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Viva la Mexico [1st grade]

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Education Department

Understanding by Design Curriculum Unit

Trinity University

Year 2008

Viva la Mexico

Beth Fitts
Trinity University

Unit: Viva la Mexico

Grade: 1

Stage 1: Desired Results

Understandings

Students will understand that...

- Traditions are time-honored practices that are passed down from one generation to the next
- Where you live influences your traditions
- People, places, institutions and countries can be independent
- Mexico is now independent
- Native American and Spanish legacies contribute to Mexico's vibrant culture

Essential Questions

1. What is a tradition?
2. Do all people and places have the same traditions?
3. Where in the world is Mexico?
4. What does it mean to be independent?
5. How did Mexico gain its independence?
6. To what extent has the mix of Native American and Spanish heritage shaped Mexico's culture?

Knowledge

Students will know...

- the 7 continents
- the location of North America, the Pacific Ocean, and the United States in relation to Mexico
- Mexico is part of North America
- Mexican culture is a mix of Native American and Spanish heritage
- why the piñata and fiesta are part of Mexican culture
- the reason that September 16 is Mexican Independence Day and a national holiday

Skills

Students will be able to...

- locate Mexico in relation to other nations on the North American continent
- identify and locate geographical elements that are part of or border Mexico- Central America, the Yucatan Peninsula, the Pacific Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, the Rio Grande, and Mexico City

Stage 2: Assessment Evidence

Performance Task: “Talk Show: Viva la Mexico!”

You have been invited to interview on the talk show, “Viva la Mexico!” Since you are now experts on Mexico, you will appear on the talk show and answer questions posed by the host. You will have the opportunity to answer questions regarding Mexico’s location, traditions, history and quest for independence.

Interview Questions:

1. What is the name of the continent on which Mexico is located?
2. What is the name of one of the nations that is located to the North of Mexico?
3. Where is Central America in relation to Mexico? Rio Grande? Yucatan Peninsula?
4. What is the capital of Mexico?
5. Do you think that you are independent? Why?
6. Is Mexico independent? Was it always independent?
7. What happened on Mexican Independence Day?
8. Do you remember one of Mexico’s traditions?
9. What does tradition mean to you?
10. What is a tradition that you celebrate in your family?
11. As we studied Mexico, what did you like learning about the most?
12. What do you wish you would have learned about Mexico but did not?

Rubric:

Standards	Approaching ☺	Meeting ☺☺	Exceeding ☺☺☺
Geography	The student is somewhat familiar with name of the continent on which Mexico is located. The student is somewhat familiar with Mexico’s relative location to Central America, Yucatan Peninsula, Rio Grande	The students may or may not have known the continent on which Mexico is located. The student knew at least 2 out of 3 geographical locations and features relative to Mexico	The student correctly named the continent on which Mexico is located. The student also knew Mexico’s relative location to Central America, Yucatan Peninsula, Rio Grande
History	The student was unable to recall facts related to Mexico’s Independence	The students was able to recall at least one fact related to Mexico’s Independence	The student recalled multiple facts relating to Mexico’s Independence
Independence	The student was unable to formulate his/her own definition of independence. The student was unable to determine if he/she has ever been independent.	The student was able to either formulate a definition for independence or determine if he/she had ever been independent, but was unable to do both	The student demonstrated a clear understanding of what it meant to be independent and was able to give examples from his/her life when they were independent
Tradition	The student was unable to formulate his/her own definition of tradition. The student was unable to recall any facts about traditions in Mexico. The student was unable to recall a tradition in his/her own family.	The student was able to either formulate a definition of tradition and/or recall a fact about traditions in Mexico, along with recalling an example of a tradition that is celebrated in his/her own family	The student demonstrated a clear understanding of what a tradition is and was able to recall multiple facts about traditions in Mexico as well as traditions celebrated within his/her own family.
Journal	The student’s journal (writing/pictures) does not depict concepts discussed during unit	The student’s journal (writing/pictures) shows the student’s understanding of concepts	The student’s journal (writing/pictures) was a great representation of the concepts discussed
Participation	The student rarely participated in group work or discussion during the unit.	The student participated in group work and discussion	The student asked a lot of questions and participated in group work and discussions during the unit.

Other Evidence:

Check in's
Journals (prompts & independent writing/drawing)
Maps
Participation in discussion & group

Stage 3: Learning Activities**Day 1-What is a tradition?****Materials:**

- Jonathan London's *The Village Basket Weaver* (book)
- Scissors
- Copy paper with a large basket drawn on it
- Crayon

Teacher will:

1. Before reading story ask students if there is anything (traditions, games, concepts) they would not want to forget about or lose over time
2. Read story
3. After reading the story let students discuss why the village needed the tradition of basket weaving to continue.
4. Ask the students what they think would happen to the people of the village if they forgot how to make the basket and other traditions
5. Hand out paper with Basket outline on it along with scissors and crayons
6. Explain to students that they will be making their own basket and be putting one idea/tradition in it they do not want to lose or forget about

Students will:

1. Color basket first
2. Cut out basket
3. Write their personal tradition/ideas on the back of the basket

Assessment:

Students will present their basket to the class and explain why they chose what they did to place in the basket.

Day 2-Do all places/people share the same traditions?**Materials:**

- Student Journals
- Pencils
- Chart paper
- Markers

Teacher will:

1. Ask students to think of traditions or celebrations that we observe in our classroom
2. Ask students to talk about traditions that happen in our school
3. Have students share traditions that are celebrated in their family
4. Tell the students a story of a tradition that you have been a part of during your life. Give lots of details so that they can picture what it was like.
5. On chart paper make a chart, chart traditions that are present in the classroom, school and families

6. Discuss with students that we have traditions in our classroom, our school and in our families, but “do you think that a country can have traditions?”
7. Make a list of country traditions that students are familiar with either from Switzerland, US or other countries

Students will:

1. Participate in group discussions

Assessment:

Ask students to reflect on their own family traditions by having them draw a picture of a tradition that is unique to their family and write about that tradition in their journal. (Have students keep their entries for sharing for lesson 5)

Day 3-Why do we celebrate?

Materials:

- Photos
- Paper
- Pencils
- Power point of flags
- Blank copy of a world map
- Journals

Teacher will:

1. Explain that different countries have holidays/traditions with which we may be unfamiliar. Look back at traditions listed from previous day.
2. Tell students that they will be divided into groups. In these groups the students will be given 1 photo. The photo will show an image of a celebration. (Each photo will be different?)
3. Explain to the students that they will be given 7-10 minutes to answer the following questions about the photos
 - What is unique or unusual about the photo/celebration?
 - What decorations, art, and/or symbols do you see present in the photos?
 - What do you think is the theme of the photo? What do you think is being celebrated?
 - Do you think people celebrate traditions in the same way? Why? Why not?
4. Record student answers to questions on chart paper (Have larger versions of the student’s photos displayed so that the other groups may see the photos)
5. Revisit a question that was posed the previous day, “Do you think that countries have traditions?”
6. Facilitate a discussion and then invite students to watch a power point of flags from around the world. As each flag is shown, tell the students 1 tradition that is celebrated in this country. (The power point can begin with the flag of Switzerland and can include pictures of flags from the various countries represented by the students in the class. The final flag in the power point will be of Mexico.)
7. Tell students that in Mexico celebrations are called fiestas
8. Write the word fiesta on the board. Facilitate a discussion about the word.
9. Following the power point, students will be given a blank copy of a world map.

They will then be asked to place an “X” on Mexico (this will show if they know where Mexico is located in relation to the world/Lugano).

10. Let students know that in tomorrow’s lesson they will learn about the country of Mexico and begin to find out some of the traditions that are celebrated in this country.

Students will:

1. Discuss photos and answer questions in groups
2. Share answers to questions with class
3. Watch power point of flags
4. Participate in answering questions about traditions in other countries
5. Discuss what they know about fiestas
6. Mark location of Mexico on their own map

Assessment:

In your journals you are to “quick write” any facts that you think you might know about Mexico. You will be given 4 minutes.

Day 4-Where in the world is Mexico?

Materials:

- Students journals
- World Map
- Map of Mexico
- Handouts (Mexico Map/World Map)
- Chart paper
- Pencils/Markers

Teacher will:

1. Tell students that yesterday I asked you to write in your journals information about Mexico. Let’s share those ideas right now as I record them on our chart.
2. Record thoughts, etc. on chart paper
3. Tell students that one thing that we need to clarify is where is Mexico?
4. Ask students to hold up their maps from the previous day to show where they think Mexico is located
5. Pull down world map and show location
6. What do you notice?
7. Which parts are around water, on land? Where is Mexico in relation to Switzerland? The United States?
8. Have students show you where Central America, the Yucatan Peninsula, the Pacific Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, the Rio Grande, and Mexico City are on the map.
9. Give students information about each of these places
10. Can you make conjectures on climate, etc? Compare and contrast Mexico’s climate with Lugano’s climate on a chart
11. Have the students go back to their seats and label a map of Mexico with its surroundings
12. End the lesson by telling the students that tomorrow you will learn more about Mexico and independence

Students will:

1. Share journal entries
2. Show their maps
3. Participate in location game
4. Label their maps

Day 5-Why independence? What's the big deal?

Materials:

- Chart paper
- Statements on note cards

Teacher will:

1. Ask students if they have ever heard of the word independent?
2. Chart words, ideas, phrases that they have heard or times in their own life when people have called them independent
3. When have you wanted to be more independent?
4. What does it mean to be independent? (when you think or act on your own, no one is telling you what to do)
5. On note cards write down statements that are examples of having independence and examples of not having independence (for example: You can eat whatever you want for dinner. You must always wear sandals)
(As a class, sort and discuss the cards)
6. Ask students to go home and think about the following question. "If individuals can be independent, can a country be independent? What would that mean?"

Students will:

1. Participate in vocabulary development
2. Participate in a discussion

Day 6-Why independence? What's the big deal? Continued

Materials:

- Photos to help explain the history of Mexico's revolt against Spain
- Cards with facts about Mexico prior & post independence

Teacher will:

1. Tell students that last night you were asked to go home and think about whether a country can be independent. Now, I would like for you to give me a thumbs up if you think that a country can be independent. Give me a thumb down if you don't think that a country can be independent from another country. (Elicit ideas why)
2. Tell students that today we will be learning about the country of Mexico. Mexico is independent today, but it has not always been independent. Today we will learn why Mexico wanted to be independent and how it became independent.
3. Explain to the students that in Mexico, a fiesta that is celebrated each year is Mexican Independence Day.
4. Show students photos to help explain the history of Mexico's revolt against Spain. Tell the events that led up to the war and how the war was started. Explain who Father Miguel Hidalgo is and what he did to start the revolt. Tell what happened after Father Hidalgo died and that the war went on for

eleven years before Mexico finally gained its freedom. Check for understanding with review questions and review material as needed.

5. On cards, write down ways that Mexico was previously not independent and the independence they currently enjoy. Have kids sort them.

Assessment:

In your journal answer the following question. What does it mean to be independent? Write down your own definition.

Day 7-What do all the colors mean?

Materials:

- Mexican flag
- Construction paper
- Copies of the symbol on Mexico's flag
- Markers
- Paint
- Glue
- Crayons, markers, etc.
- Confetti
- Tissue Paper

Teacher will:

1. Review information regarding fiestas.
2. Explain the events that take place in Mexico on the Eve of Mexican Independence Day and on Mexican Independence Day.
3. Redefine the concept of tradition (an event or thing that is carried out or acted upon each year at the same time).
4. Ask the students to share the journal entries that they wrote in Lesson 2 regarding a tradition that they celebrate in their families. Have students discuss what the traditions mean to them.
5. Show students a book of symbols (heart, stop sign, shamrock, etc.). The idea is that these are symbols that represent something else. It stands for something else.
6. Discuss with the students that the colors of the Mexican Flag each symbolize something to the Mexican people. The green symbolizes independence, white symbolizes religion, and red symbolizes union. Talk about how things are decorated in these colors for the fiesta, for example: flags, flowers, lights, confetti, and noisemakers.
7. Discuss with students: What symbol would you use to represent yourself? Why?
8. Introduce the piñata, talk to students about the origin of a piñata and its symbolism in Mexico
9. Have the students make one of these items as if it were for a decoration for a town square on Mexican Independence Day, along with a piñata. Display the items made as decorations in the classroom. Remind the students what each color symbolizes.

Students will:

1. Share their journal entries with the class
2. Participate in the discussion of symbols and family traditions
3. Make a flag, flower, lights, confetti, noise maker or other celebratory object of their choice

Day 8-It's time for a fiesta!

Materials:

- Hot Chocolate recipe and ingredients
- Polvorones recipe and ingredients
- Video/ Photos of Independence Day Celebrations in Mexico
- Music- "La Cucaracha"

Teacher will:

1. Have a Mexican Independence Day celebration in the classroom.
2. As a class or prior to class make or serve Mexican hot chocolate and Polvorones for the students to eat.
3. The students can wear green, red, and white. Ask them what these colors symbolize.
4. During the fiesta, show the students a video and photos of a Mexican Independence Day Celebration.
5. Teach students the song "La Cucaracha"- a popular Mexican song
6. Have a bell and at eleven o'clock shout the Grito de Delores and have the students echo it back.
7. After all the previous activities have been completed ask the students to respond to the following question. "What do you know about Mexican Independence Day?"
8. On a piece of chart paper, each student will add at least one thing that they learned to the discussion. No answer may be the same.

Students will:

1. Join in the celebration
2. Participate in the 11 o'clock shouting of the Grito de Delores
3. Participate in the discussion about Mexican Independence

Day 9- Who helped shape Mexico's culture?

Materials:

- Photos from Spain and Mexico to help students compare and contrast Spanish influences (architecture, food, music, religion)
- Music from Mexico & Spain

Teacher will:

1. Tell students that if we were to go to Mexico today there would be many things architecturally and culturally that we would also find in Spain. There are also influences from Native Americans.
2. Ask students to make guesses as to how Spain influences Mexico and how Native Americans influenced Mexico. (Native American influences are reflected in their brilliantly colored folk art, traditional dances, fiestas and cuisine while language; Catholicism and the legal and educational systems denote their Spanish legacy.)
3. Record answers on chart paper
4. Discuss answers
5. Tell the students that for many years Mexico was controlled by Spain, but since 1812 Mexico has been independent, free of Spanish rule, and if we went to Mexico today you would not see Spanish soldiers marching around the city but you would see some of Spain's influence on the country as well as influences of Native Americans.
6. Show power point comparing architecture, food, music, religion, art, dance, etc.

Students will:

1. Discuss influences present in Mexico
2. Watch power point
3. Listen to music
4. Answer assessment question

Assessment:

Ask students to answer the following question:

Do any of the photos you've seen remind you of home? Do you see any similarities in these photos with buildings or food, etc. from home?

Day 10- Let's start a tradition!

Materials:

- New traditions that you could incorporate into your classroom
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Envelopes

Teacher will:

1. Brainstorm traditions that would be easy to implement in the classroom
2. Tell students that since we have been studying Mexico and learning about traditions, I thought that it would be fun to start a new tradition in our classroom.
3. Construct a list of 5 traditions, make copies and place into an envelope
4. Divide the class into groups.
5. Tell students there are 5 traditions in their envelope. Their job is to look at the choices and decide on their favorite tradition.
6. Give students time to read the traditions and talk about them in their groups
7. Ask students to read their favorite choice
8. Record answers on chart paper and ask students why
9. Ask students if there is any tradition that they thought of either in their group or individually that they would like to add to the list.
10. As a class rank student choices.
11. Take a vote
12. Begin a new class tradition

Students will:

1. Work in groups
2. Discuss and decide on a favorite tradition in their groups
3. Explain choice to class
4. Take a vote

Procedure for activity:

We have been talking a lot about Mexico and the various traditions that are a part of their culture. Throughout this unit we have also learned that we have traditions in our classroom, our school, our family, and in our culture. Today, I thought it would be fun to start a new tradition in our classroom. In these envelopes is a piece of paper. On the

paper, I have written down 5 new traditions. I will read these traditions to you. Soon you will be divided into groups. In your groups, I want you to talk to your peers about these traditions. Your job is to find your favorite tradition. You will discuss this tradition in your group. Be prepared to tell me why this tradition was your favorite out of the others. After each group has had time to determine which tradition is their favorite, we will come back together as a class. Each group will then tell the class their favorite tradition and why. I will record your answer on our chart paper. After each group has had a turn, we will vote as a class for our new class tradition.

Students will:

1. Divide into groups
2. Read traditions
3. Discuss their favorites
4. Choose their favorite tradition
5. Participate in class discussion
6. Vote on a new class tradition

