

## CELEBRA EL CINCO DE MAYO LESSON PLAN FOR GRADES 3–6



Book/Text Set:

*Celebra el Cinco de Mayo con un jarabe tapatío /  
¿Qué es el Cinco de Mayo?*

by F. Isabel Campoy and Alma Flor Ada

**Content Overview:** In the fiction story, students preparing to celebrate Cinco de Mayo learn the Mexican hat dance, *jarabe tapatío*. Their challenge is to dance without stepping on the hat. The non-fiction section introduces Benito Juárez and the Battle of Puebla, and describes the many ways in which Cinco de Mayo is celebrated across the United States.

### Materials and Preparation

- chart paper and markers
- red and green construction paper
- white drawing paper and crayons, colored pencils, and markers
- examples of a variety of posters
- additional books about Cinco de Mayo, Mexico, and Mariachi music
- *jarabe tapatío* music

### Standards Covered

#### NCSS Social Studies Strands

- I. Culture: a, c, d, e
- II. Time, Continuity, and Change: b
- III. People, Places, and Environments: a, b,
- IV. Individual Development and Identity: e, f, h
- V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions: d, e, g
- VI. Power, Authority, and Governance: a, c, e, h
- IX. Global Connections: a, b

NCTE/IRA English Language Arts Standards: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12

### Vocabulary

F: saludo / galante / repican (repicar) / zapatear / avergonzado / decorado (decorar)  
piñatas / banderines / ensayo / función

NF: victoria / poderoso / presidente / valentía / libertad / mariachis / alegría  
riquísimas (ricas)

**Pacing Guide** 3 days; 30–45 minute sessions, plus optional extensions

## Reading and Activities

### DAY 1

#### Explore the Topic: Cinco de Mayo

Generate a discussion about celebrations. Ask students to recall events that their families have celebrated. Have them describe decorations and activities using details. After a short discussion, tell students that you are going to read a book about a group of students who practice a dance for a special celebration at their school.

#### Vocabulary Introduction

On a piece of chart paper, start a vocabulary list. Write “Cinco de Mayo” at the top; under that, write “Jarabe tapatío” and then write the vocabulary words for the fiction section in column format. Point to the uppercase in “Mayo”, and explain that even though names of months in Spanish are written with lowercase, in this case “Mayo” is part of a proper name. Read the words with students and ask volunteers to define the words and use them in sentences. Add to student responses as appropriate to enhance and clarify definitions. Note that in this context, “función” refers to a show rather than a job.

#### Fiction Read-Aloud & Discussion

Review and reinforce nouns, verbs, and adjectives by starting an information chart. At the top of a piece of chart paper posted horizontally, write and underline the phrase “Cinco de Mayo.” Create three columns just under the title by drawing two vertical lines lightly with pencil.

Ask students what they already know about Cinco de Mayo. Write their responses as words and short phrases in the appropriate columns as follows. In the left column, write any nouns/visuals. In the center column, write any verbs/actions. In the third column, write any adjectives/descriptions. When finished, have students look at the columns and guess the categories for each column. Label the columns with the words “sustantivos,” “verbos,” and “adjetivos” and leave the chart on display.

In this session you will read aloud only the fiction story, *Celebra el Cinco de Mayo con un jarabe tapatío*. Before reading the story, show the cover and ask a volunteer to read the title. Have students describe the traditional clothing and the designs on the sombrero.

As you read, stop as appropriate to use context and illustration clues to help define the vocabulary and other unfamiliar words. Ask questions about the characters who are stepping on the hat and about the decorations used for the celebration. Have students notice the Mexican flag colors and the cut paper designs.

When finished, ask students to tell you the basic plot of the story—beginning, middle, end—and then ask the following questions, referring to the illustrations in the book to help students as needed:

<b>Beginning</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ¿Qué es el jarabe tapatío?</li> <li>2. ¿Cómo esta decorada la escuela?</li> <li>3. ¿Qué pasa con el sombrero cada vez que los estudiantes ensayan el baile?</li> </ol>
<b>Intermediate</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Di lo que pasa cuando los estudiantes ensayan.</li> <li>2. ¿Quiénes decoraron la escuela y por qué?</li> <li>3. ¿Qué hacen los estudiantes en la función del Cinco de Mayo?</li> </ol>
<b>Advanced</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe el jarabe tapatío y di lo que pasa cuando los estudiantes practican el baile.</li> <li>2. Describe las decoraciones que ves en la escuela.</li> <li>3. Explica qué pasa el día de la función.</li> </ol>

Review the “Cinco de Mayo” chart and ask students if they learned anything that could be added to the lists. Add their responses and leave the chart on display.

## DAY 2

### Vocabulary Activity

Review the words on the vocabulary list by having volunteer students reread, define, and use them in sentences. Then add the vocabulary words for the non-fiction section. Read the words aloud with students and ask for volunteers to give definitions and /or use them in sentences. Add to the responses as needed to create clear definitions. When you get to the word “riquísimas”, underline the suffix “-ísimas”, and discuss its meaning when added to a word. Have students give examples of other words they can think of that end with “-ísimo(ma),” or supply familiar words for the students.

Show students the cover of *Celebra el Cinco de Mayo con un jarabe tapatío* and ask someone to retell the story briefly. Have students review the categorized “Cinco de Mayo” chart with you, then explain that now you’re going to read a selection about the Cinco de Mayo celebration.

### Non-Fiction Read-Aloud & Discussion

Open the book to pages 16–17 and have students read the section title with you. Have someone describe the images representing the Mexican flag.

Begin the story, *¿Qué es el Cinco de Mayo?* and stop at the end of page 21. Emphasize that the smaller army won the battle at Puebla. Demonstrate the imbalance between the Mexican and French armies by having six students stand together in one group and two students stand together in another group, with the two groups facing each other. Ask students to imagine and describe what might happen if these two groups of students were on opposing teams for a game. Ask them to think about what it might feel like to be in the smaller group and to win such a game against the larger group. Allow for a short discussion and then explain that this is roughly representative of the makeup of the Mexican and French armies. Allow for additional student comment.

Continue reading the story, pointing out the states highlighted on the United States map on pages 22–23 and the repeated images and colors of the Mexican flag. Stop as appropriate to point out objects and activities in the photographs and illustrations. Also stop to have students use context to define and discuss any words they may not know.

When finished, have students recall some of the facts about Cinco de Mayo. Then have them answer the following questions, using the illustrations in the book as resources:

<b>Beginning</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Señala a México y Francia en el mapa.</li> <li>2. ¿Quién ganó la batalla de Puebla?</li> <li>3. ¿Qué hacen las personas para celebrar el Cinco de Mayo?</li> </ol>
<b>Intermediate</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ¿En qué continentes están México y Francia?</li> <li>2. ¿Qué se celebra el Cinco de Mayo?</li> <li>3. Nombra dos actividades que se hagan Cinco de Mayo.</li> </ol>
<b>Advanced</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ¿Qué país invadió a México en 1862? Di qué pasó en Puebla.</li> <li>2. ¿Por qué el Cinco de Mayo es una celebración importante?</li> <li>3. Si fueras a una celebración del Cinco de Mayo, ¿qué harías?</li> </ol>

Review the “Cinco de Mayo” chart and ask students what new information might be added in each category. Leave the chart on display.

## **DAY 3**

### **Vocabulary Review**

Do an oral review of the vocabulary while categorizing the words. One part of speech at a time, ask students to identify the nouns, verbs, and adjectives on the list. As they find the words, mark asterisks next to each of the words, using black for nouns, red for verbs, and green for adjectives. If necessary, ask them to conjugate the verb “saludar” in present tense, and note the difference between the noun and the verb: “un saludo” and “yo saludo.” You could also use “el ensayo” and “yo ensayo” to teach them more about nouns and verbs. When finished, review and check for accuracy.

Distribute the [Sustantivos, verbos y adjetivos del Cinco de Mayo worksheet](#), and instruct students to categorize vocabulary words.

Set aside some time for students to browse through and read additional picture books about Cinco de Mayo, Mexico, or other related topics. After reading, they may wish to revisit the information charts.

### **Writing Activity**

Invite students to create an advertising poster for an imaginary Cinco de Mayo community event. Explain that they will use illustrations with descriptive captions, and that they will need to include details on their posters to make the event look interesting. Write the guidelines on the board:

- Incluir fecha, hora y lugar.
- Usar ilustraciones con leyendas.
- Usar lenguaje descriptivo.
- Diseña un borde apropiado para el afiche.

Review the “Cinco de Mayo” chart and remind students to include information from each column in their poster. Also review the vocabulary list and encourage the use of as many words as possible in their captions.

Show students some examples of posters to give them layout ideas. These can be movie or book posters, magazine or newspaper advertisements, or any other resources with ideas for layout and design. Make sure students know what a caption does, and what a border is.

Suggest to students that they do a “mock-up” layout first on scratch paper to decide what they want to include and how they want their poster to look. Illustrations and captions can be done on separate papers and glued onto sheets of construction paper. Have all materials on hand for students so that they can get what they need as they need it: scratch paper for creating a mock-up layout; blank white paper for illustrations and captions; colored construction paper for color blocks and borders; crayons, colored pencils, and markers; scissors and glue; full sheets of red and green construction paper.

When the posters are finished, display them on the wall of the classroom. Note that if the school is having a Cinco de Mayo celebration, the content of the posters can be adjusted to reflect the school celebration, and they can be displayed around the school for advertisement.

## Extensions

**Writing** Choose a vocabulary word from the noun list as the subject for a poem.

**Art** Make cut paper designs with folded paper. See directions at [http://www.austinkids.org/exhibits/Spanish/PapelPicado\\_spanish.htm](http://www.austinkids.org/exhibits/Spanish/PapelPicado_spanish.htm).

**Music** Watch the *jarabe tapatío* (Mexican Hat Dance) at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtDNYqGNK3A>  
Several audio versions are available for download at iTunes.  
Listen to Mariachi music online:  
<http://www.almademexico.com.mx/mariachi.html>

**Mathematics** Using multiplication, division, and fractions, write as many equations as possible that equal 5. Do it in five minutes.

**Social Studies** Research recent census data to find cities in the United States with the highest Latino (Hispanic) populations. Show the findings in a graph.

**Science** Make a list of healthy foods that could be used in a piñata. Use the grocery store ads from a newspaper to help with the lists and sort the foods according to food groups.

## Technology

Learn more about Cinco de Mayo:

<http://www.nacnet.org/assunta/spa5may.htm>

Learn more about the Mexican Hat Dance:

<http://www.andalon.net/zjarabe.html>

Learn about Mexico:

<http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C3%A9xico>

Find a variety of types of maps of Mexico, print them out, and add cities or topography:

[http://www.trace-sc.com/maps\\_sp.htm](http://www.trace-sc.com/maps_sp.htm)

## Creative Reading

Share this book with your students using Alma Flor Ada's Creative Reading methodology based on the principles of Transformative Education. [Suggested questions](#) to initiate the dialogue are provided for Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced levels as well as self-assessment tools for [teachers](#) and students—in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

© Santillana USA Publishing Company, Inc.  
Developed by Renee Goularte

*Renee Goularte started teaching in the late 1980s. She has taught students in all elementary grades, and has worked specifically with English language learners, at-risk students, and GATE students. Renee holds a Master's Degree in Elementary Education from San José State University. In addition to teaching, she also writes and presents workshops for teachers. Renee lives in Northern California.*