

# WOW! MEXICO HAS STATES, TOO!

(Adapted from Helen Chaney's The Mailbox Magazine "Ho! Ho! Ho! Mexico" lesson plan)

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**Grade Level:** 6<sup>th</sup>

**Purpose/Objective:**

This lesson will allow students to learn the location of the states of Mexico by labeling them on a political map.

**National Geography Standards (second edition) from *Geography for Life***

**Geographic Elements & Standards:**

The World in Spatial Terms –

1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective
2. How to use mental maps to organize information about people, places, and environments in a spatial context

**Oklahoma Academic Standards for the Social Studies:**

**Grade 6 World Geography: Western Hemisphere**

**6.PALS1.B.4.C.7:**

**Literacy Skills Standard 1: The student will develop and demonstrate Common Core Social Studies reading literacy skills.**

B.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

C.7. Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

**6.PALS2.A.2.d.B.4:**

**Literacy Skills Standard 2: The student will develop and demonstrate Common Core Social Studies writing literacy skills.**

A.2. Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historic events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.

d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

B.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

**6.CS1.2&4:**

**Content Standard 1: The student will analyze data from a geographic perspective using the skills and tools of geography.**

2. Integrate visual information, draw conclusions, and make predictions from geographic data and analyze spatial distribution and patterns by interpreting that data as displayed on globes, graphs, charts, satellite and other forms of visual imagery including data from bar and line graphs, pie charts, thematic maps, population pyramids, climographs, cartograms, contour/relief maps, GIS systems, and diagrams.
4. Integrate visual information and apply the skill of mental mapping of the political and physical features of Earth's surface and to organize information about people, places, environments.

#### **6.CS2.2.A:**

**Content Standard 2: The student will examine the cultural and physical characteristics of the major regions of the Western Hemisphere.**

2. Describe specific political regions of the Western Hemisphere and identify on a political map the major urban centers and countries including
  - A. All nations of North America, Central America, South America, and the Caribbean

#### **Geographic Themes:**

Location, place, and region

#### **Objectives:**

1. Students will label the states of Mexico on a blank political map.
2. Students will transform the map of Mexico into a Santa image to enable them to mentally map locations of the states of Mexico.
3. Students will learn about traditions of Mexico.

#### **Materials:**

PowerPoint "Wow! Mexico Has States, Too!"  
Map pencils or crayons  
Atlas for each student  
Blank political maps of Mexico (provided in lesson)  
Laptop computer and LCD Projector (or equivalent)

**Time Frame:** 1–2 class periods

#### **Procedures:**

1. Begin this lesson with a discussion of the physical map of Mexico on the PowerPoint "Wow! Mexico Has States, Too!" Point out geographic features, such as the location of Mexico in relation to the United States and Central America, bodies of water, the Yucatan Peninsula, mountains, and other physical features on the map.
2. Follow instructions on the PowerPoint for mapping activity.
3. Give each student a blank map of Mexico to use with PowerPoint.
4. Give each student an atlas.
5. After the presentation, give Christmas traditions facts to students to read. Cut them into strips so that different students get an opportunity to participate.

6. (Optional) Lead the students in a discussion about what gift could they give to someone if they didn't have money to spend.
7. (Optional) Have students write a paragraph explaining what gifts they could give that didn't cost them any money, to whom would they give the gifts, and why they chose that person(s).

**Assessment:**

Completed map and (optional) writing activity

**Resources:**

Outline map of Mexico used in lesson:

[http://www.coloring.ws/t\\_template.asp?t=http://www.coloring.ws/countries/mexico/map2.gif](http://www.coloring.ws/t_template.asp?t=http://www.coloring.ws/countries/mexico/map2.gif)

Two formats of outline map of Mexico with state names labeled:

<http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/namerica/printpage/mxstates.htm>

<http://www.freeusandworldmaps.com/html/Countries/NAmerican%20Countries/MexicoPrint.html>

**Extension and Enrichment:**

1. Map with labeled states is included in this lesson in two different formats.
2. Review states of Mexico and hear the correct pronunciations using the following website:  
[http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/Mexico\\_GL\\_Click.html](http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/Mexico_GL_Click.html)
3. Students can draw a design for a piñata. It should be something that will represent Mexico, such as a poinsettia, flag, turkey, native animals, etc.
4. Students can make their own piñatas. See instructions at the following website:  
<http://familycrafts.about.com/od/makeapinata/a/makepinata.htm>
5. Read the story of the poinsettia with students:  
<http://www.just4kidsmagazine.com/poinsettia.html>  
"The Legend of the Poinsettia" by Tomie dePaola –  
<http://www.amazon.com/The-Legend-Poinsettia-Tomie-dePaola/dp/0698115678>

**Connections:** English, Art, and Reading

**Notes to accompany slides:**

Slide #4 - Teachers may want to use the map of Mexico that comes with their textbook instead of the one provided in this lesson.

Slide #5 - You can use this map if you have students who need help. It is also very useful if you have a SmartBoard to help them draw the lines for the assignment.

Slide #6 - This is an example of another way students can label the states on their maps. Some of the spaces are so small it makes it difficult to write them all in.



[http://www.coloring.ws/t\\_template.asp?t=http://www.coloring.ws/countries/mexico/map2.gif](http://www.coloring.ws/t_template.asp?t=http://www.coloring.ws/countries/mexico/map2.gif)

# MEXICO

(Location of 31 Mexican States and 1 District)



<http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/namerica/printpage/mxstates.htm>



<http://www.freeusandworldmaps.com/html/Countries/NAmerican%20Countries/MexicoPrint.html>

## *Mexico Christmas Traditions*

1. The days leading to Christmas are filled with the wonderful smell of *buñuelos*, thin round pastries covered with sugar and cinnamon.
2. Christmas dinner may include *ensalada de la nochebuena*, a fruit and vegetable mixture; roast turkey (which sixteenth-century explorer Hernando Cortés took back to Spain from Mexico); tortillas; and hot chocolate with vanilla and cinnamon.
3. A special Christmas salad, *ensalada navideña*, includes fruit, beets, sugarcane, and nuts and is decorated with small colored candies.
4. All over the country, bakeries offer the *rosca de reyes*, an oval shaped sweetbread, decorated with candied fruit. There are *roschas* of all sizes from very small ones for two or three people and up to ones that will delight more than twenty people.
5. The *rosca* is served along with *tamales*, made of corn which was the pre-Hispanic food, and hot chocolate. Chocolate is also a gift from the native peoples of the New World.
6. Adding to the colors of this festive time of year is the *flor de la nochebuena*, which is admired for its flame-colored leaves. In the United States, it is called the poinsettia plant, named for Joel Robert Poinsett, who served as American ambassador to Mexico from 1825 to 1829.
7. On Christmas Eve, there is a parade of singers carrying bells and candles on top of long poles. They wind through the streets until they get to the local church.
8. In Oaxaca, a city 340 miles southeast of Mexico City, December 23 is *la Noche de los Rabanos*, or the Night of the Radishes.
9. In 1897, a contest was held to encourage farmers to grow bigger and better vegetables for the December 23 market, the biggest market day of the year. They were judged on how cleverly they could carve radishes!
10. Today the carved radish figures may represent religious scenes, animals, folktale characters, or spaceships. Their sizes range from a few inches to one or two feet. The root of the radish may be used as part of the figure or serve as an arm or leg. The figures are still judged and prizes are awarded.
11. One game that is often played at parties is *piñata*. A *piñata* is a decorated clay or paper-mache jar filled with sweets and hung from the ceiling or a tree branch.
12. The *piñata* may be shaped like a star, a flower, an animal, a bird or a house.
13. On Epiphany Eve (this is a holiday on Jan. 6 when Latinos receive most of their presents), children place their shoes in a window of their homes. The next morning their shoes are filled with gifts.