

CELEBRATIONS

onestopenglish

Cinco de Mayo (the fifth of May)

Teacher's notes

Age: Adults

Level: Intermediate to upper-intermediate (B1/B2)

Time: Approx. 90 minutes

Activity: In this lesson, students will:

1. read a text about Cinco de Mayo (the fifth of May);
2. work with the language involved;
3. in pairs or groups, create a multiple-choice quiz for others to do.

Language focus: vocabulary related to *Cinco de Mayo (the fifth of May)*, and the language involved in writing specific questions.

Materials: one copy of the worksheet per student. Internet access to see Cinco de Mayo images and to research items for the quiz.

Procedure

1. Warmer

In pairs or groups of three, students briefly discuss what they associate with Mexico and its culture.

Then they search for images related to Cinco de Mayo and note how many of the things they thought about can be seen in the images.

Hold a brief feedback discussion about what they discussed – and whether all the students came up with similar things - and what they came across during their quick internet research.

2. Key words and expressions

Students search for words and expressions in the text and write them next to the definitions before reading the text carefully and noticing how the words are used in context.

Key:

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1. re-enactment | 7. importers |
| 2. victory | 8. take advantage (of) |
| 3. poorly-supplied | 9. reportedly |
| 4. heavily-armed | 10. corporate sponsors |
| 5. troops | 11. commercial |
| 6. heritage | 12. originates |

3. Understanding the text

Students decide whether the sentences are true or false and rewrite any that are false to correct them. Using any additional information in the text to extend their answers.

Key:

1. False. It celebrates a victory known as the Battle of Puebla which took place on 5th May 1862 where the Mexicans achieved a surprise victory over the stronger French troops.
2. True.
3. True.
4. False. They started in the 1960s and were linked to the Civil Rights Movement. Mexican-Americans used it as a day to show their pride in their cultural background and heritage.
5. False. In the past 30 years it has become more and more commercialised due to Mexican drinks importers sponsoring parades and fiestas.
6. False. They often use Cinco de Mayo as an opportunity to teach the pupils about their close neighbours in Mexico, over the border to the south.

4. Using the key words and expressions

a. Students complete the sentences using some of the key words and phrases from task 2.

Key:

1. heavily-armed
2. commercial
3. victory
4. importers
5. re-enactment
6. troops

b. Then, they should choose the six key words and phrases that they think will be most useful for them to be able to learn and use well, and write a further 6 sentences of their own – preferably sentences that relate to their own lives.

5. Quiz

In this communicative and creative, speaking and writing task, students work in pairs or small groups to create a multiple-choice quiz about Mexico and its culture.

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If you have enough time available, allow the students to use images as well as audio and video clips, possibly embedded into PowerPoint, or alternatively static images and drawings to illustrate their quiz.

If they use PowerPoint or a similar programme to create their quiz, then make sure they have the opportunity to present it too.

Note: the answer to the example question is *b. green, white and red.*