



Geography Integrated Lesson Plan

Title: Learning About Mexico

Subjects: Social Studies, Reading/Language Arts

Duration of lesson: Two or three 90 minute class periods (with possible extension activities)

Teacher: Sarah Jett

PURPOSE/OVERVIEW

The purpose of this lesson is to learn about the geography and culture of Mexico. Students will learn about the physical geography of the country, Mexican folktales, and complete additional research to learn more about the culture and geography of Mexico.

ESSENTIAL OR GUIDING QUESTION:

What is the geography is Mexico like? What is the culture of Mexico like?

VOCABULARY:

-culture

WEST VIRGINIA CONTENT STANDARDS

Social Studies

SS.O.06.04.02- use map tools (e.g., legends, keys, scales) to interpret information (e.g., climate, landforms, resources).

SS.O.06.04.03- locate and identify the continents, major climates, major bodies of water, natural resources and landforms and analyze the relationship of people with their environment regarding population demographics, settlement and trade.

SS.O.06.04.05- evaluate the effects of physical geography and the changing nature of the earth's surface on transportation, culture, economic activities and population density/distribution.

Reading/Language Arts

RLA.O.6.1.4- select defining characteristics, construct background knowledge, and develop reading skills to understand a variety of literary passages and informational texts by West Virginia, national, and international authors: myth, fantasies, biographies, autobiographies, science fiction, tall tales, and

supernatural tales.

RLA.O. 6.1.6-differentiate and apply comprehension strategies in literary and informational texts to use prior knowledge, draw conclusions, interpret meaning, determine cause and effect, and judge text critically.

RLA.O.6.1.15-increase the amount of independent reading to comprehend, analyze, and evaluate literary text and informational text.

RLA.O.6.2.2-use the five-step writing process (pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, publishing) to generate topics, plan approaches, and develop descriptive and narrative writing tasks: compositions, personal narratives, brochures, speeches, and poetry.

RLA.O.6.2.8-demonstrate the ability to use electronic and non-electronic reference materials to locate information, analyze the source, evaluate the data, and create a product based upon an assigned task.

RLA.O.6.2.9-credit sources of information by citing references using various formats.

GEOGRAPHY STANDARDS

How to Analyze the Spatial Organization of People, Places, and Environments on Earth's Surface	<u>3</u>	1: The World in Spatial Terms
The Physical and Human Characteristics of Places	<u>4</u>	2: Places and Regions
How Culture and Experience Influence People's Perceptions of Places and Regions	<u>6</u>	2: Places and Regions
The Characteristics, Distribution, and Complexity of Earth's Cultural Mosaics	<u>10</u>	4: Human Systems

21ST CENTURY LEARNING SKILLS AND TECHNOLOGY TOOLS

21C.O.5-8.2.LS.1-Student engages in a critical thinking process that supports synthesis and conducts evaluations by applying comprehensive criteria.

21C.O.5-8.3.LS.4-Student demonstrates ethical behavior and works responsibly and collaboratively with others, in academic and social contexts, to accomplish both individual and team goals related to improved academic, extracurricular, and co-curricular performances.

MATERIALS: (include resources)

- Map Activity from http://homeschoolcreations.com/files/Mapping_Mexico.pdf
- colored pencils
- Folktale “Senor Coyote and the Cheese” from <http://accelerateu.org/assessments/1998EnglishSamplerTest/SenorCoyote.htm>
- sample postcards
- access to computer lab or library for research
- Mexico Research page
- pre-cut oak tag or poster board for students to create postcards

MAP INTEGRATION:

- Map Activity from http://homeschoolcreations.com/files/Mapping_Mexico.pdf
- Students may also use an atlas or textbook with map of North America

PROCEDURE: (include activity sheets)

1. Students will complete a Mexico map activity (http://homeschoolcreations.com/files/Mapping_Mexico.pdf).
2. To introduce Mexican culture, students will read “Senor Coyote and the Cheese.” This is a clever trickster tale from Mexico. (The folktale is attached but can also be found at <http://accelerateu.org/assessments/1998EnglishSamplerTest/SenorCoyote.htm>.) Discuss with students before reading what they think this folktale will be about. Read the brief folktale. Ask students to say any words they do not recognize or sound unfamiliar. Discuss these words and the native language of Mexico. Discuss with students what this folktale reveals about Mexican culture. (Have a reminder discussion—What is culture?)
3. Students will be shown several postcards. What do you write on a postcard? What usually appears on the front side?
4. Explain to students they will be completing research about the culture of Mexico and creating a postcard to tell everyone “back home” what they have seen and learned. Give students several ideas about what to research. What did you see? What cities did you visit? What did you do? What did you eat?
5. Take the students either to the library or to the computer lab to complete their research. Give students the Mexico Research page. Remind students they MUST cite their sources (at least author name and book title or URL) on their research page. Students may use student-friendly sites for research such as <http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/places/find/mexico/> or <http://www.timeforkids.com/destination/mexico/day-in-life>).

CONCLUSION/SUMMARY

Possible extension activities include:

- Study the flag of Mexico: http://www.homeschoolcreations.com/files/Flag_of_Mexico.pdf
- Copy a recipe for a tasty Mexican dish: http://www.abcteach.com/free/r/reportform_food_mexico.pdf
- Practice learning the states of Mexico: http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/Mexico_Geography.htm
- Students may read another Mexican folktale, "The Bear Prince" from either <http://www.g-world.org/magictales/oso.html> or <http://www.schoolvideos.com/tgs/A4301TG.pdf> (found on p.14-19 of this Teacher's Guide). Students can reenact the play in class or create a story wheel for the folktale.
- Learn about the day in the life of a teenager from Mexico: <http://www.timeforkids.com/destination/mexico/day-in-life>

ASSESSMENT (include assessment)

Students will be graded on their research and final post card product. If time permits, the teacher may wish for the students to complete one of the above extension activities as a final grade.

Mapping Mexico



1. Find and label Mexico's capital, Mexico City, with a star.
2. Label the Pacific Ocean and shade it blue.
3. Label the Gulf of Mexico and shade it blue.
4. Label the Gulf of Campeche and shade it blue.
5. Label the Yucatan Peninsula.
6. Label the Baja Peninsula.
7. Find and label the Sonoran Desert and shade it brown.
8. Trace the path of the Rio Grande with a blue colored pencil.
9. Find and label the United States and color it blue.

SEÑOR COYOTE AND THE CHEESE

A Mexican Folktale
Retold by Marci Stillerman



One night, when a full moon was shining brightly in the sky, Senor Coyote crept up to Conejo (Kone-A-hoh), the rabbit. Conejo was sitting at the edge of a pond.

Senor Coyote said, "Conejo, I have you, and I am going to eat you, pronto!"

"Wait," said Conejo. "Do you see this fine cheese in the pond?"

There, gleaming in the black pond, was something that looked like a big, round, delicious, yellow cheese.

"Do you like cheese?" asked Conejo.

"I love cheese," said Senor Coyote.

"Swim out, then, and get it," Conejo said. "I'd go myself, but I can't swim. While you get the cheese, I'll get some tortillas, and we'll have a fiesta."

"How do I know you'll be here when I come out of the pond?" asked Coyote.

"I've been watching this cheese for hours," Conejo said. "Do you think I'd leave it all for you? Hurry, I'm hungry."

Senor Coyote jumped into the pond and swam toward the cheese. But the cheese stayed ahead of him. Every time he lunged for it and snapped his jaws to catch it, pond water rushed into his mouth, and he coughed and spluttered. Senor Coyote's eyes filled with water, and he had to blink them many times to see the cheese. His heart pounded from the effort of swimming. Finally, disgusted, he gave up and swam to shore and shook the water from his fur.

Of course, Conejo was gone. He had tricked Coyote.

Senor Coyote lifted his head to the big, round, yellow moon in the sky and howled in anger and frustration. He went hungry that night.



Name _____

MEXICO RESEARCH PAGE

Directions: Organize your postcard into three main topics. Please write where you visited in Mexico, what you saw there, what you ate, what the weather was like, and any other cultural elements you experienced. ***You must use at least three sources and cite each of them.***

1. Write down your research below.
2. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, organize your thoughts into at least two or three paragraphs.
3. After your draft is complete, you may begin your final product. Don't forget to draw or print a really neat picture for the front of your postcard!

Source:	Research:
1	Citation: _____
2	Citation: _____
3	Citation: _____

The Flag of Mexico



Color the flag of the Mexico. The band on the left is green, the center band is white and the band on the right is red.

The national flag of Mexico is a green, white and red tricolor of vertical bands, featuring the national coat of arms in the center of the white band. It was first seen in 1821 and was known as the 'Sierra', but the flag was not officially adopted until September 16, 1968. The coat of arms helps distinguish it from the flag of Italy, although the green and red of the flag of Mexico are a darker shade.

The coat of arms features an eagle holding a serpent in its talon and perched on a prickly cactus. The cactus sits on a rock that is above a lake. The symbols are from an Aztec legend that told them to build a city when they spotted an eagle eating a serpent ~ what is now Mexico City.