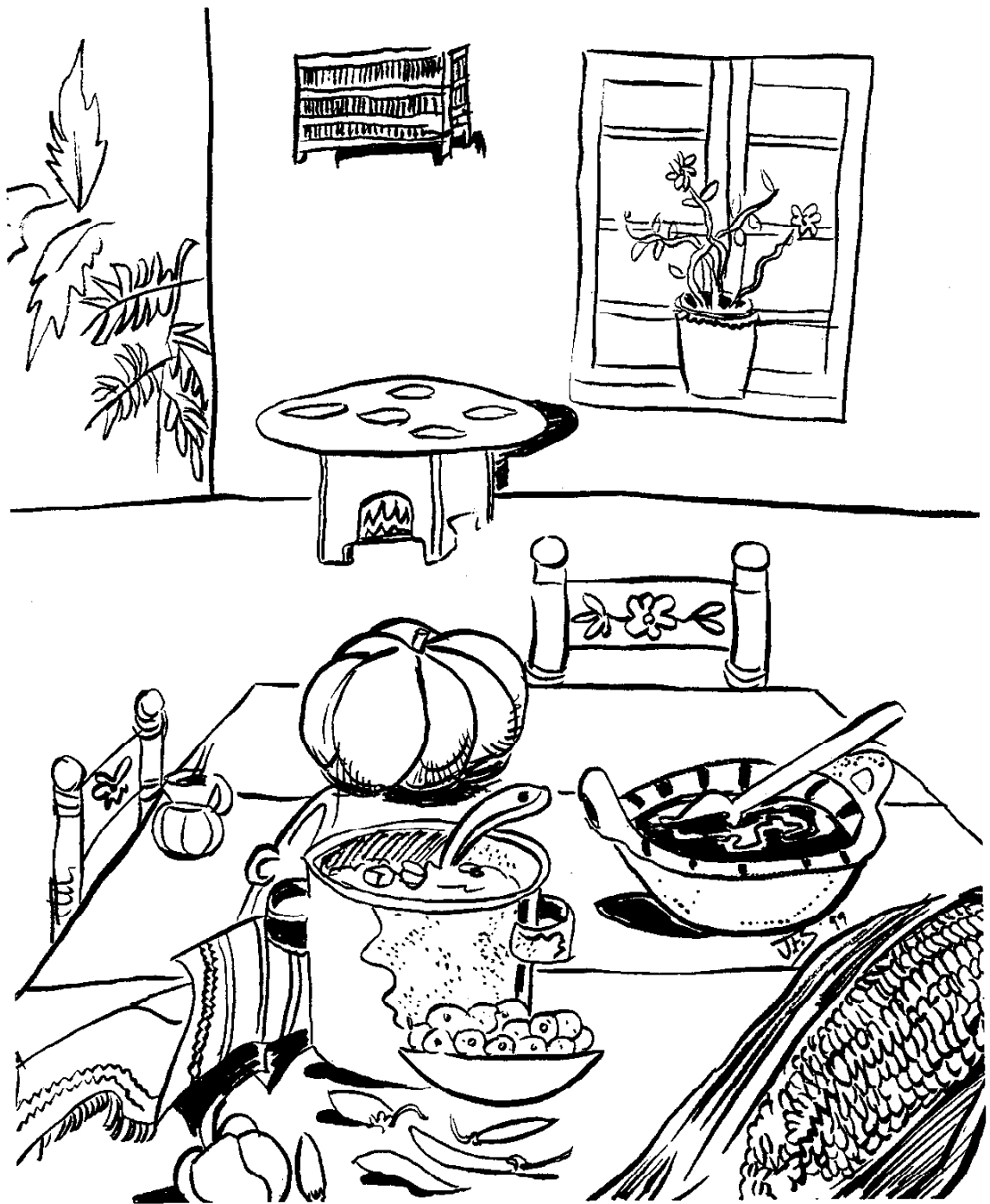
G

En - tre - mos en el bos - que

D G D7 G D7

mien-tras el lo - bo no\_es-tá. ¿Lo - bo, es - tás?

Juguemos en el bosque  
mientras que el lobo no está  
porque si el lobo aparece  
a todos nos comerá  
Lobo, ¿estas ahí?



# Food

## **Agua de Horchata / Rice Drink**

---

- 1½ gallon of water
- ½ cup white long grain rice
- 1 small can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 small can evaporated milk
- ground cinnamon
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 2 teaspoons vanilla

In a large bowl, soak the rice in 4 cups of water with the cinnamon sticks overnight. Next day, blend the mixture in the blender. Strain the mixture into a pitcher and pour the remaining water that had not been used, add the sweetened condensed milk, evaporated milk, and vanilla. Add sugar to taste.

## **Arroz a la Mexicana / Mexican Rice**

---

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2 cups long grain rice | 2 ½ cups water        |
| 2 tomatoes             | 1 small sprig parsley |
| 1 tomato               | ½ cup chopped carrots |
| 1/3 onion              | ½ cup green peas      |
| 1 whole clove garlic   | 1/3 cup oil           |

Rinse the rice in warm water and drain. In a blender, puree the tomatoes, onion, and garlic. Heat oil in a large skillet, brown the rice, stirring occasionally. Pour the puree over the rice and add the parsley, allow it to simmer for 5 minutes. Pour in the 2 ½ cups of water, the chopped carrots, and the green peas and let it come to a boil. When the mixture comes to a boil, cover, and cook over low heat for 20 minutes or until liquid has been absorbed. Keep warm until ready to serve.

## **Arroz con Leche / Rice Pudding**

---

- |                       |                                      |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 cup long grain rice | 1 ½ cups sugar                       |
| 3 cups water          | 1/3 cup raisins                      |
| 1 stick cinnamon      | 1 teaspoon vanilla extract           |
| 5 cups of milk        | Ground cinnamon & raisins to garnish |

Place water in a large saucepan with the long grain rice and a cinnamon stick. Bring to a boil, lower the temperature, stirring until most of the water has been

absorbed. Stir in the sugar and milk and cook, stirring constantly, until the mixture thickens. Add the raisins and vanilla and cook for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and transfer to a platter. Garnish with raisins and ground cinnamon. Store in refrigerator until ready to serve.

Song:           Arroz con leche, me quiero casar  
                  Con una viudita de la capital,  
                  Que sepa coseer, que sepa bordar.  
                  Que sepa las tablas de multiplicar,  
                  2x2 son 4, 4 y 2 son 6  
                  7 y 2 son 8 y 8, 16.

### **Atole de Leche / Cornmeal Milk**

2 cups water  
½ cup masa or cornmeal found in Mexican grocery stores)  
2 cinnamon sticks  
1 cup sugar or piloncillo  
½ gallon milk

In a small container blend water and masa. Place the mixture in a pot, add cinnamon sticks and bring to a boil. Add milk and sugar (or piloncillo); bring to a boil stirring constantly. Remove cinnamon sticks and serve hot.

### **Buñuelos / Pancake Fritters**

1 cup water  
4 cups all purpose flour  
2 eggs  
2 tablespoons sugar  
2 tablespoons shortening  
Vegetable oil for frying  
4 tomatillo leaves or orange leaves

Boil the water with tomatillo leaves or orange leaves. Remove the leaves and set the water aside. Place the flour in a large bowl, add eggs, sugar and shortening. Mix ingredients using your fingers. Add the reserved water little at a time, mixing, and kneading with your hands until dough is pliable.

Place the dough in a grease glass bowl, cover, and let sit for half-hour.

Divide the dough into 24 balls.

Flour a working surface and a rolling pin. Roll out each ball, stretch the dough as far as you can without breaking it.

Heat some oil in a large skillet. When the oil is well heated, add a buñuelo. When the buñuelo has puffed up, turn over, and permit the other side to lightly brown. Transfer to a plate covered with paper towels to absorb excess oil. Repeat this with the remaining dough.  
Serve the buñuelo warm, sprinkle sugar and pour some sugar syrup.

### **Cacahuates Endiablados / Spicy Nut Mix**

---

1/3 cup margarine, melted  
1 tablespoon Tabasco sauce  
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 pound peanuts

Preheat the oven at 350\* F. Combine the margarine, Tabasco sauce, pepper, and salt in a small bowl. Place the nuts in a pan over the mixture, and toss to coat. Spread the nuts in a single layer and bake for 20 minutes. Drain in a paper towel.

### **Café de Olla / Brewed Coffee**

---

5 cups water  
1/2 cup coarsely ground dark-roasted coffee (Viennese-roast coffee)  
4 oz. piloncillo (raw sugar) found in Mexican grocery stores  
    or 1/2 cup dark brown sugar  
2 sticks of cinnamon

In a saucepan, combine the water, sugar, and cinnamon. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Stir coffee, remove from heat, cover. Strain the coffee through a fine sieve. Place in a coffee server. Serve.

### **Calabacitas con Elote / Squash with Corn**

---

2 tomatoes, finely chopped  
1 small onion, finely chopped  
3 ears of corn (remove the kernels)  
1 clove of garlic, finely chopped  
2 pounds of zucchini, chopped  
3 tablespoons of vegetable oil  
Cilantro (optional) and salt to taste

In a skillet heat the vegetable oil, add the garlic and onion and sauté over medium heat. Add the zucchini and corn and sauté for a few minutes, stirring occasionally for two minutes. Add the tomatoes and cook over low heat until the mixture begins to bubble. Add the cilantro and salt; lower the heat and cover. Cook for 5 minutes until the zucchini is tender.

### **Chiles Rellenos / Stuffed Peppers**

---

8 large poblano peppers  
2 pounds mozzarella  
4 eggs, whites and yolk separated  
1/3 cup flour  
vegetable oil for frying

Roast poblano peppers. Remove skin. Make a slit in the side of the roasted pepper; carefully remove the seeds with your fingers. Loosely stuff the chiles with the mozzarella cheese and seal with toothpicks or thread.

In a large bowl, beat the egg whites to soft peaks. Gently beat in the egg yolks, one at a time. Place the remaining 1/2 cup flour on a plate. Roll the chiles in the flour, gently patting off the excess. Pick up a chile by its stem and dip into the egg mixture. Carefully place in the hot oil and repeat until the pan is full. Fry until the chiles are brown on one side and turn to brown the other sides. Transfer to paper towels to drain. Keep warm on a baking sheet in the oven while you fry the remaining chiles.

### **Chocolate / Hot Chocolate**

---

1/2 gallon of milk  
8 ounces of chocolate (unsweetened)  
1/4 cup of sugar

Use a large pot. Place milk, chocolate, and sugar. Stir constantly over low heat with a whisk until frothy. Serve.

## **Enchiladas Verdes / Green Enchiladas**

---

12 tortillas	2 cups green tomatoes
2 cups cooked chicken	4 chiles serranos
1 large onion, finely chopped	1 clove garlic
1/2 cup sour cream	1 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup farmer cheese, well crumbled	1/3 cup milk
oven proof serving dish (8½x13x2)	oil to fry

Blend the green tomatoes with the chiles serranos, garlic, salt and milk until smooth. In a frying pan heat 2 tablespoons of oil and sauce for 5 minutes. Remove from heat, add the sour cream, and set aside.

In another frying pan fry the tortillas, one by one, and place in a paper towel to drain the excess oil.

Dip the tortillas into the sauce. Fill each one with some chicken, roll and place side by side in the ovenproof serving dish. Continue this process until all tortillas have been filled. Pour the remaining sauce over the enchiladas. Garnish with the onion, cheese, sour cream and serve.

## **Frijoles de Olla / Baked Beans**

---

1 pound pinto beans  
6 cups water  
2 garlic cloves  
2 tablespoons salt  
1 large onion, cut in half

Rinse beans in a colander. Pour water in a large pot bring it to boil. Place beans, garlic cloves, salt and onion. Simmer over low heat for two hours until beans are tender.

## **Frijoles Refritos / Refried Beans**

---

1/2 cup vegetable oil  
1/2 cup onion, cut into small chunks  
4 cups frijoles de la olla with their liquid  
*queso fresco*  
fried tortilla chips

Heat vegetable oil in a frying pan, add the onion and sauté until onions are golden brown. Add half of the beans with their liquid and mash in the pan with

a potato masher. Gradually add the remaining beans and liquid and continue mashing to make a coarse puree. Stir and cook over medium high heat until the puree begins to dry out. Transfer to a warm platter sprinkle with cheese and garnish with tortilla chips.

### **Guacamole / Guacamole**

---

2 ripe avocados  
2 fresh tomatoes, finely chopped  
2 spoons cilantro, finely chopped  
¼ chopped onion (optional)  
2 tablespoons of lime juice

Cut the avocados, remove the seed. Scoop the avocado from the skins. Add the tomatoes, cilantro, chopped onion, lime juice and mix. Place mixture on a bowl and place tortilla chips around and serve.

### **Melado de Piloncillo / Piloncillo Syrup for Buñuelos**

---

3 cups water  
2 cones piloncillo (raw sugar) found in Mexican grocery stores  
2 cinnamon sticks  
1 orange peels from one whole orange  
½ teaspoon aniseed

Heat the water in a saucepan, add the aniseed, *piloncillo*, cinnamon sticks, orange peel and boil for 20 minutes. Stir, lower the heat for 5 more minutes. Pour syrup over bunuelos

### **Pico de Gallo / Avocado Sauce**

---

2 avocados  
1 white onion  
2 tomatoes  
2 teaspoons lemon juice  
Fresh cilantro (optional)  
Salt

Cut in small squares the avocados and tomatoes. Chop the onion and cilantro finely. Mix all chopped ingredients in a bowl. Add lemon juice and salt to taste.

## **Salsa Picada / Red Sauce**

---

2 large tomatoes, chopped  
1 onion, chopped  
2 jalapeno peppers  
Cilantro (optional)  
1 lime  
Salt

Mix tomatoes, onion, jalapeno, cilantro and squeeze lime juice. Add salt to serve.

## **Salsa Verde / Green Salsa**

---

1 pound tomatillos, husked removed and washed  
2 to 4 jalapeño chiles  
½ medium onion  
Cilantro  
Salt  
3 cups water

Place the tomatillos and jalapenos in a small saucepan with the 3 cups of water. Bring them to a simmer. Pour the tomatillos, jalapenos, and onion cilantro in a blender. Puree for about 2 minutes until smooth. Salt to taste. Pour in a sealed container. Store in the refrigerator until ready to use.

## **Sopes / Boat Floats**

---

2 cups of masa (masa packages can be found at any Mexican grocery store)  
½ cup vegetable oil  
1 cup shredded lettuce  
1 cup sour cream  
1 cup queso fresco  
½ cup onion  
1 can of refried beans (see refried beans)  
1 cup salsa (see salsa)

Prepare masa as the package indicates. Once masa dough is ready make balls the size of a small apple. Flatten with your hands forming round thick tortillas. Place the sope on a hot grill or flat pan, turn over when you see the edges begin to dry out (approximately 45 seconds). After 45 seconds, remove from pan

pinch the edges of the sope with your fingers. Follow this procedure until all your masa has been used. Wrap in a clean cloth and set aside. This can be done a few hours before serving.

When ready to be served, heat a frying pan, lightly add some vegetable oil and brown a sope, remove from the heat. Spread each sope with the toppings such as *frijoles refritos*, lettuce, onion, sour cream, and *salsa*. The toppings of the sopas can vary depending on one's taste.

### **Tortillas de Maíz / Corn Tortillas**

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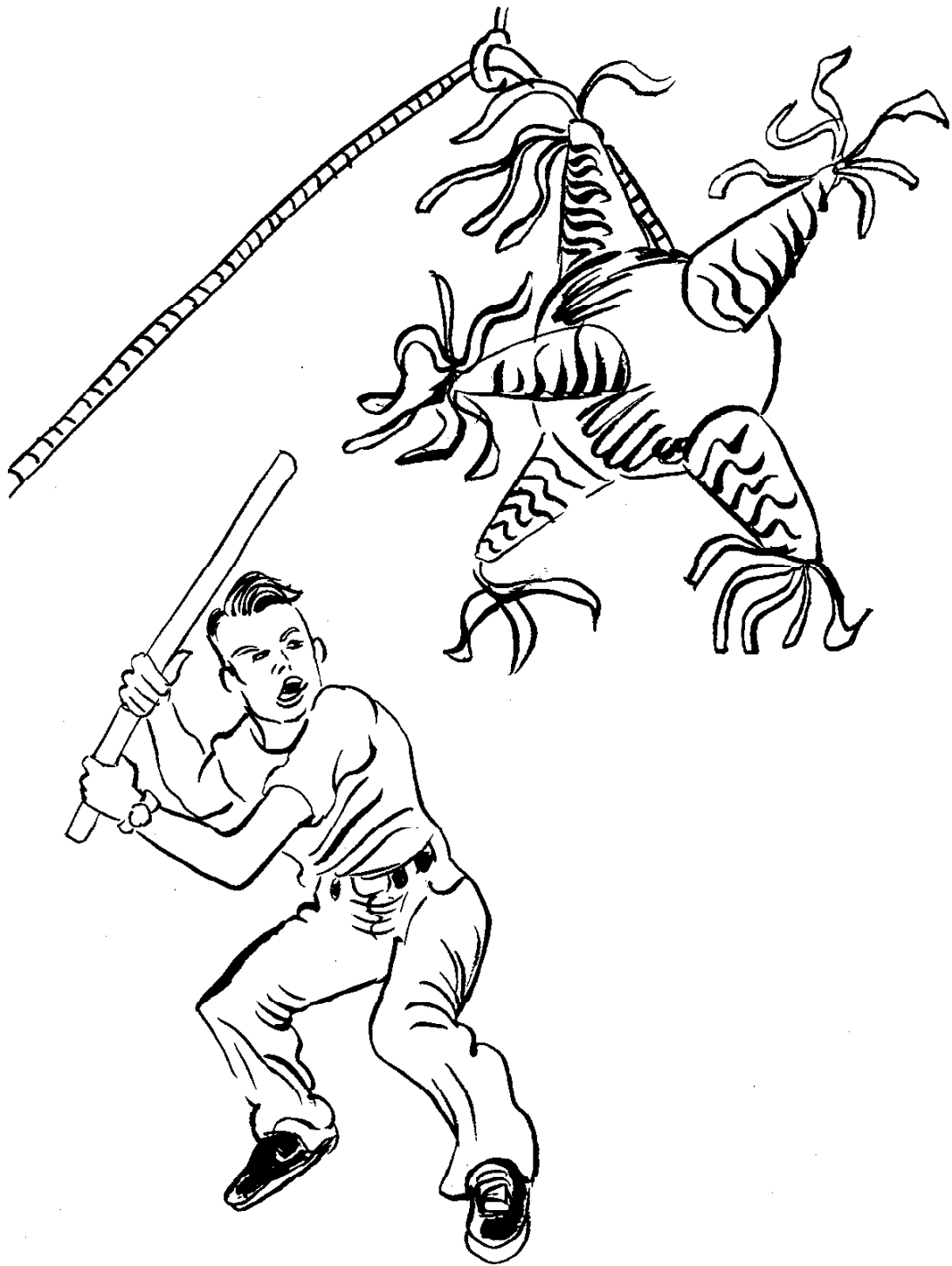
2 cups harina de masa (ground cornmeal found in Mexican grocery stores)

1 ½ cups warm water

Wax paper

Roller

Take ingredients and mix, form dough into balls about the size of a small golf ball. Place a ball between waxed paper and roll into thin round pancakes. Gently remove and place in a hot grill or flat frying pan. Turn tortilla when lightly brown and serve.



# Holidays

## **January 6 - Día de los Reyes Magos / Three Kings Day**

---

This is an important religious holiday celebrated in México and in most Latin American countries. It is similar to Christmas Day because it makes reference to the biblical story of Jesus and the three visitors he receives upon his birth. These visitors went to a stable in the small town of Bethlehem from far away lands bearing gifts. Each king had an affinity towards astronomy. They followed a shining star, which led them to the manger. The Three King's were Melchor, Gaspar, and Balthazar. They arrived 12 days after the birth of baby Jesus. Since then, the day of the Three Kings, or *El Día de los Reyes Magos*, is celebrated 12 days after Christmas.

On the eve of the fifth of January, children place their shoes on the doorsteps or window ledges of their homes for the Three Kings to fill with gifts. In the morning, children wake up and find gifts or toys inside their shoes. Later in the day, families gather to cut a round ring cake called *Rosca de Reyes*. It is decorated with various fruit toppings such as cherries and/or pineapple slices. The *Rosca* contains small toys or trinkets. It is a Mexican custom that if anyone finds the plastic baby Jesus they are responsible for organizing and holding a party on the Day of the Candelaria on the second of February.

## **February 24 - Día de la Bandera Mexicana / Mexican Flag Day**

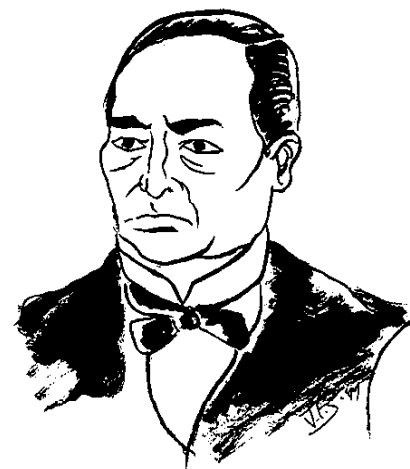
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This day commemorates the creation of the Mexican Flag. The national emblem has changed throughout time along with the battles and struggles that have taken place in México. The flag is tri-colored; green, white and red. The green represents independence, the white represents religion and the red represents unity. Legend has it that the Aztec god Huitzilopochtli told the wandering Mexica tribe to settle where they found an eagle perched on a cactus devouring a serpent in his mouth. This symbol is now the national emblem and sits in the center of the flag.

## **March 21 - Natalicio de Benito Juárez / Birth of Benito Juárez**

---

México's most beloved leader, Benito Juárez, of Zapotec origin, was responsible for initiating many governmental reforms. He was born on March 21<sup>st</sup> in 1806, in the village of San Pablo Guelatao, near Oaxaca. One of his greatest accomplishments was to help improve the condition of the Mexican lower



class. He had much in common with his contemporary, Abraham Lincoln. Both men were of humble origins and held public office as a sacred trust. He encouraged honesty in public administration and discouraged the patronage system within the government. He is most famous for this quote: "El respeto al derecho ajeno es la paz," which translates to, "respecting other people's rights is peace."

### **April 30 - Día del Niño / Day of the Child**

---

This special day celebrated in Latin American countries and México honors all children. Children and their families enjoy each other's company. Parents and adults alike prepare games and special foods for the children. At parks, schools and their homes, young children play games and receive gifts or treats. Older children dress up as young children and parade in infantile costumes. All children are considered special and are held in high esteem. The Latin American society realizes that children need to be nurtured, respected and cared for so that they grow up to be responsible citizens.

### **May 5 - Cinco de Mayo or Batalla de Puebla / Battle of Puebla**

---

This popular Mexican holiday commemorates the victory of the Mexicans over French invaders at the Battle of Puebla on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 1862. The Mexican army, led by Ignacio Zaragoza, defeated the French army sent to México by Emperor Napoleon III. This holiday is a celebration of Mexican resistance to outside forces. It is not celebrated heavily in the country of México, but it is becoming a popular day in the United States celebrated by people of all races and cultures.

### **May 10 - Día de las Madres / Mother's Day**

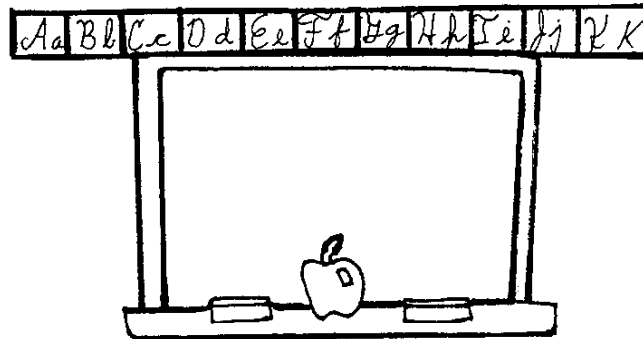
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Mother's Day is especially significant in México. It is always celebrated on May 10<sup>th</sup>. All mothers are honored and held in high esteem. They are invited to the schools to participate and listen to their children recite poems, short stories and songs in their honor. Children spend time creating special hand-made crafts lovingly decorated and made of household items.



## May 15 - Día del Maestro / Teacher Appreciation Day

---



Teacher Appreciation Day is celebrated throughout the country of México. Teaching is viewed as the cornerstone of any profession, for without teachers, no professions can exist. Students organize a luncheon or potluck dinner to show their appreciation for their highly respected educators, demonstrating their gratitude in many different ways: through song, dramatizations and dances.

## September 15 - Día de la Independencia / Mexican Independence Day

---

This day commemorates the beginning of the revolt against Spanish rule in 1810. Every year, on September 16<sup>th</sup>, México's Independence Day, the president stands on the balcony of the Government Palace in México City and before thousands of people in the plaza below him, shouts the traditional Grito: *¡Viva la libertad! ¡Viva la Independencia! ¡Viva México!*

México's National Anthem was written more than one hundred years ago. Francisco González Bocanegra wrote the lyrics and Jaime Nuno, a Spanish musician, composed the accompanying music. The National Anthem was first sung on September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1854. The National Anthem is taught and sung in schools in the country of México.



## Himno Nacional Mexicano

Coro:  
Mexicanos, al grito de guerra.  
El acero aprestad y el bridón.  
Y retiemble en sus centros la tierra.  
Al sonoro rugir del cañón.

¡Ciña Oh Patria! Tus sienas de oliva  
De La Paz el arcangel divino,  
Que en el cielo tu eterno destino  
Por el dedo de Dios se escribió.  
Mas si osare un extraño enemigo  
Profanar con su planta y tu suelo,  
¡Piensa oh Patria! Querida que el cielo  
Un soldado en cada hijo te dio.

## Mexican National Anthem

Chorus:  
Mexicans at the cry of war.  
Get ready your sword and horse.  
Let the foundation of the land resound.  
To the roar of the cannon.

Countryland, crowned with olive branch  
Of peace by the divine archangel,  
For in heaven your eternal destiny  
Was written by the finger of God.  
If a foreign enemy dares  
To profane your land with his foot,  
Consider, Countryland, that heaven  
Has given you a soldier in each son.

## October 12 - Día de la Raza / Columbus Day

---

This day is celebrated in México and in many other countries in Latin America. It commemorates Cristopher Columbus, who discovered America in 1492. There are a number of cities, streets and countries that are named after him. Yet the irony exists as to why the country he "discovered" doesn't bear his name. The name America was given to this country after an Italian named Amerigo Vespuccio who first noticed that Christopher Columbus had discovered a new continent, and not reached India, which had been his intended destination. Christopher Columbus died not knowing he had discovered a new continent.



For Mexicans and people of other Latin American countries October 12<sup>th</sup> has a different meaning. The celebration also bears the name, *Día de la Raza*. It commemorates the creation of a new race of people when Christopher Columbus arrived in the New World. He brought with him the language and customs of Spain, his home country. Columbus sailed with men only, unlike other Europeans who would sail with their families later on. The men he brought along proceeded to inter-marry with the indigenous cultures of the new land, thus creating a new race.

After the encounter between the worlds of the Spaniards and the indigenous peoples of the Americas, México's population became a mixture of new races, namely that of the *mestizo*, *mulatto*, and *criollo*. A *mestizo* is a person of Spanish and indigenous roots. *Mulattos* is a person of Spanish and African roots; Africans came as slaves brought on boats by the Spaniards to work in the New World. *Criollos* is a person of Spanish descent born in the Americas. Presently, there are very few people in México that have maintained their indigenous language and customs. The Mayan customs and language, however, have been preserved with the *Huichol* Indians in northeast México and the *Totonacas* in eastern México.

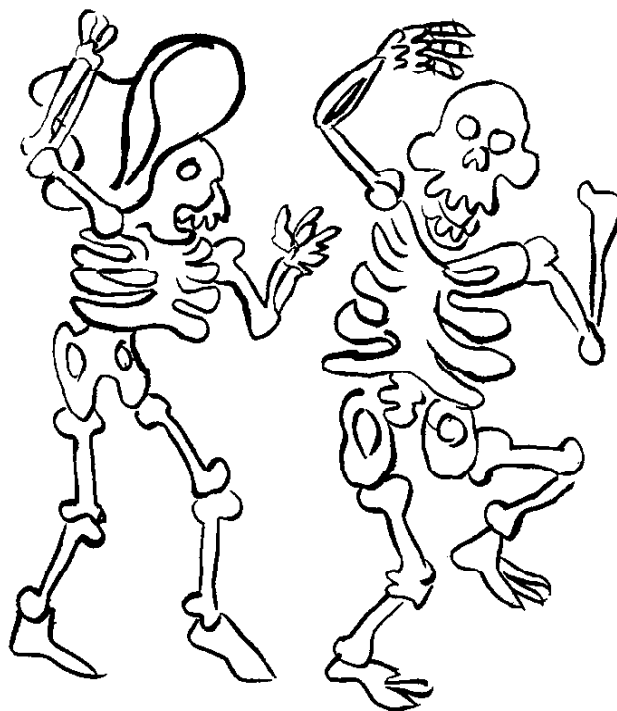
## **November 1 and 2 - Día de los Muertos / Day of the Dead**

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Festivals and celebrations to honor the dead were held in the ninth, tenth, and fourteenth month of the Aztec calendar (the fourteenth month coincides with the month of November, as we know it). In the indigenous world, death was not feared. It was linked continuously with life and was represented by many gods. The celebrations were intended not just for remembering the dead, but to reflect that life is simply a movement toward your own death. Death was simply a state in the cycle of life, something to laugh at, to mock, but not to fear.

November 2<sup>nd</sup> is known as the Day of the Dead, or All Souls' Day. November 1<sup>st</sup> commemorates dead loved ones and is called All Saints' Day, or *Los Angelitos*. It is believed that divine consent is given to the deceased to go and visit with their relatives and friends on earth on these days. People prepare to welcome the souls by cutting *papel picado*, banners from tissue paper, baking *pan de muerto*, a special Day of the Dead bread, and making toy gifts and candy skulls.

An *ofrenda*, or offering, is constructed in the form of an altar. The altar is set up inside the home, or at the burial site. Adornment varies according to the village and regional traditions.



A traditional offering has:

- ❖ *photographs* of the deceased being remembered
- ❖ *cempazuchil*, day of the dead flowers
- ❖ *copal*, a resinous incense burning in a censer
- ❖ *glass of water*, a must for the thirsty traveler
- ❖ *religious images*, those in which the deceased was especially devout
- ❖ *candles*, to guide their path
- ❖ *sugar skulls*, with the names of the people waiting for them on earth
- ❖ *papel picado*, cut paper banners
- ❖ *pan de muerto*, day of the dead bread decorated with bones
- ❖ *personal mementos* the deceased enjoyed in life such as cigarettes, special meals and other favorite objects.

## **November 20 - Revolución Mexicana / The Mexican Revolution**

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The Mexican Revolution began as a movement by the lower class people. Extremely needy and neglected by the government, the people fought for improved social conditions. Mexicans celebrate the anniversary of the 1910 Revolution and its principal leaders: Don Francisco I. Madero, Francisco "Pancho" Villa, Álvaro Obregón, José María Pino Suárez, Don Venustiano Carranza, Emiliano Zapata, and others who had the courage and valor to confront the powerful army established by Porfirio Díaz and his thirty-year dictatorship.



## **December 12 - Día de la Virgen de Guadalupe / Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe**

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This is one of the most important Catholic religious feasts for Mexicans. On this day, Mexicans celebrate the feast of their patron saint, *La Virgen de Guadalupe*, by attending an early morning mass. People bring bouquets of roses and place them at the foot of the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Travelers devoted to Our Lady of Guadalupe from México and all over the world make a pilgrimage to her Basilica on this day. Traditional indigenous dances are performed along with mariachi musicians playing *Las Mañanitas* (Happy Birthday).

It is said that the Virgin appeared to Juan Diego, a native Indian who had converted to Christianity in 1531. The Virgin spoke to Juan Diego in his native language of Náhuatl. The Virgin had a brown complexion like that of the indigenous people of México. She instructed him to tell the bishop of the region to construct a church for her on Tepeyac Hill, the site where she appeared to Juan Diego on three different occasions. The bishop responded that he needed a sign from the lady who appeared to Juan Diego. The Lady of Guadalupe told Juan Diego to pick some roses growing nearby. Roses were not native to the area, yet Juan Diego found the roses and placed them in his cloak to show them to the bishop. When he arrived, he unfolded his cloak and the roses fell out to reveal the marvelous image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, which was imprinted on the cloak. To this day, scientists cannot explain how the impression was made.

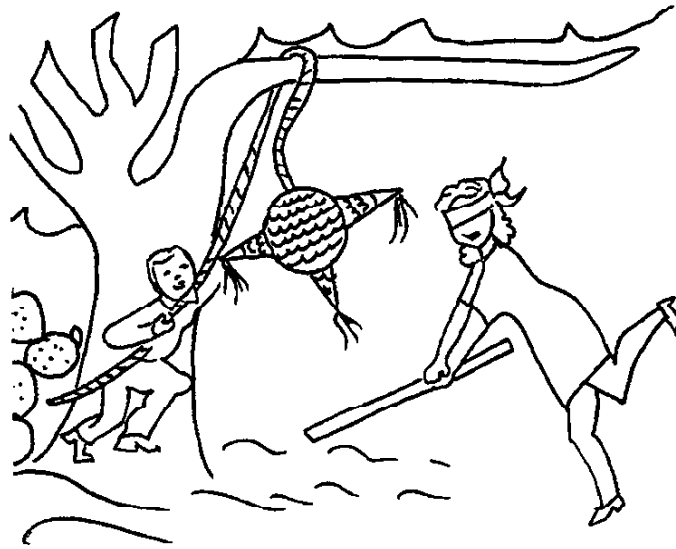
### **December 16–24 Las Posadas / Christmas Celebration**

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*Las Posadas* (The Shelters) is a Christian celebration that originated in México. They are celebrated daily for nine days prior to Christmas Eve. *Las Posadas* consists of the re-enactment of Mary and Joseph's search for shelter in Bethlehem. Special prayers and songs are recited during this re-enactment which stems from the Conquest period. The Catholic Church needed to convert the natives of the New World and one way of doing it was by retelling and re-enacting the events of the pilgrimage.



For a period of nine nights there is a re-enactment of the Holy Family's pilgrimage. Shelter is refused on the eighth night but the "keeper" offers his stable on the ninth night. A figure of a Christ child is placed in a manger and Christmas songs are sung followed by a children's game of a breaking *piñata*.



A *piñata* is a cardboard box or clay pot decorated with brightly colored tissue paper and streamers. It is filled with candy and treats that pour out when it is hit with a stick. Children and adults are blindfolded and take turns hitting the *piñata* until it breaks. The *piñata* represents Evil. The person blindfolded represents Faith. The spectators represent mankind's Faith and their battle with Evil. Onlookers chant songs during this festive practice.

# Information Center

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Christopher Columbus by Stephen Krensky

Con Mi Hermano/With my Brother by Eileen Roe

Diego by Jeanette and Jonah Winter (Murals)

The Discovery of the Americas by Betsy and Giulio Maestro

En 1492 by Jean Marzollo (Christopher Columbus)

Flame of Peace: A Tale of the Aztecs by Deborah Lattimore

Hello, Amigos! by Tricia Brown (Piñatas)

Hill of Fire by Thomas P. Lewis (Volcanoes)

Hooray, A Piñata! by Elisa Kleven

Josefina by Jeanette Winter (Art: clay)

Journey of the Nightly Jaguar by Burton Albert (Mayan tale)

The Legend of the Poinsetta by Tomie de Paola

Maya's Children: The Story of La Llorona by Rudolfo Anaya

Mayeros: A Yucatec Maya Family by George Ancona

México: The Geography by Laura Conlon

Mexican Independence Day and Cinco de Mayo by Dianne MacMillan

Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla: Father of Mexican Independence by Frank DeVarona

Musicians of the Sun by Gerald McDermott (Aztecs)

Pablo Remembers: The Fiesta of the Day of the Dead by George Ancona

Pedro's Journal by Pam Conrad (Christopher Columbus)

Sad Night: The Story of an Aztec Victory and a Spanish Loss by Sally Mathews

Saturday Market by Patricia Grossman

Say Hola to Spanish by Susan Middleton Elya

The Spirit of Tío Fernando by Janice Levy (Day of the Dead)

Soccer Sam by Jean Marzollo

Three Little Javelinas by Susan Lowell

Too Many Tamales by Gary Soto

Village Basket Weaver by Jonathan London

Viva México: A Story of Benito Juárez by Argentina Palacios

Volcanoes & Earthquakes by Patricia Lauber

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Alivio Medical Center  
2355 S. Western Ave  
Chicago, IL 60608  
(773) 650-1202

American Spanish Institute (ASI)  
2619 W. Armitage Ave  
Chicago, IL 60647  
(773) 278-5130

Archdiocese of Chicago/Latin  
American Center  
126 N. Des Plaines  
Chicago, IL 60661  
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Asociación de Periodistas y Locutores  
Inter-Americanos de Illinois (APLI)  
(Association of Inter-American  
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Casa Central  
1401 N. California Ave  
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Chicago Housing Authority  
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Illinois Fiesta Educativa  
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Instituto Del Progreso Latino  
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