



# Fiesta Mexicana: A Summer Latin Dance Experience

Denver Public Schools

In partnership with Metropolitan State College of Denver

El Alma de la Raza Project



# Fiesta Mexicana: A Summer Latin Dance Experience

By Stephanie A. Herrera

Grades: 6–8

Implementation time: 4 weeks

Denver Public Schools  
El Alma de la Raza Curriculum  
and Teacher Training Program

Loyola A. Martinez, Project Director

# Introduction

Fiesta Mexicana is a pilot program that is intended exclusively for middle schools in the Denver Public Schools. The program is designed to teach traditional Mexican dance with a one-day academic component using the Alma Project standards-based instructional framework. The interdisciplinary curriculum ties the Academic Content Standards in geography, history, music, and culture of Mexico into a dance lab where the elements of dance are taught. The curricular component of the program will strengthen students' sense of self and respect of other cultures. Fiesta Mexicana integrates art, culture, geography, and social science in a way that engages students and encourages them to interact through dance. Much like other extracurricular activities, dance helps to engage students in various thinking patterns to strengthen their learning styles. Imitation, modeling, leadership, fitness, and body awareness are just a few of the benefits students receive from dance instruction. Students will meet with a lead teacher for two hours a day, four days a week (Monday through Thursday). Three of the days will be a dance lab, and one will be in the classroom. The program will culminate in a presentation of dance from each school. Approximately 20 students will participate in the program at each of the four middle schools that are chosen. This is a pilot program that will test the feasibility of a permanent, year-round program that will serve a greater number of students.

This program is for any student who shows interest and is dedicated to finishing the program. Each learning experience in the program builds on the previous ones. It is important to begin and end the program with as many of the same students as possible.

# Lesson 1:

## Bienvenidos a Mexico

### What will students be learning?

#### **STANDARDS**

Students know how to use and construct maps and other geographic tools to locate and derive information about people, places, and environments. (G1)

Students know the physical and human characteristics of places and use this knowledge to define and study regions. (G2)

Students apply knowledge of people, places, and environments to understand the past and present and to plan for the future. (G6)

#### **BENCHMARKS**

Students know how to use maps and other geographic tools to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.

Students develop knowledge of Earth to locate people, places, and environments.

Students know the physical and human characteristics of places.

Students know how and why people define regions.

Students know how culture and experiences influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

Students know how to apply geography to understand the past.

Students know how to apply geography to understand the present and plan for the future.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

Students will identify locations of selected places using references systems, maps, and globes.

Student will define and use geographic terms in describing the physical characteristics of Mexico, such as Chiapas, regions, and the three mountain ranges of Mexico.

Students will determine the common characteristics of regions such as race, language, landforms, and climate.

Students will learn the meaning of the colors of the Mexican flag.

#### **SPECIFICS**

Mexico is our neighbor to the south. It is a country rich in tradition and history dating back as far as 1520 when Spanish explorers found treasures in the New World and began the overthrow of one of the biggest Indian empires in history. Mexico won its independence from Spain in 1821. Long periods of turmoil and economic crisis has dominated Mexico for over 90 years with the emergence of a Renaissance in the 1920s and 1930s that gave birth to a vast Mestizo class. The works of Diego Rivera, Frieda Kahlo, and Dr. Atl have preserved the history of Mexico. It is a country where 60 Indian peoples live and the population is estimated at 12 million people.

The traditions and crafts in Mexico are the threads that bind the many bloodlines that form popular culture. Dominant themes, such as the Catholic Church and the national emblem, which depicts an eagle, perched on a prickly pear with a serpent in its peak, are the heart of Mexico. Legend has it that the Aztecs would establish their city where they would see an eagle perched on a prickly pear tree, devouring a serpent. They saw this eagle on a marshy lake that is now the Zocalo on the main plaza in Mexico City.

## **What will be done to help students learn this?**

### **INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

Comparing and Contrasting  
Analyzing Geographical Information  
Identifications of Patterns  
Direct Instruction  
Location of Regions, Mountain Ranges, and States  
Map Skills

### **PRELIMINARY LESSON PREPARATION**

This unit of study is primarily geared for students in grades 6-9 with an excellent review of geography skills acquired in the intermediate grades. Maps and globes are to be visible in the classroom for quick access by the students during this lesson.

Have student's worksheets (answer sheets) ready for students. Advise students they will be responsible for information on the worksheets for the next class period.

### **PRETEACHING**

Go over the four-week requirements with students. Establish baseline data of what students already know about Mexico before beginning the lesson. Distribute blank maps of Mexico for labeling. Post all maps of Mexico before beginning each lesson.

### **ACTIVITY**

Lead a discussion of the three dominant cultures of Mexico and other cultural aspects of the country.

Make copies of the Mexican flag and pass it out to students. Students may add the colors to the flag if they wish.

Give each student a blank map of Mexico and have him or her label the states and regions of the country during class time.

Students will be given a blank map of Mexico fact sheet to study for the next class session.

Have students record key concepts learned in the dance lab as well as in the classroom and their experiences during the four-week dance program.

### **VOCABULARY**

Mestizo ..... The intermarriage between Spaniards and Indians  
Symbolism ..... The practice of representing things by symbols or attributing symbolic meaning or significance to objects, events, or relationships  
Plateau ..... A flat, high-altitude landform  
Cardinal directions ..... The four main points of the compass: north, south, east, and west  
Region ..... An area with one or more common characteristics or features that give it a measure of unity and make it different from the surrounding areas  
Resource ..... A source of supply  
Ancestry ..... Honorable or distinguished descent

- Indigenous people ..... The first people to live in a certain region or country
- Barren ..... Unable to produce or support life
- Landforms ..... A specific geomorphic feature on the surface of the earth ranging from large-scale features, such as plains and mountains, to minor features, such as hills and valleys
- Climate ..... The composite or generally prevailing weather conditions of a region, as temperature, air pressure, humidity, precipitation, cloudiness, and winds throughout the year are averaged over a series of years
- Country ..... The territory of a nation, delimited by a boundary that separates it from other nations

### **RESOURCES/MATERIALS**

- Large, colored poster-size relief maps of Mexico for display
- Legal- or letter-sized blank maps of Mexico for students
- Mexican flag
- Mexican flag worksheet
- Red, white, and green Crayons or markers
- Facts of Mexico worksheet
- Regions of Mexico worksheet
- Mountain ranges worksheet
- Journals

### **LESSON ASSESSMENT**

Students will be assessed on information presented in Lesson 1:

- Facts of Mexico
- The Mexican Flag
- Lesson 1 Vocabulary
- Regions of Mexico
- Mountain Ranges

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson 1:**  
**Facts of Mexico Worksheet**

Official Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Capitol: \_\_\_\_\_

Population: \_\_\_\_\_

Main Religion: \_\_\_\_\_

Official Language: \_\_\_\_\_

Currency: \_\_\_\_\_

Area \_\_\_\_\_

Other Facts: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Lesson 1: Vocabulary Worksheet

Match the correct meaning with the term

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| ____ <i>Mestizo</i>             | a. the four main points of the compass: north, south, east, and west   |
| ____ <i>Symbolism</i>           | b. a flat, high-altitude landform  |
| ____ <i>Plateau</i>             | c. the practice of representing things by symbols or attributing symbolic meaning or significance to objects, events, or relationships   |
| ____ <i>Cardinal Directions</i> | d. the intermarriage between Spaniards and Indians   |
| ____ <i>Region</i>              | e. an area with one or more common characteristics or features that give it a measure of unity and make it different from the surrounding areas  |
| ____ <i>Resource</i>            | f. unable to produce or support life   |
| ____ <i>Ancestry</i>            | g. a source of supply  |
| ____ <i>Indigenous People</i>   | h. the composite or generally prevailing weather conditions of a regions, as temperature, air pressure, humidity, precipitation, cloudiness, and winds throughout the year are averaged over a series of years |
| ____ <i>Barren</i>              | i. honorable or distinguished descent  |
| ____ <i>Landforms</i>           | j. the first people to live in a certain region or country   |
| ____ <i>Climate</i>             | k. a specific geomorphic feature on the surface of the earth ranging from large-scale features, such a plains and mountains, to minor features such as hills and valleys                                       |
| ____ <i>Country</i>             | l. the territory of a nation, delimited by a boundary that separates it from other nations   |

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson 1:**  
**Regions of Mexico Worksheet**

Name the six regions of Mexico

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson 1:**  
**Mountain Ranges of Mexico Worksheet**

Name Mexico's three mountain ranges:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON 1 TEACHER'S SCORING ASSESSMENT

### Facts of Mexico Worksheet

Official Name: **United Mexican States**

Capitol: **Mexico City**

Population: **86,000,000**

Main Religion: **Roman Catholic**

Official Language: **Spanish**

Currency: **New Peso (1000 old pesos or 100 centavos)**

Area: **1,972,550 square kilometers (761,660 square miles)**

**Other Facts:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Vocabulary Worksheet

**Mestizo**—d) the intermarriage between Spaniards and Indians

**Symbolism**—c) the practice of representing things by symbols or attributing symbolic meaning or significance to objects, events, or relationships

**Plateau**—b) a flat, high-altitude landform

**Cardinal directions**—a) the four main points of the compass: north, south, east and west

**Region**—e) an area with one or more common characteristics or features that give it a measure of unity and make it different from the surrounding areas

**Resource**—g) a source of supply

**Ancestry**—i) honorable or distinguished descent

**Indigenous people**—j) the first people to live in a certain region or country

**Barren**—f) unable to produce or support life

**Landforms**—k) a specific geomorphic feature on the surface of the earth ranging from large-scale features such as plains and mountains to minor features such as hills and valleys

**Climate**—h) the composite or generally prevailing weather conditions of a region, as temperature, air pressure, humidity, precipitation, cloudiness, and winds throughout the year are averaged over a series of years

**Country**—l) the territory of a nation, delimited by a boundary that separates it from other nations

### Regions of Mexico Worksheet

Mexico is divided into states, but it is often easier to think of it in terms of its regions.

- The Central Highlands
- The Central Plateau
- The Northwest Deserts
- The Tropical Lowlands
- The Mountainous South
- The Yucatan Peninsula

### Mountain Ranges of Mexico Worksheet

- To the east is the Sierra Madre Oriental
- To the west is the Sierra Madre Occidental
- To the south is the Neo-volcanic Cordillera



## Lesson 2: Chiapas Speaks

### What will students be learning?

#### **STANDARDS**

Students know how to use and construct maps and other geographic tools to locate and derive information about people, places, and environments. (G1)

Students know the physical and human characteristics of places and use this knowledge to define and study regions and their patterns of change. (G2)

The students apply knowledge of people, places, and environments to understand the past and present and to plan for the future. (G6)

Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time. (H3)

Students know and apply visual arts materials, tools, techniques, and processes. (A3)

Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW1)

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences. (RW2)

Student will relate music to various historical and cultural traditions. (MU5)

#### **BENCHMARKS**

Students know how to use maps and other geographic tools to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.

Students develop the knowledge of Earth to locate people, places, and environments.

Students know how and why people define regions.

Students know how culture influences people's perceptions of places and regions.

Students know how to apply geography to understand the past.

Students know how to apply geography to understand the present and plan for the future.

Students know how various societies have been affected by contact and changes by diverse people.

Students select and use materials, tools, techniques, and processes that enhance communication of ideas through art.

Students will use comprehension strategies.

Students will use information from their reading to increase their vocabulary and language usage.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

Students will be introduced to the historical and famous city of Chiapas and will identify the physical characteristics of this preserve of ancient ruins.

Students will learn about the history, language, dress, religions, and dances of Chiapas.

Students will be introduced to a Bailes Regionales (Regional Dances) performed in Chiapas during various celebrations.

Students will write a reflection piece on their trip to a Pre-Columbian exhibit as a homework assignment.

## **SPECIFICS**

Chiapas is 74,415 square kilometers with a population of 3,210,496

Capitol: Tuxtla Gutierrez (population 289,626) sits in a fertile valley at the foot of the Chiapas highlands

Major Cities: Tapachula, San Christobal las Casas, Comitán, Huixtla, Tonala, Arriaga

Regional Dialects: Tzeltal, Tzotzil, Chanabal, Chiol y Mame

Lakes: Catazaja and Tepancuapa

**Other Facts:** Two main cultures flourished in ancient Chiapas: the Olmeca and the Maya. Today, monuments like Ocozocoautla and Tonala, Yaxchilan, Chinkultic, Palenque and Bonampak are testaments to the geographical landmarks. The word *Chiapas* is a Nahautl word meaning, “water under a hill,” which many believe refers to the disappearance of the Chiapa or Grijalva River into a deep canyon called “El Sumidero.” Chiapas is a paradise with its beautiful tropical plains to the pine-forested mountains. The mirrored lakes give rise to the virgin jungles where one can still see the archeological ruins of its ancient cultures. Within this beautiful land, live the Zoques, Tzotziles, Tzeltales, Tajolaboles, Chiapanecos, and the Lacandones.

The highlands of central Chiapas rise 8,000 kilometers above the Grijalva River to the northwest and extends approximately for 220 kilometers southwest into Guatemala. The Tzotzil- and Tzeltal-speaking Maya have lived in these valleys of this plateau for at least 1,000 years. The economy is based primarily on corn, beans, and squash, which to this day, still uses the old slash and burn agriculture. Cash flow is attributed to special crafts or cash crops sold at the market in the colonial city of San Cristobal de Las Casas (population 90,000). Mineral resources are silver, gold, and copper, with petroleum production becoming significant. Tourism and ethnological research are very important.

The climate is hot with heavy rainfall from June to November. Chiapas is the leading national producer of coffee, rubber, and cacao. The state is also a major producer of hydroelectric power from dams on the Grijalva River.

The women from the state of Chiapas are called Chiapanecas and the men are called Chiapanecos and are known for their performance of the dance called Las Chiapanecas. Las Chiapanecas originally was a very serious dance and over the ages has produced an array of variations. The Chiapanecas is a Mestizo dance with clapping, stomping, and sometimes the boys may whistle or shrug their shoulders.

## **What will be done to help students learn this?**

### **INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

Comparing and Contrasting

Viewing Photographs and Posters

Field Trip to Denver Art Museum

Maps

Questioning

Whole-Group Instruction

Journals

**PRELIMINARY LESSON PREPARATION**

Prepare and set maps, globes, and posters of Mexico and Chiapas around the room for quick access by the students. Provide specific guidelines for the writing assignment: one-page, hand-written or typed, genre-specific (feature article) document based on the exhibit visited at the Denver Art Museum. Handwriting must be legible and based on actual observation of artifacts on display at the museum. Grammar/usage/syntax and punctuation and capitalization are evaluated.

Preteaching: Review material in Lesson 1 and have students complete worksheets issued in Lesson 1 while listening to music. Collect worksheets and grade. Record grades.

**ACTIVITY**

Students complete the worksheets from Lesson 1 (allow 20 minutes). They will listen to a musical selection of Bailes Regionales from Chiapas as they complete their worksheets.

Students will board the bus for their field trip to the Denver Art Museum, taking their notebooks with the Observation Sheets for recording the artifacts in the Pre-Columbian exhibit.

Students continue practicing their dance routines in the dance labs and record their experiences in their journals.

**VOCABULARY**

- Palenque ..... Located in Chiapas and contains the preserved Mayan structures in all of Mexico
- Mestizo ..... Persons whose heritages stem from the Europeans, Aztecs, and Indians
- Bailes Regionales  
(Regional Dances) ..... Dances usually presented in community and in theatrical productions and are basically social in origin; Ballet Folklorico groups in the USA and Mexico most commonly perform these dances
- Artifacts ..... Objects central to learning
- Exhibit ..... To offer or expose to view
- Auditory ..... The sense of hearing
- Elements of Dance ..... Space, time, force/energy; dance moves in and through space; progresses through time, at various speeds or tempos; and requires the body to use energy in a wide range of movements from very light and minimal to very big and strong
- Traditional Dance ..... Dancers and dance forms that have come from the traditions of a people or culture (i.e., folk dance)
- Choreography ..... A dance sequence that has been created with specific intent
- Culture ..... Characteristics of a particular group of people—their beliefs, customs, traditions
- Rhythmic Accuracy ..... The ability to transfer the rhythm from auditory stimuli into a kinesthetic movement while maintaining the tempo and energy of the rhythm
- Style ..... A distinctive manner of moving, the characteristic way dance is done, created, or performed that identifies the dance of particular performer, choreographer, historical period or culture
- Technique ..... The learning of movement skills; the ability to use choreographic craft
- Tempo ..... The speed of movement as it progresses faster, slower, or on a pulse beat
- Traditional Dance ..... Dancers and dance forms that have come from the traditions of a people or culture

**RESOURCES/MATERIALS**

Large, colored poster-size relief maps of Mexico for display

Legal- or letter-sized blank maps of Mexico from Lesson 1

Denver Art Museum (Pre-Columbian Floor)

Artifact Field Observation Worksheet

CD of music from Chiapas

**ASSESSMENT**

Completion of Facts of Chiapas worksheet

Completion of field trip worksheet

Completion of vocabulary worksheet

Journals

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson 2:**  
**Facts of Chiapas Worksheet**

Capitol: \_\_\_\_\_

Size/Area: \_\_\_\_\_

Population: \_\_\_\_\_

Regional Dialects: \_\_\_\_\_

Lakes: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Facts: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson 2:**  
**Observation of Museum Artifacts Worksheet**

Directions: Record the objects observed and write a brief description of each one.

Object

Description

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Lesson 2: Vocabulary Worksheet

Match the correct number of the word to its correct meaning.

- |   |                            |                             |
|---|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 <i>Palenque</i>                             | 2 <i>Mestizo</i>           | 3 <i>Culture</i>            |
| 4 <i>Style</i>                                | 5 <i>Choreography</i>      | 6 <i>Auditory</i>           |
| 7 <i>Elements of Dance</i>                    | 8 <i>Traditional Dance</i> | 9 <i>Exhibit</i>            |
| 10 <i>Bailes Regionales (Regional Dances)</i> | 11 <i>Artifacts</i>        | 12 <i>Rhythmic Accuracy</i> |
| 13 <i>Technique</i>                           | 14 <i>Tempo</i>            |                             |

- \_\_\_\_\_ located in Chiapas and contains the preserved Mayan structures in all of Mexico
- \_\_\_\_\_ persons whose heritages stem from the Europeans, Aztecs, and Indians
- \_\_\_\_\_ dances usually presented in community and in theatrical productions and are basically social in origin; Ballet Folklórico groups in the USA and Mexico most commonly perform these dances
- \_\_\_\_\_ objects central to learning
- \_\_\_\_\_ the sense of hearing
- \_\_\_\_\_ dance moves in and through space; progresses through time, at various speeds or tempos; and requires the body to use energy in a wide range of movements from very light and minimal to very big and strong (space, time, force/energy)
- \_\_\_\_\_ dancers and dance forms that have come from the traditions of a people or culture (i.e., folk dance)
- \_\_\_\_\_ a dance sequence that has been created with specific intent
- \_\_\_\_\_ characteristics of a particular group of people—their beliefs, customs, traditions
- \_\_\_\_\_ the ability to transfer the rhythm from auditory stimuli into a kinesthetic movement while maintaining the tempo and energy of the rhythm
- \_\_\_\_\_ a distinctive manner of moving, the characteristic way dance is done, created, or performed that identifies the dance of particular performer, choreographer, historical period or culture
- \_\_\_\_\_ the learning of movement skills; the ability to use choreographic craft
- \_\_\_\_\_ the speed of movement as it progresses faster, slower, or on a pulse beat
- \_\_\_\_\_ to offer or expose to view

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson 2:**  
**Student Reflection of Field Experience at Art Museum**

Write a one-page essay of what you learned during your field experience. Please edit and revise your work. Turn in a final draft of your best writing.

## LESSON 2 TEACHER'S SCORING ASSESSMENT

### Facts of Chiapas Worksheet

Capitol: **TuxtlaGutierrez**

Area: **74,415 square kilometers**

Regional Dialects: **Tzeltal, Tzotzil, Chanabal, Chiol y Mame**

Lakes: **Catazaja and Tepancuapa**

Other Facts: \_\_\_\_\_

### Vocabulary Worksheet

- (1) **Palenque**—located in Chiapas and contains the preserved Mayan structures in all of Mexico
- (2) **Mestizo**—persons whose heritages stem from the Europeans, Aztecs, and Indians
- (10) **Bailes Regionales**—dances usually presented in community and in theatrical productions and are basically social in origin; Ballet Folklorico groups in the USA and Mexico most commonly perform these dances
- (11) **Artifacts**—objects central to learning
- (6) **Auditory**—the sense of hearing
- (7) **Elements of Dance**—dance moves in and through space; progresses through time, at various speeds or tempos; and requires the body to use energy in a wide range of movements from very light and minimal to very big and strong (space, time, force/energy)
- (8) **Traditional Dance**—dancers and dance forms that have come from the traditions of a people or culture (i.e., folk dance)
- (5) **Choreography**—a dance sequence that has been created with specific intent
- (3) **Culture**—characteristics of a particular group of people—their beliefs, customs, traditions
- (12) **Rhythmic Accuracy**—the ability to transfer the rhythm from auditory stimuli into a kinesthetic movement while maintaining the tempo and energy of the rhythm
- (4) **Style**—a distinctive manner of moving, the characteristic way dance is done, created, or performed that identifies the dance of particular performer, choreographer, historical period or culture
- (13) **Technique**—the learning of movement skills; the ability to use choreographic craft
- (14) **Tempo**—the speed of movement as it progresses faster, slower, or on a pulse beat
- (9) **Exhibit**—to offer or expose to view



## Lesson 3: Celebraciones

### What will students be learning?

#### **STANDARDS**

Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time. (H3)

Students know and apply visual arts materials, tools, techniques, and processes. (A3)

Students read and understand a variety of materials. (RW1)

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences. (RW2)

#### **BENCHMARKS**

Students know how culture influences people's perceptions of places and regions.

Students know how to apply geography to understand the past.

Students know how to apply geography to understand the present and plan for the future.

Students know how various societies have been affected by contact and changes by diverse people.

Students select and use materials, tools, techniques and processes that enhance communication of ideas through art.

Students will use comprehension strategies.

Students will use information from their reading to increase their vocabulary and language usage.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

Students will deepen their understanding of the elements of dance through the performance of a traditional dances performed in the state of Chiapas.

Students will learn key actions and movements that will culminate in a grand finale performance for parents and invited guests.

Students will deepen their understanding of the celebrations specific to dances in Mexico and Chiapas.

Students will track all key concepts presented in class through journal writing.

Students will examine various traditional pieces of dress and the embroidered patterns inherent in those fabrics.

#### **SPECIFICS**

One of the golden threads that weave the tapestry of Mexican culture is the importance of celebrations, traditional dress and social connections. These aspects of Mexican culture preserve traditions and strengthen social connections that have been passed from generation to generation, creating incredibly strong communities. Celebrations in Mexico have three major origins: culture, history, and religion. Special holidays are often seasonal, representing beliefs and practices that are the very core of Mexican culture. Among the more famous celebrations are religious holidays like Easter, which is a weeklong celebration, called Semana Santa. Christmas is another celebration that calls for preparation in all aspects of daily life. Cinco de Mayo, Quinceaneras, birthdays, weddings, Diez y Seis de Septiembre, and Feast of the Virgin de Guadalupe are a few of the celebrations in Mexico. Specific to Chiapas are two

celebrations: San Juan Chamula, celebrated on January 1, and Chiapa de Corzo, celebrated from January 15 to 23. San Juan Chamula is the New Year's celebration that also includes the change in tribal governors and Chamula Indian traditional dances. The Chiapa de Corzo is the Fiesta of Saint Sabastian, the martyr, which displays regional costumes, also a reenactment of a naval battle on the river.

The El Bolochon and the Javalin are zapateados (heel-tapping dances). They are joyful dances, usually performed at festivities. The dances will be presented in class and practiced in the dance lab. The traditional adornment for women is ribbons woven into the braids worn by the dancers, tying the braids at the tips. Basket earrings and coin bracelets accent the hairstyle. There is an interesting history of the dress worn for this dance and versions exist going back to the turn of the century and how the designer of the dress brought the traditional patterns of other South American countries into the weave. Women wear a white blouse with a big lace ruffle without sleeves and a very low neckline. The skirt is made of rich, satin colors and usually does not have a ruffle but is wide enough to flare. The skirt includes an underskirt, adorned with ribbons. The man, wears the typical red paleacate (bandana) tied to his neck, black slacks, a white shirt, and a red sash. Both dancers wear black shoes.

In Chiapas, women who speak Maya weave the delicate and intricate designs into their fabrics by adding brightly colored yarn into the warp and weft of their looms. The ancient design that can be seen in the fabrics is called *brocade*. This art form is still popular today among the 200,000 Maya who live in the Chiapa mountains. Textiles in Chiapas are famous and recognized for their colorful embroidery in beautiful reds, pinks, purples, and navy blues. The fabrics are woven outside in a waist loom. Tablecloths, bedspreads, placemats, and tunics for men are individually made and often have slight variations, giving each piece a custom-made quality.

Brocade is not only an art form, but considered sacred and practiced by the ancestors. For centuries, women have woven and brocaded gowns in honor of their gods. These gods are the closely identified with the Virgin and Catholic saints. The designs of the Chiapa Maya are taken from local history and mythology. Common designs are diamonds, snakes, and flowers. Patterns denoting three vertical lines represent ancestors or trickster monkeys. Other figures, such as saints and toads, represent the rain god and the patron saint of the Earth.

## **What will be done to help students learn this?**

### **INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

Journal Writing

Comparing and Contrasting

Viewing Photographs and Posters

Dance Routine Demonstration

Active Listening

Word Walls

Cooperative Learning Groups

Demonstration and Modeling

Whole-Group Instruction

### **PRELIMINARY LESSON PREPARATION**

Review material presented in Lesson 2, specifically map and vocabulary skills. Have students complete the vocabulary worksheet introduced in Lesson 2.

Ensure that vocabulary words for Lesson 3 are added to vocabulary words from the first two lessons. Continue posting all vocabulary on the word wall.

Preteaching: Students complete worksheets from Lesson 2.

Student should have time to update their journals from key concepts learned in Lesson 2. Students should also be recording the dance routines learned in the dance lab.

### **ACTIVITY**

Allow students time to write in their journals about what they know about Mexican celebrations. Have them write from the perspective of planning a celebration in their community. Their writing piece must have facts and information presented in class, including the values or beliefs represented in the celebration. Students need to address the common elements in celebrations.

Hand out and review the dance routine to, “El Bolochon” and “El Javali.” Have students practice the dances in the dance lab in preparation for the grand finale performance.

### **VOCABULARY**

Level .....	How high or low movements occur in relation to the ground
Shape .....	The designs the body makes in a set space
Directions .....	Refers to both the directions of the body and the directions in space
Pathway .....	The design of the path made by the body while moving through space
Quality .....	The flow of energy in movement
Force .....	The amount of energy in a movement
Proximity .....	The distance between performers in relation to stage props
Rhythm .....	Dynamic patterns with which a movement unfolds
Danza .....	Dance
Textile .....	Any cloth or goods produced by weaving
Motif .....	A recurring subject, theme, or idea
Weaving .....	The interlacing of threads, yarns, strips, and fibrous material to form a fabric or material
Costume .....	A style of dress, including accessories and hairdo
Garment .....	An article of clothing
Huipil .....	A sleeveless tunic
Rebozo .....	Rectangular shawl

### **RESOURCES/MATERIALS**

Large, colored poster-size relief maps of Mexico for display

Dance Step Sheet for El Bolochon and El Javalin.

Sample Textiles

**ASSESSMENT RUBRIC**

<b><u>Points Possible</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>
3 .....	Participated actively in groups. Writing assignment included vocabulary presented in class with accurate information about the celebrations studied and the traditional dress worn for the dances. Essay is well written. Specifically described dances learned in the dance lab. Demonstrated proficiency with dance routine.
2 .....	Average participation. Writing assignment lacked some integral aspects of celebrations and contained some errors. Demonstrated some knowledge of dance routines.
1 .....	Little participation. Did not contribute to writing assignment. Demonstrated weak recollection of material presented in previous class sessions. Unable to demonstrate dance routines.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Lesson 3: Vocabulary Worksheet

Match the correct number of the word to its correct meaning.

1 *Rebozo*

2 *Motif*

3 *Level*

4 *Textile*

5 *Huipil*

6 *Shape*

7 *Garment*

8 *Costume*

9 *Weaving*

10 *Danza*

11 *Directions*

12 *Rhythm*

13 *Proximity*

14 *Force*

15 *Quality*

16 *Pathway*

\_\_\_\_\_ the amount of energy in a movement

\_\_\_\_\_ a rectangular shawl

\_\_\_\_\_ the flow of energy in movement

\_\_\_\_\_ the design of the path made by the body while moving through space

\_\_\_\_\_ how high or low movements occur in relation to the ground

\_\_\_\_\_ the designs the body makes in a set space

\_\_\_\_\_ refers to both the directions of the body and the directions in space

\_\_\_\_\_ the distance between performers in relation to stage props

\_\_\_\_\_ dynamic patterns with which a movement unfolds

\_\_\_\_\_ an article of clothing

\_\_\_\_\_ dance

\_\_\_\_\_ the interlacing of threads, yarns, strips, and fibrous material to form a fabric or material

\_\_\_\_\_ a style of dress including accessories and hairdo

\_\_\_\_\_ a sleeveless tunic

\_\_\_\_\_ any cloth or goods produced by weaving

\_\_\_\_\_ a recurring subject, theme, or idea

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson 3:**  
**Holiday Writing Assignment Worksheet**

Write about one celebration you learned about in class.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson 3:**  
**Student and Teacher Worksheet**

**Dance Description**—Describe the dance (s) you are learning in dance lab.

**Textile Description**—Describe a garment or fabric you examined in class.

## **El Bolochon Dance Steps**

STEP 1 16 TIMES

STEP 2 5 TIMES

STEP 3 16 TIMES

STEP 4 30 TIMES

STEP 3 16 TIMES

STEP 2 12 TIMES

STEP 1 12 TIMES OFF STAGE

El Bolochon is a dance about boys flirting with girls. The dance begins with both the boys and girls dancing on stage. Then the boys throw stones, trying to get the girls attention. The girls do not appreciate the stone throwing and show their indignation. The boys throw more stones making the girls angrier. Next, the boys bring the girls flowers and they are now seen flirting with each other as they dance off the stage.

## **El Javali Dance Steps**

STEP 1 ..... 16 TIMES (boys do this step throughout the dance except when hunting)

STEP 2 ..... 46 TIMES

STEP 1 ..... 16 TIMES

STEP 2 ..... 16 TIMES

STEP 1 ..... 8 TIMES (girls sit down after steps)

STEP 2 ..... 12 TIMES

STEP 1 ..... 12 TIMES OFF STAGE

STEP 1 ..... 62 TIMES

STEP 1 ..... 14 TIMES

Boys hunt the Warthog for 40 counts.

Boys and girls dance off stage.

El Javalin is a dance about hunters hunting for food. First the girls and boys dance on stage. They do the first part of the dance and the girls dance into a circle and sit down and expose the warthog. The hunters see the “Javali (Warthog), and they begin to chase him, killing him, and carting him off stage. The women follow them.

## Lesson 4: Los Bailes Maraviosos

### What will students be learning?

#### **STANDARDS**

Students will understand and demonstrate dance skills. (D1)

Students will understand and apply the principles of choreography. (D2)

Student will understand and relate the role of dance in culture and history. (D4)

Students will understand the benefits of dance for lifelong fitness. (D5)

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences. (RW2)

Student will relate music to various historical and cultural traditions. (MU5)

#### **BENCHMARKS**

Students demonstrate a series of movements in a given order that create a movement phrase through basic non-locomotor and locomotor movement.

Students will transfer a rhythmic pattern from the auditory to the kinesthetic, and a spatial pattern from the visual to the kinesthetic.

Students will use a variety of sources to structure a complete dance study.

Students will perform and evaluate dance from the Mexican culture.

Students will perform, describe, and compare dance in relation to historical periods.

Students will describe a logical class progression based on the principles of fitness.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

Students turn in worksheets from Lesson 3.

Students turn in *all* worksheets not turned in from previous lessons for full credit.

Students perform two dances before a live audience representing traditional dances performed in various celebrations in Chiapas and Mexico.

#### **SPECIFICS**

Chiapas has many gathering places where people come together and where musicians play a variety of music. One famous gathering place is Parque Marimba in Tuxtla Gutierrez. This gathering place is a typical park-type atmosphere with vendors and music. The music usually has woodwind instruments and Marimbas. The Chiapa Marimba is tropical music. The Marimba appears to have originated in Chiapa de Corzo. The small instrument could possibly have come from Africa's Angola with slaves that accompanied the Spanish explorers. The instrument became widely accepted in Central and South America. Marimbas are made in Chiapas and are constructed from the "singing wood" hormiguillo, which gives the Marimba its distinct sound. The Marimba is present at all special occasions—funerals, birthdays, happy and sad celebrations, and in all sacred ceremonies. The musicians usually begin in around 7:00 p.m. with music, dancing, and partying. The different tunes compel everyone to get up and dance. Tuxtla has two famous discos, Baby Rock and La Uno. Discos close at 3 or 4 a.m.

## **What will be done to help students learn this?**

### **INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

Journal Writing

Dancing

Active Listening

Word Walls

Demonstration

Modeling

Whole-Group Instruction

Individual (one-to-one) Instruction

### **PRELIMINARY LESSON PREPARATION**

Review material presented in all previous lessons and record grades (points) in the Unit Assessment Record Sheet. Have students turn in all worksheets. Check journals and give credit for daily entries. Encourage students to get organized for the dance performance.

Preteaching: Conduct a brief warm-up, practice drill before the live performance.

### **ACTIVITY**

Students will turn in all class and homework assignments for full credit.

In full dance costume, students will perform the dances they learned before an audience of parents and invited guests. This performance will culminate the four-week summer dance experience.

Students will receive awards and certificates for their participation and performance in the summer dance program.

Staff members will also be acknowledged for their commitment and dedication to the summer program.

### **VOCABULARY**

Level ..... How high or low movements occur in relation to the ground

Shape ..... The designs the body makes in a set space

Directions ..... Refers to both the directions of the body and the directions in space

Pathway ..... The design of the path made by the body while moving through space

Quality ..... The flow of energy in movement

Force ..... The amount of energy in a movement

Proximity ..... The distance between performers and of stage props

Rhythm ..... Dynamic patterns with which a movement unfolds

Danza ..... Dance

**RESOURCES/MATERIALS**

CDs

Dance Step Sheets

Dance Costumes

Boom Box

**ASSESSMENT**

Unit Assessment

Dance Performance

Completion of Unit Assessment Record Sheet

## Unit Assessment

Assess student performance during the four-week program by compiling the number of points earned for each class session and lab assignments. Possible Points: 100 +

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment	Possible Points	Points Accrued
Facts of Mexico	2	
The Mexican Flag	2	
Vocabulary	8	
Regions of Mexico	2	
Mountain Ranges	2	
Participation	32	
Attendance	32	
Map of Mexico	2	
Journal Entries	8	
Facts of Chiapas	2	
Trip to Art Museum	5	
Artifact Field Observation Sheet	2	
Holiday Writing Assignment	2	
El Bolochon Dance Routine	2	
El Javalin Dance Routine	2	
Textile Description	2	
Proper Dance Attire	2	
Dance Performance	3	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>112</b>	

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*A great collection of short Folk Tales and Legends.*
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## About the Author and Instructors

### **Stephanie A. Herrera**

Program Coordinator

Denver Public Schools Summer Latin Dance Program

Stephanie has been an entrepreneur since she was 12 years old, when she started her own dance group. She cofounded the United States Hispanic Junior Chamber of commerce at age 20 while she was attending Front Range Community College as president of student government.

Her passion is helping people. She teaches Bizworks, 14 different college classes (not all at the same time), and is the executive director and master instructor for Danzantes De Las Americas. She is the president and owner of A-Anytime Seamless Gutters and Herrera Insurance and Financial Planning. She hold a Bachelor of Arts in International Business Management and a Masters in Business Administration in market strategy. She is working on her doctorate in Business Administration in management and international business. Stephanie is also certified as a Business Instructor.

Stephanie has worked for many nonprofit organizations, such as consultant and teacher for the Colorado Enterprise Fund. At Mi Casa Resource Center for Women, she created the individual micro-loan program. Stephanie was the manager of the circuit rider program for the Mayor's Office of Economic Development where she helped develop businesses in four of the poorest neighborhoods in Denver.

Stephanie has been elected to many boards across the United States and throughout Colorado, and is now serving on the board of directors for the Pemrose Corporation, and the chairperson for the Community Advisor Board of the Community College of Denver.

She is in the United States Congressional Record and has been named a Dynamic Hispanic Role Model by the Hispanic Educational Institute.

Stephanie was born and raised in Denver, Colorado. She started dancing at the age of five when she joined the Mestizo dance group at her church. When she was 15, she was awarded a dance scholarship from the Changing Scenes Theater. Stephanie has pursued a career in dance and much of her time in spent teaching dance to all age groups. She has studied extensively in Guadalajara; Mexico City, Mexico; New York City; and San Juan, Puerto Rico. Instruction in her dance repertoire ranges from ballet, tap jazz, to theater dance, salsa and Yabura that she studied in New York City. Stephanie had studied Mexican Folklorico Dance for 28 years in Colorado, New Mexico, Guadalajara, and Mexico City.

Under Stephanie's leadership, Danzantes De Las Americas has formed a partnership with Grupo De Danza Folklorica Raramuri from Juarez, Mexico, where the artistic director, Juan Jose Ortega, hosts workshops for the group.

Stephanie developed the curriculum and is the program coordinator for "Fiesta Mexicana: A Summer Latin Dance Experience."

Stephanie and her husband, Dan, reside in Denver where they volunteer their time with the neighborhood youth. They believe that you have to share the knowledge with the younger generations to build a better community.

**Jazmin Chavez**

Dance Instructor

Denver Public Schools Summer Latin Dance Program

Jazmin Chavez is a sophomore at the University of Colorado at Boulder. She is a double major in Ethnic Studies and Education, and is studying to become an immigration lawyer. Jazmin has danced since she was in first grade with Danzantes de las Americas, but left because her family moved. She continued dancing in high school, dancing with the John F. Kennedy Pep Club as well as varsity cheerleader, and all-state cheerleader squad. Jazmin has also danced in the dance line of Denver Citywide Marching Band for four years and was guard captain for the dance line for two years. She has started her own Ballet Folklorico in Boulder with a troupe of 15 members. She dances salsa, swing, and folklorico and is excited to work with kids and teach them about folklorico and Mexican culture.

**Armando Somoza**

Dance Instructor

Denver Public Schools Summer Latin Dance Program

Armando Somoza is a junior at the University of Colorado at Boulder. He is studying an independently structured major focusing on Cultural Anthropology, Fine Arts, and Ethnic Studies. Armando has been dancing for fun since he was a child. He is a master at swing and salsa and has helped with the Ballet Folklorico in Boulder and Danzantes de las Americas in Denver. He has been sponsored by and danced with Zoots by Suavecity in many shows and festivals. He also plays the saxophone and baseball, and loves to be involved in helping and educating his community.

**Mindy Martinez**

Dance Instructor

Denver Public Schools Summer Dance Program

Mindy was born and raised in Denver, Colorado. She enjoys spending time with her friends, playing tennis and working in a nursery. She will begin her sophomore year at Mesa State College this fall where she will major in Athletic Training.

While attending John F. Kennedy High School, she took two years of dance and choreographed her own dances and performed for huge crowds. She organized a junior dance club consisting of students from neighborhood elementary and middle schools. She choreographed a dance to the remake of the hit song, "I Want You Back." The group of 20 dancers performed for two shows.

**Suzanne S. Vega**

Dance Instructor

Denver Public Schools Summer Dance Program

Born in Guatemala City, Suzanne Vega developed an interest in dancing at an early age. At 10, she became a member of the folkloric community. She danced in Durango, Mexico, for two years and continued her dance lessons in Denver, Colorado, with Danzantes de las Americas. Now, at 20, flamenco and folkloric dance are part of her daily routines. She is a student at Denver University working toward a degree in digital media and works at Horace Mann Middle Neighborhood Center where she helps teenage students develop a passion for culinary arts. In the evenings, she teaches English as a second language to adults, which was highly instrumental in her being awarded the Youth Leadership Award.