Art in Mexico:
Communicating across Centuries and Cultures

Author: Brenda Prescott
School: Kentucky School for the Deaf

Subject Area: Arts & Humanities
Topic: Mexican Art
Grade Level: K–5
Time Frame: Approx. 6 weeks with classes meeting 1 or 2 times per week

Summary of Unit:

Our entire elementary school will be involved in this unit. During an assembly at the beginning of the unit we will introduce the unit. Afterwards we will meet during our regular art and music/dance classes. Each class will select a project to complete for the unit. We will then come together as a group to share what we have learned. We will ask the Danville Community Arts Center to host a display of our work. In the past they have done this for us as well as having an opening night with a reception. Worksheets and PowerPoint are available for download from this Web site (http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/etext/lilas/outreach/fulbright10/) or the Kentucky School for the Deaf (http://www.ksd.k12.ky.us/STAFF/prescott/HomepagePrescott%27sRoom.htm). When the unit has been taught at KSD there will be pictures of completed projects and additional information posted on our Web site on the Elementary page under Brenda Prescott’s name.

Unit goals:

- To learn that people have communicated or expressed ideas through art for many hundreds of years.
- To understand that although people are different they share some common experiences and attitudes.
➢ To experience creating a work of art in the manner that resembles art typical of Mexico.

Stage 1: Desired Results

Established Goals:

From the Kentucky Core Content 4.1:

**Purposes for Creating the Arts**
The arts have played a major role throughout the history of humans. As the result of the power of the arts to communicate on a basic human level, they continue to serve a variety of purposes in society. The arts are used for artistic expression to portray specific emotions or feelings, to tell stories in a narrative manner, to imitate nature and to persuade others. The arts bring meaning to ceremonies, rituals, celebrations and commemorations. Additionally, they are used for recreation and to support recreational activities. Students experience the arts in a variety of roles through their own creations and performances and through those of others. Through their activities and observations, students learn to create arts and use them for a variety of purposes in society.

**Humanities in the Arts**
The arts reflect the beliefs, feelings and ideas of those who create them. Experiencing the arts allows one to experience time, place and/or personality. By experiencing the arts of various cultures, students can actually gain insight into the beliefs, feelings and ideas of those cultures. Students also have the opportunity to experience how the arts can influence society through analysis of arts in their own lives and the arts of other cultures and historical periods. Studying the historical and cultural stylistic periods in the arts offers students an opportunity to understand the world past and present and to learn to appreciate their own cultural heritage. Looking at the interrelationships of multiple arts disciplines across cultures and historical periods is the focus of humanities in the arts.

**AH-04-2.2.1**
Students will identify how dance has been a part of cultures and periods throughout history.

**AH-04-2.4.1**
Students will identify how visual art has been a part of cultures and time periods throughout history.

**AH-EP-4.4.2**
Students will choose media to create artworks with a basic understanding of how to use the media.
**Student Understanding (U), Knowledge (K) and Skills (S):**

(U) Students will understand that, although people are different, they share some common experiences and attitudes that are shown through the arts and humanities.

(U) Students will understand that art can be a non-verbal form of expression of thoughts, values, feelings, and events.

(K) Students will gain knowledge of various art forms found in Mexico.

(S) Students will develop skills in various forms of art media.

**Sample Essential Questions:**

Looking at this work of art, what do you think the artist is trying to communicate?

Can you make art like this?

Looking at this work of art, is this art old or new?

**What students will be able to do as a result of such knowledge and skill:**

Students will be able to express themselves in a variety of art media resembling one of the various art styles of Mexico.

Students will consider an artist’s expressive purpose in artwork.

Students will share what they have learned about the arts of Mexico’s past and present.
Stage 2: Assessment Evidence

Performance Tasks:

Students will learn about the arts of Mexico via multimedia presentations (PPTs, DVDs, CDs).

Students will create a work of art and label it according to a given rubric (a 1-2-3-4 score as done on Kentucky Open Response assessments).

Students will experience and participate in music and dance from Mexico.

Other Evidence:

Throughout the unit student assessment will also include teacher observations, homework, and teacher conferences in ASL (American Sign Language) and English.

The culminating activity will be a group display/presentation of work from the unit. This will be presented to the entire school (K–12) as well as open to the community. Media will be invited. The local Community Arts Center will be contacted to request a showing of the student work.

Students will reflect upon and self-assess their learning by evaluating their project after seeing the work of their peers.
Stage 3: Learning Plans

What learning experiences and instruction will enable students to achieve the desired results? Students will receive instruction about the arts of Mexico via multimedia presentations. These presentations will include PPTs, DVDs, CDs, teacher explanations and demonstrations via ASL and English. Students will experience the arts of Mexico via hands-on creations.

How will the design help the students know where the unit is going and what is expected? The unit design will include an introduction detailing what we will study in the unit and what will be expected from the students at the end of the unit. Expectations will vary according to student grade level and individual needs.

How will the design help the teacher know where the students are coming from (prior knowledge, interests)? The unit design will include questions to the students during the introduction. These questions will enable the teacher to know prior knowledge of the arts of Mexico. Older students will be given the opportunity to vote on what project they desire to make for the culminating activity.

How will the design hook the students and hold their interest? The unit is made to hook the students and hold their interest through the variety of arts presented. They will know that they will be given the opportunity to create art similar to that which they see in the presentations.

How will the design equip students, help them experience the key ideas and explore the issues? The unit will equip the students and help them experience the arts by demonstrations and explanations before they put their hands to creating their pieces of art.

How will the design provide opportunities to rethink and revise their understanding and work? The unit design will provide the students with the opportunity to express what they know about the arts of Mexico (at the beginning of the unit) and then rethink (during the unit) and express what they have learned (at the end of the unit).

How will the design allow students to evaluate their work and its implications? The unit design will allow students to evaluate their work and its implications at the end of the unit through student conferences with the teacher.
How will the design be tailored to the different needs, interests and abilities of the learners? The unit will be presented via ASL, English, and pictures to meet the needs of my deaf and hard of hearing students’ various language modes. Projects will be tailored to the different needs (easier projects for younger students, FMD students, or physically limited students). The unit will be tailored to meet the interests of the students by providing them with the opportunity to make choices in their production of the arts of Mexico.

How will the design be organized to maximize initial interest and sustain engagement as well as effective learning? The unit design will engage the students from start to finish by providing the students with opportunities of choice and self-expression through hands-on arts.
LESSONS OUTLINE

The following is a basic layout of lessons for classes which meet once a week for art and once a week for music/dance. For my school this includes the entire elementary department (K–5).

These lessons may be adapted as needed.

**Visual Art lessons**

Week 1: Assembly of all students with presentation by teacher.

Week 2: Individual classes have PPT presentation of pictures from the teacher’s trip to Mexico and discussion. Video clips will also be shown.

Week 3: Individual classes will begin their hands-on art projects related to visual arts of Mexico.

Week 4: Younger classes do their second hands-on activities. Older classes will continue working on their projects.

Week 5: Students will complete their projects and label them.

Week 6: Display artwork in our building. Have a “show” for all students to see the other classes’ works of art.

**Music/Dance lessons**

Each week students will experience music and dance of Mexico via CDs and DVDs. Each class will learn a simple dance selected from the videos they have seen. They will use their class time to practice the dances. The teacher will record (video tape) the dance for showcase. Classes will also identify the musical instruments used in Mexican music such as those in mariachi bands.
Art of Mexico activities by grade/class:

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<tr>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>Grade 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>&gt; Mosaic paper mask. You can cut out your own mask shape and cut colored</td>
<td>&gt; Paint on a flower pot. Students will draw a design on their ceramic</td>
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<td>pieces of paper to glue onto the mask. Or you can copy a blank mask</td>
<td>flower pot (found at many stores that have a gardening section). Once</td>
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<td>template from <em>Country Topics for Craft Projects: Mexico</em> (ISBN: 0-531-1431-</td>
<td>they have completed their design they will paint it using acrylic paint.</td>
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<td>14316-3). Full directions and template on pages 25–27.</td>
<td>A sealer or glaze may be applied afterwards by the teacher.</td>
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<td>&gt; Color pictures of Mexican people and cut them out to make “stand up</td>
<td>&gt; “God’s Eye” made of sticks and yarn.</td>
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<td>people.” Many can be found online. Some I found include the following:</td>
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<td><a href="http://kiddyhouse.com/Holidays/Cinco/">http://kiddyhouse.com/Holidays/Cinco/</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://www.edupics.com/images/results/photo:0/query:Mexico">http://www.edupics.com/images/results/photo:0/query:Mexico</a></td>
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<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Grade 3</td>
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<td>&gt; Make an Aztec shield like the one the conchero dancers carry in the</td>
<td>&gt; Clay mask (paint or mosaic).</td>
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<td>Festival of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Directions can be found in *Festivals of</td>
<td>Mold clay over Halloween mask and add mosaic art pieces before it</td>
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<td>the World: Mexico* (ISBN: 0-8368-1686-2).</td>
<td>dries/hardens. If students prefer to paint, do that next week after it</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt; “God’s Eye” made of sticks and yarn. Directions can be found in books or</td>
<td>dries/hardens.</td>
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<td>on the Internet. Here are sites I found with a simple Google search:</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.allfreecrafts.com/nature/ojo-de-dios.shtml">http://www.allfreecrafts.com/nature/ojo-de-dios.shtml</a></td>
<td>&gt; <em>Papel picado</em> (cut paper). Use tissue paper to fold and cut out</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.caron-net.com/kidfiles/kidsapr.html">http://www.caron-net.com/kidfiles/kidsapr.html</a></td>
<td>shapes. Unfold to display your finished product. There are many videos</td>
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<td><a href="http://crafts.kaboose.com/gods-eyes.html">http://crafts.kaboose.com/gods-eyes.html</a></td>
<td>on youtube and other sites such as</td>
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<td>&gt; Mosaic art on flat clay surface. Students will flatten the clay, select</td>
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<td>a cookie cutter to cut out a shape, then apply small tile pieces to the</td>
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<td>clay before it hardens.</td>
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<td>&gt; Collage of pictures of Mexico. (Pictures may be printed off various</td>
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<td>Internet sites or found in magazines or coloring books.)</td>
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<td>Grades 4 &amp; 5</td>
<td>Individual project choices:</td>
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<td>Clay art</td>
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<td>Mosaic Art</td>
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<td>Paper Mache (maraca, piñata, animal, etc.)</td>
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<td>Fiber Art (weaving, embroidery)</td>
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<td>Mask making</td>
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<td>Other (student ideas from library books)</td>
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**Homework:** Coloring pages, drawing in sketchbooks or on worksheet, art worksheets such as word searches
Worksheets and Projects

Sketchbook entries or sketching:
Additional sketching worksheets are available for download from this Web site (http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/etext/llilas/outreach/fulbright10/) or the Kentucky School for the Deaf (http://www.ksd.k12.ky.us/STAFF/prescott/HomepagePrescott%27sRoom.htm). You can also get pictures from National Geographic magazines and cut them in half and have students draw the other half. Or you could scan a picture from library books and cut it in half and give one student half and another student the other half for their sketchbook entries.

Word search puzzles:
Since I will be teaching this unit to deaf and hard of hearing elementary students (including deaf FMD students), my word search puzzles generally include words going left to right and top to bottom. You can make word search puzzles to match your students’ age and abilities. The following pages have two word search puzzles. One is created for younger students and one for older students. Also the first one, for older students, includes music and dance vocabulary. Word search puzzles can also be found on the Internet. I have included one from Kids Domain.

PowerPoint information page:
I have included a PowerPoint worksheet. The PowerPoint is available for download from this Web site (http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/etext/llilas/outreach/fulbright10/) or the Kentucky School for the Deaf (http://www.ksd.k12.ky.us/STAFF/prescott/HomepagePrescott%27sRoom.htm). It includes many photos taken in Mexico during the Fulbright-Hays Seminar Abroad, Mexico 2010. Any of these photos could be used in the sketching activities.

Music and Dance activities:
There are many videos on the Internet that show traditional dances of Mexico as well as music. I also plan to post video taken during the Seminar Abroad on our KSD Web site.

Hands-on activities (papel picado, etc.):
I chose hands-on activities based on the level of my current students. You may search library books to get additional ideas for art activities. My 4th and 5th grade class will be given ideas as well as library books to search for ideas for their projects. They may decide on an individual, partner, or group project.

Scoring:
Scoring will mirror the Kentucky Open response scoring: Distinguished (4), Proficient (3), Apprentice (2), and Novice (1). Criteria for each level will be given at the beginning of each activity. You may set your own criteria to match your school or state requirements and your students’ grade level and ability.
Sketching Entry

Name: _______________________________ Date: ____________________________

Directions: Draw the other half(s) of the Olmec Stone heads.
Cinco de Mayo Word Search

MÉXICO
PUEBLA
MÚSICA
BAILES
PIÑATA
MARACAS
BURRITO
COMIDA
FIESTA
GLOBOS
ROJO
VERDE
BLANCO
RISA

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ARTS AND HUMANITIES OF MEXICO WORDSEARCH

Find the following words and highlight them. They go up to down and right to left.

ART       AZTEC       CARVING
CODICES    CLAY        DANCE
DRAWINGS   DRUMS       EMBROIDERY
FEATHERS   FLUTES      GUITARS
GLYPHS     JADE        MARIACHIS
MARIMBA    MASK        MOSAIC
MURALS     MUSIC       MYAN
PAINTING   PAPER       POTTERY
RATTLES    SCULPTURES  SEW
SILVERSMITH STONE      TRUMPETS
VIOLINS    WEAVING     WOOD

A  C  B  C  D  E  M  B  R  O  I  D  E  R  Y  E  I  J  K  V
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Find the words:

Carve          Clay          Draw          Mosaic          Mask

Olmec          Paint         Pottery       Stone          Yarn
### Answer Sheet

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### Find the words:

- Carve
- Clay
- Draw
- Mosaic
- Mask
- Olmec
- Paint
- Pottery
- Stone
- Yarn

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PowerPoint Information Page

Fill in the blank using the PowerPoint information either during the presentation or afterwards with or without a PowerPoint printout according to the teacher’s directions.

Masks in Mexico can be made of what different materials?
1. _____________________  2. _____________________
3. _____________________  4. _____________________
5. _____________________

Mexicans make artwork of clothing by ___________________
or ___________________ designs or patterns in their clothes.

Dyes for fabric can be made from _____________________ or even a special ____________ which makes a red dye.

The “Eye of God” is made of what materials? _________________
and ________________.

Talavera is a special __________________ and it was founded in the year ________________.

Painting was used long ago to record history or events. This is called __________________ art. Today artists paint murals as
______________________ or ___________________ art.

Painting is also done on _________________________________.

The ________________ people carved giant heads out of ___________.
Art can also be made of other materials such as ____________, ____________, ____________, ____________, ____________, and more.

At la Casa de Sordo (The House of the Deaf) the students make ____________ to sell in the market place.

Name two musical instruments you saw in the PowerPoint.
__________ and ________________

Name two materials used to make musical instruments.
__________ and ________________.

Draw a work of art similar to anything you saw in the PowerPoint. It could be a mask, clothing, pottery, jewelry, etc.
How to Make Papel Picado - Free Printable Papel Picado Patterns

Make papel picado streamers like the one above using our free printable papel picado templates below!

**Instructions**

Choose any of our free printable papel picado patterns to the right and click on it to print it out. All patterns measure half the size of an A4 letter sheet. Cut along the dotted lines to make shaped "holes" in the paper. Use a cutter for internal shapes. You can use scissors for the shapes at the edges.

Cut crepe paper into A4 letter-size sheets and fold them in half. Place template on top (the crepe paper's fold should be on the left). Outline the holes on the template with a pen. You can cut a few tissue paper sheets at once, by placing one inside another, leaving all folds on the left. The pattern will be drawn on the sheet at the top. Cut holes again as done with the template.

To make a long streamer of papel picado, stick the top corners of each sheet one to the other. You can also use needle and string to "sow" the sheets together from the top corners to make a streamer.

Use different patterns and tissue paper in different colors to make your streamer.

To make a streamer with just one pattern and in one color only, cut your crepe paper 7.5" high by the lengh of the crepe paper sheet. Fold the paper 5.5" from one edge, and continue folding at the same distance, letting each new fold wrap the last one. Once all figures are cut out, open up the paper... you will have a complete papel picado streamer!  
http://kiddyhouse.com/Holidays/Cinco/
Mexican Costumes

Mexican Girl

Mexican Girl in traditional costume

Mexican Boy in Charro Suit
Reference Books

Check your local library for adult and children’s books on Mexico or request these through interlibrary loan.

Archaeological Mexico
Andrew Coe

The Art of Mesoamerica from Olmec to Aztec
Mary Ellen Miller
ISBN: 0-500-20203-6

Nice chronological table

Ancient Aztec: Archeology Unlocks the Secrets of Mexico’s Past
National Geographic
ISBN: 978-1-4263-0072-1

The Ancient Aztecs
Liz Sonneborne
ISBN: 0-531-12362-6

Aztec Indians
A New True Book Series
Patricia McKissack
ISBN: 0-516-01936-8

The Aztec
A True Book Series
Andrew Santella
ISBN: 0-516 22500-6

The Aztecs
Catriona Clarke
ISBN: 978079451579-9

The Aztecs (A Civilization Project Book)
Susan Purdy and Cass R. Sandak
ISBN: 0-531-04455-6
The Aztec Empire
Cultures of the Past
R. Conrad Stein
ISBN: 0-7614-0072-9

A Brief History of Mexico
Lynn V. Foster
ISBN: 0-8160-3165-7

The Changing Face of Mexico
Edward Parker
ISBN: 0-7398-4967-0

Children of the World: Mexico
Yoshiyuki IkuHara

Christmas in Mexico
Cheryl L. Enderlein
ISBN: 1-56065-622-0

Countries of the World: Mexico
National Geographic
Beth Gruber
ISBN: 0-7922-7669-8

The Crafts of Mexico
Margarita de Orellana and Alberto Ruy-Sanchez

Country Topics for Craft Projects: Mexico
Anita Ganeri & Rachel Wright
ISBN: 0-531-14316-3

Cultures of the World: Mexico
Leslie Jermyn & Mary-Jo Reilly
ISBN: 0-7614-1363-4

Everyday life of the Aztecs, Incas & Maya
Morris, Neil

Eyewitness Travel Guides: Mexico
ISBN: 0-7894-9720-4
A Family in Mexico
Peter Jacobsen
ISBN: 0-531-03787-8
Shows the life of a silversmith family

Festivals of Mexico
Colleen Madonna Flood Williams
ISBN: 1-59084-078-x

Festivals of the World: Mexico

The Fiestas
Viva Mexico! series
George Ancona
ISBN: 0761413278

Fodor’s Mexico 2007

The Folk Arts
Viva Mexico! series
George Ancona
ISBN: 0761413294

Frommer’s Cancun, Cozumel & the Yucatan 2007
ISBN: 0-471-92236-6

Frommer’s Cancun & the Yucatan day by day
ISBN: 978-0-470-08119-8

The Lands, Peoples, and Cultures Series; Mexico: The culture
Created by Bobbie Kalman
ISBN: 0-86505-216-6

The Lands, Peoples, and Cultures Series; Mexico: The people
Created by Bobbie Kalman

The Lands, Peoples, and Cultures Series; Mexico: The Land
Created by Bobbie Kalman
Look What Came From Mexico
Harvey Miles
ISBN: 0-531-11496-1

Mexico
Justine Fontes
ISBN: 0516245651

Mexico
A True Book
Ann Heinrichs
ISBN: 0-516-20337-1

Mexico: From the Olmecs to the Aztecs
Michael D. Cop
ISBN: 050028346X

Mexico: Rich in Spirit and Tradition
Deborah Kent
ISBN: 0-7614-0187-3

Mexico in Pictures
Janice Hamilton

Moon Handbooks: Oaxaca
Bruce Whipperman

NTC’s Dictionary of Mexican Cultural Code Words
Boye Lafayette De Mente
ISBN: 0844279595

Oaxacan Ceramics: Traditional Folk Art by Oxacan Women
Lois Wasserspring
ISBN: 081182358X

Oaxaca: The Spirit of Mexico
Judith Cooper Haden
ISBN: 157965214X
The People
Viva Mexico! series
George Ancona
ISBN: 0761413294

The People’s Guide to Mexico
Edited by Steve Rogers
ISBN: 1566917115

Productos de Mexico
Laura Conlon
ISBN: 1-55916-074-8

Seasons of My Heart: A Culinary Journey Through Oaxaca, Mexico
Susana Trilling
ISBN: 0-345-42596-0

Stories from Mexico/Historias de Mexico
Genevieve Barlow & William N Stivers
ISBN: 0-8442-0811-6

Una Visita a Mexico
Laura Conlon
ISBN: 1559160780