



## ***Exploring Brazilian and Mexican Cultural Traditions***

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:  
Language Arts/2<sup>nd</sup> Grade/3<sup>rd</sup> Grade/4<sup>th</sup> Grade/Social Studies

**Keywords:** Compare, Contrast, Create, Similar, Similarity, Different, Difference, Celebrations, Holidays, Comprehension Skills, Comparison, Mask, Culture, Mexico, Brazil, Ceremonies, Traditions, Carnival, Day of the Dead, Christmas, New Years, Independence Day, Cinco de Mayo, All Soul's Day

**Teaching Standards:** See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

**Synopsis:** In this curriculum unit, third graders will be engaged in different activities where they learn about the holidays and cultural traditions in Brazil and Mexico. The students will be able to compare and contrast some of the holidays, celebrations, and traditions of the United States, Brazil and Mexico. By the end of the unit, the students will choose a holiday or tradition from Brazil or Mexico and create a mask that represents the holiday or tradition. The purpose of the unit is to help the students learn about the holidays and traditions of the Hispanic culture while studying the similarities and differences between the holidays and traditions.

*I plan to teach this unit during the coming year in 2016-2017 to 17 third grade students in Language Arts.*

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***Exploring Brazilian and Mexican Cultural Traditions:  
Teaching Hispanic Cultural Traditions through Comprehension Skills***

***Sadé Wright***

**Introduction**

Have you ever wanted to teach your students about a different culture or tradition but could not find the time? If so, this is the perfect unit for you. The unit incorporates learning about a few Brazilian and Mexican holidays, while teaching comprehension skills. In the unit, the students will learn about the following Brazilian and Mexican holidays Independence Day, Cinco de Mayo, Tiradentes Day, Day of the Dead, All Souls' Day, Carnival, Christmas, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day.

Third Grade is a very critical year in reading comprehension through standardized testing. Therefore, the unit can be used in reading because of the comprehension strategies without losing critical literacy instruction times. If you want to teach certain traditions or holidays, then the unit can be used as a menu option. The unit can be broken up throughout the year and taught around the time of the holiday. The students can work in small groups to create masks for the holiday studied.

**School and Student Demographics**

I have been teaching for nine years. I am originally from Norfolk, Virginia. This is my third year in Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools. Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools is located in Charlotte, NC. The school district is a very diverse district with over 178 schools.

I teach 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade at Barringer Academic Center located in the West Zone of the district. Barringer Academic Center is a very special school. Barringer Academic Center is a partially gifted school and Title I school. The school is a neighborhood school with two additional programs. The programs include the Talent and Development program and the Horizons program. Both programs focus on students who are academically gifted. Therefore, we go between two very different extremes. We have students living in poverty to students from affluent families. Along with the financial aspect, we have a range of academic abilities. Some students are 2-3 grade levels behind and some students are 2-3 grade levels ahead. In addition, parental support varies widely. Some parents are not involved in their student's education, while some parents are very supportive.

In the 2016-2017 school year, Barringer Academic Center continues to be a partial Title I school. I teach students from the neighborhood with ninety-four percent African American and six percent Indian. Therefore, a unit where students

get to learn about a different culture is beneficial. It will allow students to be more culturally sensitive while celebrating the different culture. Even with the lack of diversity in my class, I have a range of abilities. I have students who are on or above grade level, while I have students who are one or more grade levels behind.

Therefore, when you come into my classroom, you will see a lot of differentiation, ability grouping, and cooperative groups. The students work better in smaller ability groups. I have very low readers. A majority of my students are able to read fluently, but their comprehension is low. Ninety-four percent of my students aren't on grade level in reading comprehension. About seventy percent of my students are two or more grade levels below in comprehension. Therefore, they need more practice in reading comprehension. The unit will focus more on learning about the different cultures through different language arts standards.

## **Purpose**

I wanted to create a unit that exposed students to different cultures, holidays, and traditions. I want the students to understand how there are similarities and differences between different cultures. The students will study Brazil and Mexico and explore how they may be similar to traditions in the United States or each other.

A majority of the students in my class have only seen their neighborhoods. They do not get a chance to travel even within the city. Therefore, the unit will expand their knowledge of the world outside of Charlotte, NC. Exposure to the world outside of Charlotte will help students with cultural understanding and sensitivity. It will expose the students to a different way of thinking when it comes to other cultures.

The goal of the unit is to incorporate cultural literature into the Language Arts class. Third grade is a very important year for students because they are transitioning into high stake testing. Therefore, the unit will allow teachers to incorporate the cultural literature with comprehension skills.

## **Background**

Carnival<sup>i</sup>

Carnival is a pre-lent festival celebrating the last days before Lent.<sup>ii</sup> In Brazil, the celebration is a combination of Roman Catholic traditions and African traditions. Brazil has one of the most famous Carnival festivals.<sup>iii</sup> It is a four day celebration. There are festivals, parades, balls, and other celebrations that take place.<sup>iv</sup> In Brazil<sup>v</sup>, samba schools practice and participate in the festival.<sup>vi</sup> A samba school is a dance school. Children and adults both participate in the samba school.<sup>vii</sup> Other people participate in Carnival by making floats and costumes.<sup>viii</sup> For its part in Mexico, the

celebration is a five day event.<sup>ix</sup> There are parades and parties with food, floats and festivals. There is a Carnival King and Queen crowned at the celebration. In both Brazil and Mexico, people form groups for the parade.<sup>x</sup> They have a theme with costumes that everyone wears alike. During the parade, they dance to the band of music and party down the street.<sup>xi</sup> People from all over the world travel to participate in the Carnival festivities of the different countries.<sup>xii</sup>

### Cinco de Mayo<sup>xiii</sup>

Cinco de Mayo celebrates the defeat of the French army that was trying to take over a small city in Mexico.<sup>xiv</sup> The victory over the French army was a great victory for Mexico. It showed Mexico that they were able to defeat a powerful nation and keep control of their country.<sup>xv</sup> Cinco de Mayo is now a national holiday celebrated every year in Mexico on May 5<sup>th</sup>. The celebration consists of parades, food, festivals, dances, and music.<sup>xvi</sup> Cinco de Mayo is also celebrated in the United States due to the blend of cultures in the country. The United States and Mexico are beside each other on the same continent which allows for a lot of Mexicans to migrate to live in the United States.<sup>xvii</sup>

### Tiradentes Day<sup>xviii</sup>

Tiradentes Day is a day to celebrate Joaquim Jose da Silva Xavier's death in Brazil. It is celebrated on April 21<sup>st</sup>.<sup>xix</sup> He was one of the leaders responsible for the revolutionary movement. The reason behind the movement was for Mexico to become independent from Portugal.<sup>xx</sup> Xavier was hung when the plan was discovered. He is a hero in Brazil because of his bravery. Tiradentes Day is celebrated by closing all schools, banks and government offices.<sup>xxi</sup> There are tributes and speeches made at the national monument, Praca Tiradentes, to honor Xavier. Most Brazilian choose to stay home for the holiday.<sup>xxii</sup>

### Mexican Independence Day<sup>xxiii</sup>

In a village, Dolores, the people were poor and hungry. Eventually, they grew tired of the conditions. On September 16, 1810, the priest of the village, Father Hidalgo, encouraged the people to fight against the Spanish.<sup>xxiv</sup> Mexico fought many battles for over ten years against Spain. Mexico celebrates its independence from Spain on September 15<sup>th</sup>. Mexican Independence day is celebrated by a speech from the president, fireworks, festivals, rodeos, and dances.<sup>xxv</sup> Decorations for the celebration are the color of the Mexican flag. The Mexican flag is red, white and green. Some decorations for the day include flags, flowers, whistles, horns and confetti. The government, banks and schools are closed for the day.<sup>xxvi</sup> The holiday is similar to Fourth of July in the United States.

## Brazilian Independence<sup>xxvii</sup>

In 1530, the colonist of Portugal established colonies in Brazil. The Brazilians started a rebellion movement and finally rebelled against Portugal until 1888. Brazil celebrates its independence from Portugal on September 7<sup>th</sup>.<sup>xxviii</sup> The Brazilian Independence Day is celebrated with military parades, picnics, air shows, and concerts.<sup>xxix</sup> Most Brazilians celebrate the holiday with balloons, streamers, and banners. In addition, they have their country flag flying. The day is spent with family and friends. The Brazilians have a feast for the holiday.<sup>xxx</sup>

## Day of the Dead<sup>xxxii</sup> and All Souls' Day<sup>xxxiii</sup>

Day of the Dead and All Souls' Day both celebrate and honor family members that have died. Day of the Dead is a Mexican celebration that takes place on November 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.<sup>xxxiii</sup> While All Souls' Day is a Brazilian celebration that takes place on November 2<sup>nd</sup>.<sup>xxxiv</sup> In both holidays, the families go to the graveyards to decorate the graves. They reminisce on the good times and share stories. For Day of the Dead, the families bring the favorite things of the person who has passed. They believe the spirits come back to visit. One traditional food for the Day of the Dead is sweet bread, Pan de Muertos.<sup>xxxv</sup> It is a bread that is sprinkled with sugar or sesame seeds. The bread goes back to the Christian belief of how the bread represents Jesus' body. They feel the bread represents the deceased people. Sugar skulls are also made and decorated. While in Brazil, the holiday is more of a religious celebration. Holy water, candles and flowers are left at the gravesite.<sup>xxxvi</sup>

## Christmas<sup>xxxvii</sup>

Christmas in Brazil and Mexico both take place on December 25<sup>th</sup>. In Brazil, Christmas can be celebrated on the beach due to the warm temperatures.<sup>xxxviii</sup> Some Brazilians set up a nativity scene. Papai Noel is Santa Claus in Brazil. The children leave their shoes near an open window in order for Papai Noel to leave them gifts in the shoes.<sup>xxxix</sup> On Christmas day, gifts are hidden around the house and children have to search for the gifts. While in Mexico<sup>xl</sup>, Christmas is a Christian holiday that lasts for two weeks. Therefore, most Mexicans go to church for Christmas and visit family on Christmas Eve. In Mexico, traditional food is eaten on Christmas Eve like salads and tamales.<sup>xli</sup>

## New Year's Eve in Brazil<sup>xlii</sup>

Fireworks, music, and dancing take place on the beach in Brazil for New Year's Eve. They offer the Goddess of the Water, Iemanjá, gifts giving thanks for the past and future years. The New Year in Brazil starts January 1<sup>st</sup>.<sup>xliii</sup> Another tradition consists of wearing clothing to welcome in the New Year. Other colors can be added

to the white that represent resolutions for the New Year.<sup>xliv</sup> For example, red or pink represent romance; purple represents inspirations; green represents prosperity; blue represents harmony; orange represents success in professions.<sup>xlv</sup> Another tradition is represented by the lucky number seven. In order to have a wallet full or money for the next year, a person will chew seven pomegranate seeds.<sup>xlvi</sup> If a person wanted abundance for the New Year, then they would eat seven grapes. If you jump seven waves, then you make one wish for each wave as your jump it.<sup>xlvii</sup>

### New Year's Day in Mexico<sup>xlviii</sup>

New Year's Day is celebrated on January 1<sup>st</sup> with most people out of school or off work. In Mexico, New Year's Day is considered a public holiday.<sup>xlix</sup> On the eve of New Year's, fireworks take place and many other traditions take place in Mexico. On New Year's Day, there are a few good luck traditions.<sup>l</sup> If a person wears yellow underwear, then they will have good luck with money. In order to have good luck in love, then a person should wear red.<sup>li</sup> Another tradition deals with eating twelve grapes at midnight representing the twelve months of the year. Sour grapes represent a sour month of the year. For example, if the second grape is sour, then the second month of the year will be sour.<sup>lii</sup> Lastly, if a person finds the coin that is baked in the sweet bread, then they will have good luck for the upcoming year.<sup>liii</sup>

### Content Objectives

The unit will focus on five reading objectives. The five objectives deal with ask and answer questions, context clues, character traits, text features, and comparisons.

RL 3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

- Student Objective Statement: I can answer questions by referring to the text to find evidence.
- Throughout the unit, there are read-aloud and guided reading books used to learn about the different holidays. The teacher will ask a few questions and the students will have to find evidence in the reading to help respond to the question. Through answering the questions, the students will demonstrate an understanding of the text.

RL 3.3 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events

- Student Objective Statements: I can describe characters in a story and explain how their actions affect the story. I will describe how each person in the story feels about what is happening.
- The students will read and hear stories about different characters living in or from different Hispanic cultures. The children will be celebrating a Hispanic holiday.

The students will describe the characters and their traits using evidence from the story. The students will answer questions about the characters and the motivations of the characters.

RL 3.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language

- Student Objective Statement: I will use context clues to determine the meaning of unknown words.
- Throughout the read-aloud, the teacher will answer a few questions dealing with the meaning of words or phrases based on how they are used in the context of the reading. The hope is that the students have had instruction with context clues and can practice the skills. However, if they have had limited instruction, then the teacher can model context clues to find the meaning of the unfamiliar words.

RI 3.7 Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).

- Student Objective Statements: I can show what I have learned from informational text and illustrations by answering questions about where, when, why and how. I can use the parts of a text that stand out to find information quickly. I can find the answers to specific questions within the stories that I read.
- The students will read a few nonfiction books on different cultural holidays and demonstrate understanding of the text through different comprehension activities and questions. The use of illustrations will help students comprehend the text. The students will show comprehension by writing and drawing about the information learned. In addition, there will be a variety of comprehension activities throughout the lesson.

RI 3.9 Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.

- Student Objective Statement: I can compare and contrast the most important ideas and details in two pieces of information.
- The students will compare and contrast the cultural holidays throughout activities in the unit. The students will constantly compare and contrast the holidays in Mexico, Brazil, and the United States. The comparisons will allow the students to see that there are many similarities between the different countries' holidays.

## **Teaching Strategies**

Read-Aloud

The students enjoy coming to the carpet and hearing the teacher read a story aloud to them. The strategy allows the students to move from their desk and sit with a different group of students. In addition, the students are able to turn and talk to a different partner. During turn and talk, the students are posed a question, given time to think about the question, and then discuss the answer with a partner. A read-aloud is a time where the teacher can model thinking about the reading while reading the text aloud to students. In addition, the read-aloud allows students who have difficulty reading to focus only on the comprehension of the text.

### Turn and Talk

The students love to turn and talk to a partner. The strategy allows all students to be able to share their answer or idea with a partner. The teacher poses a question and the students will turn and talk to their partner. Unfortunately, we aren't able to call on all students for every question. However, the strategy allows students to be able to share their thoughts even if the thoughts aren't told to the entire class.

### Graphic Organizers

The students will use Venn diagrams to compare and contrast different concepts throughout the unit. Comparing and contrasting is a very important skill in reading, therefore, we will be comparing celebrations and holidays. In addition, the students will complete story maps for different reading text.

### Questioning with Text Evidence

Throughout the lesson, the teacher will read aloud a few books while students will read some books in small group. During and after the read aloud, the students are asked questions about the text. The students must give evidence from the text that supports their answer.

### Small Group Instruction/Guided Reading Group

The unit incorporates small group instruction. Small group instruction will allow students to read a book on their reading level with guidance from the teacher while incorporating comprehension skills. All of the students will read the same text, however, the text will be on a different level. The leveled texts allows students to learn the information on their reading level with success instead of frustration. Small group instruction is a great way to incorporate the same information with different level text for students.



## Lessons and Activities

### Introductory Activity

Purpose: The purpose of the activity is to see what the students already know and want to know about Brazil and Mexico. The activity pre-assesses the students through a KWL chart.

Materials:

- [KWL chart](#) (What I Know, What I Want to Know, What I Learn)
- [Google Maps](#) (Brazil, Mexico, World)
- Smartboard
- folder (one for each student)
- construction paper (two for each child)

1. The students will complete a KWL chart on the holidays and traditions in Brazil and Mexico. The students will tell what they want to know and at least 3 questions that they want to learn about the holidays and traditions in Brazil and Mexico.
2. Display the google maps on the Smartboard. Search Brazil and Mexico to show the students the locations that they will be studying. As a class, discuss what they notice about the countries and their locations.
3. It may be beneficial to display a world map and locate Brazil, Mexico, and the United States.
4. The students will make a book for the unit. The book will consist of the activities from the unit. Give each student a folder with two sheets of construction paper in it. The students can design their cover page and back page throughout the unit using pictures and words from each activity or at the end of the unit. The folder will be used to keep all of their work together in one place.

### Activity 1

Purpose: The purpose of the activity is to introduce the students to Carnival in Mexico and Brazil.

*Materials*

- Comprehension questions
- [Carnival in Brazil video](#)

-*Cultural Traditions in Brazil* (section Carnival, pages 10-11)<sup>liv</sup>

-*Cultural Traditions in Mexico* (section Carnival, pages 16-17)<sup>lv</sup>

-Carnival questions

-egg shells

-confetti

-egg dye

-tissue paper

-shoe box (1 per group)

-construction paper

-feathers

-other material that can be used in creating a float

-Venn diagram (labeled Carnival with comparisons for Brazil and Mexico)

1. The students will watch the video from the Brazilian carnival. Before watching, set the purpose by asking the students to write down descriptive words about Carnival in Brazil while watching the video. The descriptive words should include what the students see and hear from the video. After the video, discuss what the students saw and heard.
2. Read and discuss *Cultural Traditions in Brazil*.
3. The students will trifold their paper and answer the following three questions about Carnival or use the attachment with Carnival questions.

Brazilian Carnival

When is Carnival?	Why do they celebrate Carnival?	What do they do at Carnival?
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4. Read and discuss *Cultural Traditions in Mexico*.<sup>lvi</sup>
5. The students will flip their trifold paper over and answer the following three questions about Carnival.

Mexican Carnival

When is Carnival?	Why do they celebrate Carnival?	What do they do at Carnival?
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6. The students will make cascarones. In order to make cascarones, you will need to stuff dyed egg shells with confetti. Then close the egg shell with tissue paper.
7. The students will work in small groups to create a carnival float using a shoe box a construction paper, confetti, glitter, feathers and any other material needed to create the float.
8. As a small group, the students will work together to complete a Venn diagram comparing Carnival in Brazil and Mexico. They should include at least one detail for each.

## Activity 2

Purpose: The purpose of the activity is to learn about Cinco de Mayo and Tiradentes Day. Each holiday is important to the two countries, therefore, the students will learn about the cultural importance of each holiday.

### Materials

-*Cultural Traditions in Brazil* (section Tiradentes Day, pages 16-17)<sup>lvii</sup>

-*Cultural Traditions in Mexico* (section Cinco de Mayo, pages 20-21)<sup>lviii</sup>

-*It's Cinco de Mayo, Carlos!*<sup>lix</sup>

-[Journal Entry](#)

-[Cinco de Mayo video segment](#)

1. Read and discuss the section on Tiradentes Day. Why is Tiradentes Day is celebrated?
2. Create a poster honoring Joaquim José.
3. Read and discuss the section on Cinco de Mayo. Why is Cinco de Mayo celebrated?
4. Watch the video segment on Cinco de Mayo.
5. Journal Entry: Write a journal entry as if you were a member of the Mexican army after winning the battle on May 5<sup>th</sup>. How do you feel? What would have happened if your country lost the battle? Draw a picture at the end of your journal entry.
6. In small groups, the students will read and discuss *It's Cinco de Mayo Carlos!* The teacher will display the questions by page number on the board so that the students can discuss as a group and write written responses. In the book, the teacher could mark with a star the pages that have questions to remind students to respond. Remind the students to provide text evidence for each question. The students should be able to give a sentence that helps support their answer to the question. A highlighter can be used to mark the text evidence for each question.
  - (page 3) Why does Mark talk about Cinco de Mayo when walking past the city park?
  - (page 5) How do you think Carlos feels about the dance for the festival? Why does Maria ask Carlos to dance?
  - (page 7) Why did the battle start?
  - (page 8) Who won the battle? Why is Cinco de Mayo celebrated?
  - (page 9) Why does Carlo want to learn the dance? Is Carlos excited about the dance?
  - (page 10) Was Carlos good or bad at learning the dance?
  - (page 13) What did Carlos and Maria see at the festival?
  - (page 16) How did Carlos and Maria do in the dance?

- After reading: What lesson did Carlos learn about facing his fears? What can you learn from Carlos?
- Independent Practice: Write one character trait that describes Carlos. Give a detail from the reading that supports the character trait. Draw a picture of Carlos celebrating Cinco de Mayo with his family.

### Activity 3

Purpose: The purpose of the activity is to learn about Mexican Independence Day and Brazilian Independence Day. In addition, the students will be able to compare the two holidays to the Fourth of July.

#### Materials

- Cultural Traditions in Brazil* (section Independence Day, pages 24-25)<sup>lx</sup>
- Cultural Traditions in Mexico* (section Mexican Independence Day, pages 22-23)<sup>lxi</sup>
- Carlos's Family Celebration*<sup>lxii</sup>
- [Mexican flag bookmark](#)
- [Mexican War for Independence video](#)

1. Ask the students the following questions about Independence Day in the United States?
  - When do we celebrate Independence Day?
  - What do you do to celebrate Independence Day? (make a list on the board of students responses)
  - Why do we celebrate Independence Day? Explain to students that we were governed by England. We are celebrating our separation from England so that we can be our own country.
2. Read and discuss *Cultural Traditions in Brazil*.
3. How do they celebrate Independence Day in Brazil? (make a list)
4. Watch the video on Mexican War for Independence.
5. Read and discuss *Cultural Traditions in Mexico*.
6. How do they celebrate Mexican Independence Day? (make a list)
7. Circle all of the common traditions between the United States, Brazil, and Mexico.
8. Independent Practice: Draw a picture and describe one of the common traditions from all three Independence Days. The students will share the common tradition in small groups.
9. Read and discuss *Carlos's Family Celebration*. Ask the following questions:
  - Before Reading: What do you think Carlos is celebrating?
  - During Reading: What are Carlos and Selena celebrating?
  - After Reading: In small groups, list out at least 5 ways Carlos and Selena prepared for the celebration.
  - The students will color the Mexican flag on a bookmark.

- Independent Practice Choose a character (Carlos or Selena) and describe the character using at least one character trait. What did the character say or do to show the character trait?

#### Activity 4

Purpose: The purpose of the activity is to learn about the Day of the Dead and All Souls' Day through fiction and nonfiction reading books. The activity incorporates leveled reading books for small group instruction.

#### Materials

- Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead)*<sup>lxiii</sup>
- [Día de los Muertos \(Day of the Dead\) vocabulary](#)
- Día for Maria* reading level J, M, P<sup>lxiv</sup>
- [Día for Maria reading level J, M, P vocabulary](#)
- [Dia for Maria Story Map](#)
- Cultural Traditions in Brazil* (section All Souls' Day, pages 28-29)<sup>lxv</sup>
- Cultural Traditions in Mexico* (section Day of the Dead, pages 24-25)<sup>lxvi</sup>
- [Day of the Dead mask and facts](#)
- [Day of the Dead video segment](#)
- [All Soul's Day video segment](#)
- [Sugar Skulls instructions](#)<sup>lxvii</sup>
- [Day of the Dead multiplication color page](#)

1. The teacher will show the video segment for All Soul's Day.
2. Read and discuss *Cultural Traditions in Brazil*. How are loved ones honored in Brazil?
3. The teacher will show the video segment for the Day of the Dead.
4. Read and discuss *Cultural Traditions in Mexico*. How are loved ones honored in Mexico?
5. The students will make Sugar Skulls.
6. Read the fact sheet and add one more fact about the Day of the Dead. Color the skull mask.
7. As a class, read *Día de los Muertos* and ask the following questions.
  - Before Reading: Have you had a family member, friend, or family friend pass away? How did you celebrate the person after they passed away?
  - During Reading: As a class, read the introduction. Based on the picture, how do you think the people feel? Who does the parade honor? The teacher will assign each group a section to read and teach the class. In small groups, the students will create a poster with the heading of the section in the middle. The students will scatter pictures and words on the poster that describe the section they read.

- After Reading: Complete posters and share them as a class. The teacher will facilitate the discussion on each section.
- The students will complete the vocabulary trifold for the vocabulary words for their book. The students can fold their paper in thirds. Another option instead of the trifold is to use the attached vocabulary sheet for this activity

vocabulary word	picture	definition
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8. In guided reading, read *Día for Maria*.
- The students will read Focus Question to set a purpose for reading.
  - The students will read the book as a group, choral reading, or independently depending on the level.
  - After reading: Why did the family celebrate Ratana on October 31<sup>st</sup> instead of November 1<sup>st</sup> or November 2<sup>nd</sup>?
  - Turn and Talk: The students will answer the focus question.
  - The students will complete the story map in small groups. The story map can be written on a sheet of chart paper or on the board. The group is given 4 sticky notes that represent the four sections. As a group, the students will discuss the four sections and write their answers on the sticky note. The sticky notes will be placed on the chart. After all students have posted on the chart, the answers for each section will be discussed. If you want the students to work independently, then I have attached a graphic organizer.

Dia for Maria Story Map

Main Characters:	Setting:
Problem:	Solution:

- The students will complete the vocabulary trifold for the vocabulary words for their book. Each book will have a different set of vocabulary words based on their level. The students can fold their paper in thirds or use the attached vocabulary sheet.

vocabulary word	picture	definition
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- The students will complete the Writing and Art activity connections from the book.
  - The students will complete the Social Studies and Art activity connections from the book.
9. The teacher will draw a picture of Maria or write Dia for Maria in the middle of a sheet of chart paper. Give each students a sticky note to write a character trait that describes Maria. The students will place the character traits on the chart paper. Independently, the students will draw Maria and write 3

- character traits. In addition to the character traits, the students will need to write what Maria says or does that shows each character trait.
10. What do the Day of the Dead and All Souls' Day have in common?
  11. Create and decorate a mask that honors a loved one, friend, or celebrity that has passed.
  12. Math Connection: The students can complete the Day of the Dead multiplication color page.

### Activity 5

Purpose: The purpose of the activity is to learn about Christmas in Mexico and Brazil.

#### *Materials*

- Cultural Traditions in Brazil* (section Christmas, pages 6-7)<sup>lxviii</sup>
- Cultural Traditions in Mexico* (section Christmas in Mexico, pages 28-29)<sup>lxix</sup>
- Venn diagram
- sand

1. Read and discuss *Cultural Traditions in Brazil*.
2. Draw a picture of Papai Noel on the beach and glue sand on the picture. On the paper, describe why Papai Noel is on the beach in Brazil and describe how Christmas is celebrated in Brazil.
3. Read and discuss *Cultural Traditions in Mexico*
4. Complete a Venn diagram in small group comparing and contrasting Christmas in the United States and Mexico.

### Activity 6

Purpose: The purpose of the activity is to learn about New Year's Eve and New Year's Day traditions around the world.

#### *Materials*

- Happy New Year Around the World*<sup>lxx</sup>

1. (Turn and Talk) What do you and your family do on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day?
2. "The book we will read today is a nonfiction text on New Year's around the world. What traditions do you think other people around the world have for New Years?"
3. I-Spy: The students will play a game of I-Spy where they will look for text features on the page and say, "I Spy".

4. Before each page is read, the students will look at the page for as many text features that they can spy.
5. In small groups, the students will discuss all of the text features and share one with the class. Text features may be repeated. The students will describe how the text feature helps them understand the text.
6. The students will turn and talk to discuss the following comprehensions questions.
  - (page 4) Give an example of how customs started in one place and spread to another place. Text Features: pictures, captions, bolded words
  - (page 5) Have you ever been to a New Year's Eve party? Did you stay up to midnight to blow noisemakers, kiss a loved one, or raise a glass to toast? Text Features: pictures, captions
  - (page 6) How are other countries New Year's Eve celebrations similar to the celebrations in the United States? Text Features: pictures, captions
  - (page 7) How are dishes used in New Year's traditions in Denmark? In Wales, why do they open the back door first and then open the front door? Text Features: pictures, captions
  - (page 8) How many grapes do they eat in Spain? What happens if the tenth grape is sour? What other places eat grapes as a New Year's custom? How is the grape custom different from Spain to Peru? Text Features: pictures, captions
  - (page 9) Have you ever attended or watched a parade on New Year's Day? Text Features: picture, captions, bolded word
  - (page 10) Why do people wear yellow? What is the polar bear plunge? Text Features: picture, caption, bolded word
  - (page 11) How does the picture help you understand the New Year's tradition in Kenya? What is a synonym for dhows? What happens to the winning boat? Text Features: picture, caption
  - (page 12) How are the Chinese New Year traditions different from other traditions? Why do Chinese New Year celebrations take place in the United States? Text Features: picture, caption
  - (page 13) How is Rosh Hashanah different and similar from the Chinese New Year? U.S. New Year?
  - (page 14) For Muslims, how is the day of New Year different from all other traditions studied in the reading?
7. After reading the book, the students will work in small groups to create their own New Year's Eve or New Year's Day tradition. The tradition should be written in at least 2 complete sentences. The students should include a picture.
8. The students will share the traditions with the class.



### *Literacy Center*

1. Place the book in a literacy center.
2. The students will create a New Year's Eve and New Year's Day Traditions book.
3. The students will reread the book.
4. The students will write a tradition for each country listed in the book.
5. The students will draw a picture for each tradition.

### Activity 7

Purpose: The purpose of the activity is to learn about New Year's Eve and New Year's Day in Mexico and Brazil.

#### *Materials*

- Cultural Traditions in Brazil* (section New Year's Eve, pages 8-9)<sup>lxxi</sup>
- Cultural Traditions in Mexico* (section New Year's Day, pages 12-13)<sup>lxxii</sup>

1. Read and discuss *Cultural Traditions in Brazil*.
2. Draw a picture of Iemanja with some of the things people offer her as thanks.
3. Read and discuss *Cultural Traditions in Mexico*.
4. Complete a concept map with good luck for Mexican New Year's Day in the middle. Write and draw the four things that Mexicans believe bring them good luck on New Year's Day.

### Activity 8 - Project

Purpose: The purpose of the project is to represent what the students learned about the holidays and traditions in Brazil and Mexico. The mask will represent one of the holidays or traditions.

#### *Materials*

- Chatterpix app
- camera
- confetti
- construction paper
- paint
- markers, crayons, color pencils
- glitter
- sequins
- feathers
- balloons (one for each child)
- glue

- newspaper cut into strips
  - buttons
  - any materials that could be used on the masks
  - iPad or Smartphone
  - [Paper machete instructions](#)
1. Tell students to write down their favorite holiday studied.
  2. Write 5 words that describe the holiday.
  3. Explain to the students that they will create a mask that represents the holiday.
  4. Begin making paper machete masks.
  5. Once the paper machete dries, the students will begin painting and designing their masks.
  6. The students will write 5 complete sentences using the 5 words used to describe the holiday.
  7. The teacher will take a picture of the mask.
  8. The teacher will upload the picture into Chatterpix and the students will record their 5 sentences.

Extension Activity: Write a story about a character wearing your mask for the holiday.

### **End of Unit Assessment**

#### *Materials*

- markers (different colors for each member of the small group)
  - white paper with the phrase, Holidays and Traditions in Brazil and Mexico, written in the middle (1 sheet of paper for each small group)
  - Timer (approximately 5 minutes)
1. Explain to students that each member of the group will be given a different color marker to draw and record everything they learned about Brazilian and Mexican traditions on their group paper. Explain that they should draw pictures and write words that represent what they have learned about each country. They are not allowed to talk with group members. They should draw and write until the timer goes off.
  2. After completion of the graffiti activity, the students will share their work of art with the class and describe what they have learned about masks.
  3. The students will add information for what they learned to the KWL.

4. The teacher will create a collage with the graffiti to post in the room.
5. The students will add to the K-W-L chart with facts that they learned about holidays and traditions in Brazil and Mexico.
6. Create the student book of work. Staple all of the assignments and activities together with the two sheets of construction paper. The students can draw pictures and words on the cover and back.

## **Appendix 1-Teaching Standards**

The unit will focus on five reading objectives. The five objectives deal with ask and answer questions, context clues, character traits, text features, and comparisons.

RL 3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

- Throughout the unit, there are read-aloud and guided reading books used to learn about the different holidays. The teacher will ask a few questions and the students will have to find evidence in the reading to help respond to the question. Through answering the questions, the students will demonstrate an understanding of the text.

RL 3.3 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events

- The students will read and hear stories about different characters living in or from different Hispanic cultures. The children will be celebrating a Hispanic holiday. The students will describe the characters and their traits using evidence from the story. The students will answer questions about the characters and the motivations of the characters.

RL 3.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language

- Throughout the read-aloud, the teacher will answer a few questions dealing with the meaning of words or phrases based on how they are used in the context of the reading. The hope is that the students have had instruction with context clues and can practice the skills. However, if they have had limited instruction, then the teacher can model context clues to find the meaning of the unfamiliar words.

RI 3.7 Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).

- The students will read a few nonfiction books on different cultural holidays and demonstrate understanding of the text through different comprehension activities and questions. The use of illustrations will help students comprehend the text. The students will show comprehension by writing and drawing about the information learned. In addition, there will be a variety of comprehension activities throughout the lesson.

RI 3.9 Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.

- The students will compare and contrast the cultural holidays throughout activities in the unit. The students will constantly compare and contrast the holidays in Mexico, Brazil, and the United States. The comparisons will allow the students to see that there are many similarities between the different countries' holidays.

## Appendix 2 - List of Classroom Materials

### Activity 1

- Comprehension questions
- [Carnival in Brazil video](#)
- Cultural Traditions in Brazil* (section Carnival, pages 10-11)<sup>lxxiii</sup>
- Cultural Traditions in Mexico* (section Carnival, pages 16-17)<sup>lxxiv</sup>
- [Carnival questions](#)
- egg shells
- confetti
- egg dye
- tissue paper
- shoe box (1 per group)
- construction paper
- feathers
- other material that can be used in creating a float
- Venn diagram (labeled Carnival with comparisons for Brazil and Mexico)

### Activity 2

- Cultural Traditions in Brazil* (section Tiradentes Day, pages 16-17)<sup>lxxv</sup>
- Cultural Traditions in Mexico* (section Cinco de Mayo, pages 20-21)<sup>lxxvi</sup>
- It's Cinco de Mayo, Carlos!*<sup>lxxvii</sup>
- [Journal Entry](#)
- [Cinco de Mayo video segment](#)

### Activity 3

- Cultural Traditions in Brazil* (section Independence Day, pages 24-25)<sup>lxxviii</sup>
- Cultural Traditions in Mexico* (section Mexican Independence Day, pages 22-23)<sup>lxxix</sup>
- Carlos's Family Celebration*<sup>lxxx</sup>
- [Mexican flag bookmark](#)
- [Mexican War for Independence video](#)

### Activity 4

- Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead)*<sup>lxxxi</sup>
- [Día de los Muertos \(Day of the Dead\) vocabulary](#)
- Día for Maria* reading level J, M, P<sup>lxxxii</sup>
- [Día for Maria reading level J, M, P vocabulary](#)
- [Dia for Maria Story Map](#)

- Cultural Traditions in Brazil* (section All Souls' Day, pages 28-29)<sup>lxxxiii</sup>
- Cultural Traditions in Mexico* (section Day of the Dead, pages 24-25)<sup>lxxxiv</sup>
- [Day of the Dead mask and facts](#)
- [Day of the Dead video segment](#)
- [All Soul's Day video segment](#)
- [Sugar Skulls instructions](#)<sup>lxxxv</sup>
- [Day of the Dead multiplication color page](#)

#### Activity 5

- Cultural Traditions in Brazil* (section Christmas, pages 6-7)<sup>lxxxvi</sup>
- Cultural Traditions in Mexico* (section Christmas in Mexico, pages 28-29)<sup>lxxxvii</sup>
- Venn diagram
- sand

#### Activity 6

- Happy New Year Around the World*<sup>lxxxviii</sup>

#### Activity 7

- Cultural Traditions in Brazil* (section New Year's Eve, pages 8-9)<sup>lxxxix</sup>
- Cultural Traditions in Mexico* (section New Year's Day, pages 12-13)<sup>xc</sup>

#### Activity 8 - Project

- Chatterpix app
- camera
- confetti
- construction paper
- paint
- markers, crayons, color pencils
- glitter
- sequins
- feathers
- balloons (one for each child)
- glue
- newspaper cut into strips
- buttons
- any materials that could be used on the masks
- iPad or Smartphone
- [Paper machete instructions](#)

## Student Resources

Aloian, Molly. *Cultural Traditions in Brazil*. New York: Crabtree Pub., 2012. The book tells about the different holidays and traditions celebrated in Brazil. All of the Brazilian holidays studied in the unit are in this book.

Boelts, Maribeth. *It's Cinco de Mayo, Carlos!* Learning A to Z. The book is about a boy name Carlos. Carlos is preparing to celebrate Cinco de Mayo by participating in one of the dances at the festival. The book is from Reading A to Z, therefore, it can be printed, assigned to students on Raz-Kids, or displayed on the board.

Colman Communications. Celebrating Cinco de Mayo in San Antonio, Texas. Video Segment. 1998. <http://www.discoveryeducation.com> (accessed November 18, 2016). - See more at: <https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/videos/0d4f422d-9c1c-4813-b113-04ecd7b7da45?hasLocalHost=false#sthash.5w7tIMwC.dpuf> The video shows the students how Cinco de Mayo is celebrated in San Antonio. It give the students a representation of the holiday celebrated in the United States.

Di Bello, Lorena F. *Carlos's Family Celebration*. Learning A to Z. The book is about how Carlos and his sister, Selena, prepare the house to celebrate Mexican Independence Day. The book is from Reading A to Z, therefore, it can be printed, assigned to students on Raz-Kids, or displayed on the board.

Discovery Channel. Carnival in Brazil. Video Segment. 2006. <http://www.discoveryeducation.com> (accessed November 18, 2016). - See more at: <https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/videos/342cf4c1-1e05-4a28-a817-54efc8db33e0?hasLocalHost=false#sthash.kbdXvM34.dpuf> The video follows a girl who is participating in Carnival. It shows the days leading up to Carnival. In addition, the video shows her performing in Carnival.

Discovery Education. Cuanajo: Day of the Dead Celebrations. Video Segment. 2008. <http://www.discoveryeducation.com> (accessed November 18, 2016). - See more at: <https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/videos/8f89c3d4-732e-48f2-8955-fc61a22acac4?hasLocalHost=false#sthash.NGJTeTLi.dpuf> The video provides students with a visual representation of the Day of the Dead celebration. It shows the students how the holiday is celebrated.

Discovery Education. The Mexican War for Independence. Video Segment. 2006. <http://www.discoveryeducation.com> (accessed November 18, 2016). - See more at: <https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/videos/8961317c-3eb5-449f-9f02-8c3085a1a3d5?hasLocalHost=false#sthash.kcHRbqwd.dpuf> The video gives students a visual representation of the Mexican War for Independence. It provides students with facts about the war.



EV Productions, Inc.. Trick or Treating and Halloween Today (K-5). Video Segment. 2016. <http://www.discoveryeducation.com> (accessed November 18, 2016). - See more at: <https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/videos/696b3067-789c-492a-8971-94bb59a310f0?hasLocalHost=false#sthash.T3moVhoj.dpuf> The video compares how trick or treating for Halloween has a similarity to All Souls' Day.

Fimbres, Gabrielle. *Dia De Los Muertos (Day of the Dead)*. Learning A to Z. The nonfiction book teaches about the Day of the Dead. The book is from Reading A to Z, therefore, it can be printed, assigned to students on Raz-Kids, or displayed on the board.

Follett, Katerine. *Dia for Maria*. Learning A to Z. The book is about how Maria celebrates the life of her cat that passed. The celebration takes place the day before the Day of the Dead. The book is from Reading A to Z, therefore, it can be printed, assigned to students on Raz-Kids, or displayed on the board.

Harkrader, Lisa. *Happy New Year Around the World*. Learning A to Z. The nonfiction book teaches about how countries around the world celebrate New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. The book is from Reading A to Z, therefore, it can be printed, assigned to students on Raz-Kids, or displayed on the board.

Peppas, Lynn. *Cultural Traditions in Mexico*. New York: Crabtree Pub., 2012. The book tells about the different holidays and traditions celebrated in Mexico. All of the Mexican holidays studied in the unit are in this book.

### **Teacher Resources**

"All Souls Day." All Souls Day. Accessed November 18, 2016. <http://www.fisheaters.com/customtimeafterpentecost12ac.html>. The website gives the history of All Souls' Day. There are recipes on the website along with facts about the Day of the Dead.

"All Souls' Day." Encyclopedia Britannica Online. Accessed October 27, 2016. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/All-Souls-Day-Christianity>. The online encyclopedia gives information on All Soul's Day. The website gives the date and history of All Souls' Day.

"Brazil." National Geographic Kids. Accessed October 27, 2016. <http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/explore/countries/brazil/#brazil-soccer.jpg>. The website gives facts on Brazil. There is information on Brazilian independence from Portugal.

"Carnival." Encyclopedia Britannica Online. Accessed October 27, 2016. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Carnival-pre-Lent-festival>. The online encyclopedia gives information on Carnival. It gives the Catholic background for the holiday.

"Cinco De Mayo." History.com. Accessed October 27, 2016. <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/cinco-de-mayo>. The website explains why Cinco de Mayo is celebrated. The website provides information, videos, pictures and speeches on Cinco de Mayo.

Deckker, Zilah, David J. Robinson, and João Cezar De Castro Rocha. *Brazil*. The book is about Brazil. It gives pictures and facts all about Brazil.

"Independence Day in Mexico." Independence Day in Mexico. Accessed October 27, 2016. <https://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/mexico/independence-day>. The website provides information on Mexico's battle that leads to their Independence Day. The website provides information on how it is celebrated along with facts.

Momsen, Richard, Ronald E. Scheidner, Preston E. James, Luciana Martin, E. B. Burns, and Robert E. Poppino. "Brazil." Encyclopedia Britannica Online. Accessed October 27, 2016. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Brazil/Performing-arts#toc222832>. The online encyclopedia provides information on carnival in Brazil. It shows a picture and information on who participates in Carnival.

## Notes

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<sup>iii</sup> "Carnival." Encyclopedia Britannica Online. Accessed October 27, 2016. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Carnival-pre-Lent-festival>.

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<sup>v</sup> Momsen, Richard, Ronald E. Scheidner, Preston E. James, Luciana Martin, E. B. Burns, and Robert E. Poppino. "Brazil." Encyclopedia Britannica Online. Accessed October 27, 2016. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Brazil/Performing-arts#toc222832>.

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<sup>vii</sup> Momsen, Richard, Ronald E. Scheidner, Preston E. James, Luciana Martin, E. B. Burns, and Robert E. Poppino. "Brazil." Encyclopedia Britannica Online. Accessed October 27, 2016. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Brazil/Performing-arts#toc222832>.

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- ix Momsen, Richard, Ronald E. Scheidner, Preston E. James, Luciana Martin, E. B. Burns, and Robert E. Poppino. "Brazil." Encyclopedia Britannica Online. Accessed October 27, 2016. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Brazil/Performing-arts#toc222832>.
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- lxiii Fimbres, Gabrielle. *Dia De Los Muertos (Day of the Dead)*. Learning A to Z.
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