

Musical Ancestries: Mexico

Each Musical Ancestries episode, through the audio story and *Prezi* resources, provides a wealth of *materials* for teachers and parents to use at their discretion. Shape the activity/lesson as you wish. Use bits and pieces of the resources as they fit into your plan or create something new. This is NOT a checklist of activities that must be followed or a curriculum that dictates how you use the resources. The *Prezi* materials have been vetted for accuracy, authenticity, and child appropriateness so *you* don't have to spend time doing so.

Students learn in various ways. Some may benefit more from the story format and adventure and others from independent research. Some students need to see it, some need to hear it, some need to do it. We encourage you to use the audio story and *Prezi* resources to address the differing learning styles in your classroom.

Lesson Prompts/Idea Board

Start Here

- Preview Radio Broadcast Story/Audio Recording, Script, and/or *Prezi* of educational resources

Children's Radio Story/Audio Recording

- Play all or part of the Musical Ancestries: Mexico Story/Audio Recording for the students
 1. Prep students for the story/audio recording by introducing select instruments and styles of music through the *Prezi*. Include vocabulary words/music words.
 2. As students listen to the story/audio recording, have them follow along with a Listening Map or create a listening map of their own.
 3. As students are listening to the audio story, project the script and have them follow along. You can also project photos from the *Prezi* of instruments and other images of note.
 4. After the listening exercise, ask students to write or talk about their choice of music, instruments, city/country, or traditions incorporating some of the vocabulary words/musical terms learned.

Prezi Educational Resources

Delve deeper with your choice of materials and resources from the *Prezi* presentation.

Music

1. Play samples of music from select styles/regions/countries and compare and contrast musical elements. What is the same and what is different?
2. Discuss the song "La Llorona." Play the Disney version, then play the version from the *Prezi*. Using a Venn diagram, compare and contrast the two versions.

Which version do the students like the best? Why?

3. Find other musical instruments that come from Mexico.
4. Play “drop the needle” with music from the Prezi or audio recording. Have students try to identify the style, country or region based on the selected music samples. This could be across other Musical Ancestries™ episodes as well.
5. Have children name a folk song or tale they know. Discuss why the three Prezi classical composers’ inclusion of folk songs in their classical works is important to maintaining Mexican culture.
6. Have a SCAVENGER HUNT through this episode or across other Musical Ancestries™ episodes. Keep it simple, not too detailed. Let the students explore.
 - a. Find the string, wind, or percussion instruments
 - b. Find the dances or the festivals/celebrations
 - c. What other parts of the culture, in addition to music, do you see at festivals/celebrations?
7. Find other Mexican folk songs and teach one to the class.
8. Research more about Selena Quintanilla Perez. Why do you think she is so loved in Mexico and in the southwestern part of the United States?
9. Learn about time signatures online. Learn how to direct in 2/4 and 3/4 time. Then play the music from the Prezi and figure out which time signature each example is using. How would you direct a polka? A waltz?
10. Play “drop the needle” with the various Mexican folk instruments. What characteristics make it easy to name one instrument over another? What is timbre, and how are instruments different from each other?
11. Why is the accordion so popular in some styles of Mexican music?
12. How are music and art related?
13. Read and show the book *How Music Came to the World: A Mexican Graphic Folktale* by Jarred Lujan. Have students add music and movement to tell the story.
14. Read the book *Nina Medina and Her Abuelita: The Language of Love and Laughter* by Lena de Valgas Vizcaya to learn more Spanish words and a Spanish song about a witch. (Reading level Grade 1-3, but can be used with Grades 4 or 5 to learn Spanish words and the song.)

15. To learn more about the flight of the monarch butterflies from Canada to Mexico, read the book *Señorita Mariposa* by Ben Gundersheimer (Mister G). The rhyming words in the book lend themselves perfectly to a teacher or class created melody using the solfege sol, mi, and la. (Reading level K-2)

16. Listen to the mariachi/ranchera song “México Lindo y Quiero” (Mexico Beautiful and Beloved) and then read the English translation of the lyrics. Discuss how the words show pride in Mexican heritage and culture. How do the voice and the instruments convey a feeling? More about the song and link to a YouTube video here <https://mexicoretold.com/2013/05/17/mexico-lindo-y-querido/>

17. Elementary school essential questions:

1. What is music?
2. How is this different from sound?
3. How is rhythm different from a beat?
4. Why do people listen to music?
5. Why is music so important to people?
6. Why is the human voice particularly powerful in music?
7. What symbols are used to represent different sounds or lack of sound?
8. What do those symbols mean?
9. How are instruments different from each other?

18. Middle school essential questions:

1. What techniques are needed to perform at a high level with a particular instrument?
2. To what extent is musical performance an act of communication?
3. Why is consistent practice so important for music performance?
4. Why is the context of the performance important?
5. Why are some composers valued more than others?
6. How do culture and music interact?
7. Why is listening to a lot of different genres of music valuable for a composer?

19. High school essential questions:

1. How do the other arts, other disciplines, contexts, and daily life inform creating, performing, and responding to music?
2. How does music transcend language?
3. Why is the context of the performance important?
4. Why are some composers valued more than others?
5. How do culture and music interact?
6. Why is listening to a lot of different genres of music valuable for a composer?
7. How do composers make choices on how they wish to express an idea using music?

Art

1. How are art and music related?
2. Find the definition of “surrealism” as it pertains to art. Why do you think Frida Kahlo’s artwork is described as a mixture of surrealism and Mexican folk art?
3. Research Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera. What contributions did they make to Mexican culture? Can you find other Mexican artists?
4. Create a yarn painting. Directions are in the Huichol Art section of the Prezi.
5. Make an alebrije. Directions are in the Alebrije section of the Prezi.
6. Create papel picado. Directions are in the Papel Picado section of the Prezi.
7. Research which plants have been used to make Mexican art dyes.

Dance

1. Learn a Mexican folk dance and perform it for the class.
2. As a class, learn the Mexican Hat Dance. There are several tutorials on YouTube!
3. Watch the Danza de los Viejitos dance from the Prezi. What happens to the tempo during this dance? Does it get faster? Slower? Note how many times the tempo changes and how or if that changes the dancing.
4. Find a version of the Chinelos dance online and compare it to the Danza de los Viejitos dance.
5. Why do you think these traditional dances are important to the Mexican community?
6. Explore dances that are common to your family or community. Make a video of your family or friends dancing your traditional dances. In the video, talk about the meaning of the dance to you and how to do it.

Food Science

1. Have the students try a traditional Mexican recipe at home with their family or friends.
2. As a class project, make a recipe from the Prezi. Make sure an adult is present!
3. Have students discuss their favorite Mexican food and why they like it.
4. Why do you think food is important to a culture?

ELA (English Language Arts: Discussion/Journaling Points)

1. What is culture?
2. Why do you think religion is mentioned when discussing history or culture? How does religion play a role in shaping the culture of Mexico? Does culture affect religion?
3. Learn other Spanish words and teach one word to the class.
4. Journal prompt: What would a world without music be like? What would be the same? What would be different?
5. Read and show the book *How Music Came to the World: A Mexican Graphic Folktale* by Jarred Lujan. Have the students write a script from the folktale. Combine the acting of the story with the music and movement created in Music, #11, above. Invite another class to be your audience!
6. To learn more about Dia de los Muertos, read the book *Dia de los Muertos* by Roseanne Greenfield Thong. (Reading level K - 1)
7. Middle School students will love the book *Scary Stories From Mexican Grandmothers* by Diane Willsey. Have the students compare and contrast a scary story from the book with one they already know.

Geography

1. On what continent will you find Mexico?
2. Where is Mexico in relation to the USA?
3. Compare the climate or seasons in this country or region with a similar climate/season in the U.S.

4. Does a country's position on the globe impact its climate or seasons?
5. What is important about Mexico's geography/climate?
6. What are the countries surrounding Mexico? How have those countries influenced Mexican culture?

Theater

1. Assign parts and allow students to read/act out the Musical Ancestries script.
(There can be two or three sets of cast members to include more students.)
2. Have students plan what the scenes might be and the stage set-up. Draw a picture or make a diorama or do the real thing.
3. Create accompanying music similar to that of the audio recording using class instruments or use music from Prezi samples.

Media

1. Students interview parents/grandparents about their family's musical/cultural heritage using video or other mediums.
2. Children/teens create a video of the Musical Ancestries story.
3. Students do their own version of Musical Ancestries using short video expressions, TikTok, crowdsourcing, YouTube shorts, etc.

National Music Standards addressed:

MU: Cn10A.4a	MU: Re7A.4a	MU: Pr4B.4c
MU: Cn10A.5a	MU: Re7A.5a	MU: Pr4B.5c
MU: Cn10A.6a	MU: Re7A.6a	MU: Pr4B.6c
MU: Cn11A.4a	MU: Re7B.4a	MU: Pr6A.4a
MU: Cn11A.5a	MU: Re7B.5a	MU: Pr6A.5a
MU: Cn11A.6a	MU: Re7B.6a	MU: Pr6A.6