

Name: _____

The Incredible Story of Mexico

Mexico is a country with a history that is like a giant, colorful puzzle. It has pieces that are thousands of years old and pieces that are brand new. From people who built giant stone heads to brave leaders who fought for freedom, Mexico's story is full of adventure.

Long before there were cars or computers, Mexico was home to some of the smartest and most powerful people in the world.

- The Olmecs: They are often called the "mother culture" of Mexico. They lived a long time ago and are famous for carving giant heads out of heavy stone. No one knows exactly how they moved such big rocks without trucks!
- The Maya: The Maya were like the scientists of the ancient world. They studied the stars, created a very accurate calendar, and were experts at math. They built beautiful stone cities in the jungle with tall pyramids that you can still visit today.
- The Aztecs: The Aztecs were amazing engineers. They built their capital city, Tenochtitlán, on an island in the middle of a lake. Since they didn't have much land, they made "floating gardens" to grow their food! Today, the busy Mexico City sits right on top of where that ancient island used to be.



Aztec pyramid with Olmec head carving

In 1519, explorers from Spain arrived in Mexico. Their leader was named Hernán Cortés. This was a time of big changes. The Spanish stayed for 300 years, and during that time, the "Old World" and the "New World" mixed together.



Arrival of Cortez

The Spanish brought things like horses, sheep, and the Spanish language. In return, the world learned about amazing foods from Mexico, like chocolate, tomatoes, and corn! This mix of cultures created the unique traditions that Mexico has today.

By the year 1810, the people of Mexico were tired of being ruled by a king far away in Spain. They wanted to make their own laws. A brave priest named Miguel Hidalgo started the fight for freedom. He rang a church bell and gave a speech called the "Grito de Dolores" (the Cry of Dolores).

It took 11 years of hard work and bravery, but Mexico finally won its freedom in 1821. Even though people celebrate Cinco de Mayo, the biggest party of the year is on September 16, which is Mexico's Independence Day.

Later, in 1910, the people of Mexico had another big fight called the Mexican Revolution. This time, they fought to make sure that land and schools were fair for everyone. Famous leaders like Emiliano Zapata helped make Mexico a better place for regular families.

Today, Mexico is a modern country that loves its history. When you walk down a street in Mexico, you might see a modern skyscraper right next to a wall built by the Aztecs. It is a place where the past and the present live together!



Mexico City today

1. Which group is famous for carving giant stone heads?
 - a) The Olmecs
 - b) The French
 - c) The Maya
 - d) The Spanish
2. What did the Aztecs use to grow food in the middle of a lake?
 - a) Giant stone pots
 - b) Floating gardens
 - c) Underground tunnels
 - d) Wooden greenhouses
3. How long did the Spanish rule Mexico before it became independent?
 - a) 10 years
 - b) 50 years
 - c) 300 years
 - d) 1,000 years