

# Peregrinando

TEAM-Mexico's  
Guided Discovery  
Orientation Program



# An Introduction to TEAM-Mexico's Guided Discovery Program

*"After three weeks of residing in the republic of Mexico, Mr. Winthrop was not only convinced that he knew the country perfectly, but also that he had seen everything- that he had penetrated the character and the customs of its people and had explored it thoroughly."*

Translated from Canasta de Cuentas Mexicanos by B. Traven

Cultural Orientation: FAIL!

Unlike this clueless tourist, we hope that you will start the *journey* of understanding and enjoying Mexico and her culture. It will take a lifetime! That's why we called our program *Peregrinando* which means, "taking a journey, a pilgrimage."

This program is part of a two year orientation for new workers . On the next page, you will see a timeline. It includes formal language study, journaling and a coaching program.

We hope that you will develop skills of observation and sympathetic questioning that will serve you throughout your career. Please journal your observations and discuss your experience with your coach each week. Both of you can keep a checklist to record your progress. The activities can be done in any order.

Some of the activities will be easy to do, others may require a translator for you to complete. If you would like to substitute another activity or reading for one we have chosen, please talk with your coach first.

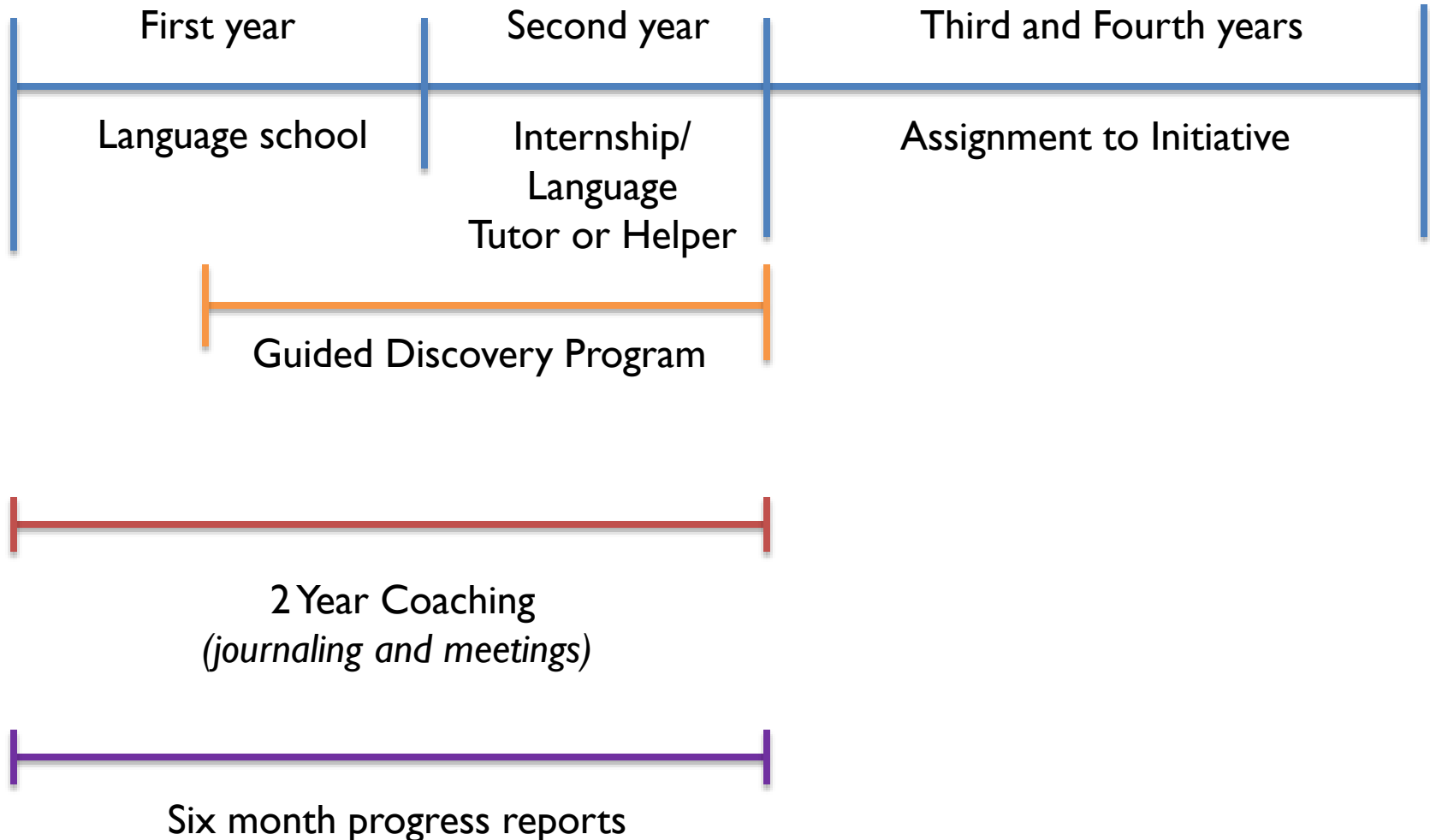
Our thanks to Beth Wyse, Curriculum Designer for Lifelearner Network, who guided us as we attempted "the discovery method." We used many of Dr. Herbert Purnell's general topics as an outline for our program (2004, A Language and Culture Learning Program for Independent Learners, preliminary rev. ed.; privately produced).

The Lord bless you as you journey!



The Language and Cultural Acquisition Committee,  
TEAM-Mexico

# Suggested Timeline for the New Orientation Program



# Check List

## People

- Greetings
- Occupations
- Courtship
- Parenting
- Extended Family and Friends

## Holidays

- Día de los Reyes
- Lent and Easter
- Independence Day
- Day of the Dead
- Day of the Virgen Guadalupe
- Posadas
- Christmas
- Birthdays

## Clothing

## Handicrafts/Jewelry

## Mexican food

## Music

## Pastimes

## Geography

## Architecture

## History

## The Mexican Evangelical Church

## Catholicism

## Current Events



# People



The people of Mexico are very diverse! The culture is changing rapidly, and many of the distinctives of being Mexican are becoming less obvious due to globalization.

There are five different subtopics in this section. Some of the activities will only require observation. Others will require interviewing Mexican friends. Ask your coach to help you craft questions before the interviews. While you should try to use as much Spanish as you can, you may need to interview English speaking Mexicans or use a translator.

You do not have to do this entire section in order. You can vary it with other topics.

Ask the Lord to help you truly understand and love your Mexican friends. After all, He called you here!

PEOPLE  
1-a

# Greetings

Observe how different Mexicans greet each other:

- 1) The first time
- 2) Middle/upper class
- 3) Lower class
- 4) Indigenous
- 5) Youth/children
  
- 6) When a Mexican passes a table where people are eating, what does he do?
- 7) When a Mexican arrives at a bank or a business where people are waiting for the doors to open, what does he do?

NOTES:



# Occupations

NOTES:

PEOPLE  
1-b

Pick five places of business from the list below.  
Ask questions about training for this occupation,  
where to buy materials, who are the customers,  
etc.

- 1) tortilla factory
- 2) iron smith
- 3) brick making community
- 4) leather worker
- 5) purified water store
- 6) carpenter
- 7) candy store
- 8) school supply store
- 9) municipal marketplace
- 10) glass blowing factory

What other stores are different from those that  
you find in your country?

Are there places of business that seem to employ  
mostly women or mostly men? (i.e. meseros)

PEOPLE  
1-c

# Courtship/Marriage

Ask two Mexican friends what a traditional Mexican noviazgo would entail. (Read an article on it if you want more information.)

What does it mean to "robar la novia"? ("rob the girlfriend"- similar to, but more serious than "eloping")

Compare and contrast various marriages. Observe a couple over fifty years old, a couple with school-aged children and a couple with pre-school children. What is the husband's role? Wife's role?

Ask two Mexicans to describe a traditional marriage (roles). Ask how this is changing.

Find out what the divorce rate is in your city. Ask a social worker to list common problems in Mexican marriages. (You can ask someone to call the local DIF for you.)

Find out if domestic abuse is a major problem in your city. (DIF)



Compare and contrast the child rearing practices of various types of families (two parent, middle income; single mother; parents of pre-schoolers; parents of school-aged children and parents of teens, lower income family).

Who helps with homework? Who supervises the chores? Who taxis the children? What kinds of family activities do they do? Are girls raised differently than boys?



# Parenting

PEOPLE

1-d

"Shame based discipline"- Read about this concept or discuss it with your coach first.

Listen for three examples of this manner of discipline or attempt to motivate.

How do the children react? Is it used more with young children or teens? Do adults use this technique with each other?

# Extended Family and Friends

I-e  
PEOPLE

- 1) Create an empty family tree using the extended family titles that you find at <http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parentesco>.  
Ask a Mexican friend to fill in the proper names of his family.
- 2) Ask two Mexican friends about the importance of extended family. What are the expectations put on a person from extended family? When are friends considered like extended family? Are the expectations the same?
- 3) Research “indirect communication” Observe instances of this in the culture. Ask other friends (both ex-patriots and Mexicans) if they can give examples. Are some subcultures more indirect than others? How do parents use indirect communication with their children?



Some websites that you will find helpful:

<http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/global-etiquette/mexico-country-profile.html>

<http://countrystudies.us/mexico/59.htm>

<http://www.inquisitivetraveler.com/pages/artlib/mxcultip.html>

Study a Mexican calendar. What do you notice about each day? Years ago, children were given their names according to the saint of the day. What names would you and your family have been given?

## Holidays

### LENT AND EASTER

Find three Mexicans who are giving up something for Lent. Ask them why they chose it and what they expect will happen.

Capirotada- Read one or more of the following articles:

<http://www.mexgrocer.com/455-capirotada.html>

<http://www.experience-san-miguel-de-allende.com/capirotada-recipe.html>

<http://mexicobob.blogspot.com/2008/03/capirotada.html>

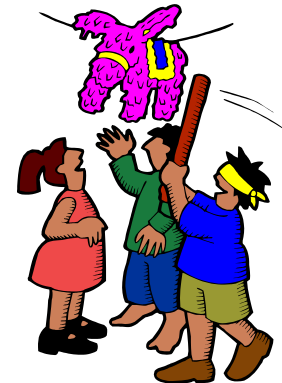
How is Easter celebrated? Ask three friends.

### DIA DE LOS REYES

If you are not invited first, buy a *Rosca de Reyes*, make some hot chocolate (champurrado) and invite some friends over to see who will get the plastic baby.

Ask a Mexican what happens to the person who gets the plastic baby in his piece.

Check the manger scene in the plaza to see what was added.





## INDEPENDENCE DAY

Research the events leading up to Independence Day.

Research the names of the Mexican revolutionists. Where do you see these names in your town?

Families may like to make decorations for their homes. (Pápel picado, flags, etc.)

Visit the plaza prior to the date and find out what events will take place. You can either attend this celebration in your town square or watch it on TV Azteca.

## DAY OF THE DEAD

Write down five things that you see in the plaza/downtown area/ supermarket related to this holiday. Ask three people to explain the significance of this holiday.

Read the following articles:

<http://www.dayofthedead.com/>

<http://www.mexconnect.com/articles/1972-november-2-the-day-of-the-dead>

Visit a cemetery on this day if you feel liberty to do so.

## Day of the Virgen of Guadalupe

Read the section on the Virgin of Guadalupe.

Also, read <http://www.inside-mexico.com/guadalupe.htm>

Observe a processional with a statue of the Virgin. What do the people do?

Ask three former Catholics what they were taught about Guadalupe.

Many European and American customs have become part of the Mexican celebration of **Christmas**. Observe three or more traditions that are uniquely Mexican or at least Latin.

Aguinaldo-Ask a Mexican friend what the "aguinaldo" is. Will you give anyone an aguinaldo?



## Posadas

Find out what kind of activities take place at a posada and what kind of foods are eaten. If you attend one, note any unique foods or activities.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Las\\_Posadas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Las_Posadas)

Try three of the following winter and/or Christmas foods and drinks :

Champurrado

Atole

Buñuelos

Ponche (non-alcoholic)

Tamales

Lechón

Bacalau

Romeros

# Birthdays

When you are invited to a child's birthday party, observe anything that is different than a party in the USA.



Learn "Las Mañanitas," the classic Mexican birthday song. The words vary a little bit throughout Mexico.

You can listen to it here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m908Q6cB-14&feature=fvw> OR

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51CpGsaK3M8&feature=related>

## LAS MAÑANITAS

ESTAS SON LAS MAÑANITAS  
QUE CANTABA EL REY DAVID  
A LAS MUCHACHAS BONITAS  
TE LAS CANTAMOS A ASÍ.

DESPIERTA MI BIEN DESPIERTA  
MIRA QUE YA AMANECIÓ,  
YA LOS PAJARITOS CANTAN  
LA LUNA YA SE OCULTÓ.

QUE LINDA ESTÁ LA MAÑANA  
EN QUE VENGO A SALUDARTE  
VENIMOS TODOS CON GUSTO  
Y PLACER A FELICITARTE.

EL DÍA EN QUE TU NACISTE  
NACIERON TODAS LAS FLORES  
Y EN LA PILA DEL BAUTISMO  
CANTARON LOS RUISEÑORES.

YA VIENE AMANECIENDO  
YA LA LUZ DEL DÍA NOS DIO  
LEVANTATE DE MAÑANA,  
MIRA QUE YA AMANECIÓ.

# Birthday Songs

## Piñata Song

Dale, dale, dale.  
No pierdas el tino.  
Porque si lo pierdes.  
Pierdes el camino.  
Ya le diste una.  
Ya le diste dos.  
Ya le diste tres.  
Y tu tiempo se  
acabó.

## Feliz, Feliz Cumpleaños

There are many variations to this Christian birthday song. This is the version that is sung in the Baja. The words and music are found here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zj8qYiwV2wA>



# List of Mexican Holidays-Días Festivos



**January 1: Año Nuevo** (New Year's Day), is an official Mexican holiday.

**January 6: [Día de Los Santos Reyes](#)** is the day when Mexicans exchange Christmas presents in accordance with the arrival of the three gift-bearing wisemen to Jesus Christ. This day culminates the Christmastime festivities.

**January 17: Feast Day of de San Antonio de Abad** is a religious holiday during which the Catholic Church allows animals to enter the church for blessing.

**February 2: [Día de la Candelaria](#)** or Candlemas, is a religious holiday that is celebrated with processions, dancing, bullfights in certain cities, and the blessing of the seeds and candles. The festivities are best seen in: San Juan de los Lagos, Jalapa; Talpa de Allende, Jalisco; and Santa Maria del Tuxla, Oaxaca.

**January 31- February 5 (2008): [Carnaval](#)** is an official Mexican holiday that kicks off a five-day celebration of the libido before the Catholic lent. Beginning the weekend before Lent, Carnaval is celebrated exhubrantly with parades, floats and dancing in the streets. Port towns such as Ensenada, La Paz, Mazatlán and Veracruz are excellent places to watch Carnaval festivities. *Dates change slightly as follows: 2008: Jan 31 - Feb 5; 2009: Feb 19-24; 2010: Feb 11-16.*

**February 5: [Día de la Constitución](#)** an official holiday that commemorates Mexico's Constitution. Celebrated Monday, February 2, 2009.

**February 24: Flag Day**, This Mexican national holiday honors the Mexican flag.

**March 18: [La Expropiación Petrolera](#)**, Oil Expropriation of March 18, 1939. Civic holiday.

**March 19: St. Joseph's Day**, Día de San José, a religious holiday best seen in Tamulin, San Luis Potosi.

**March 21: [The Birthday of Benito Juárez](#)**, a famous Mexican president and national hero, this is an official Mexican holiday. Celebrated Monday, March 16, 2009.

**Semana Santa: [Semana Santa](#)** is the holy week that ends the 40-day Lent period. This week includes Good Friday and Easter Sunday. It is Mexican custom to break confetti-filled eggs over the heads of friends and family.

**May 1: [Primero de Mayo](#)** is the Mexican national holiday that is equivalent to the U.S. Labor Day.

**May 3: [Holy Cross Day](#)** Día de la Santa Cruz, when construction workers decorate and mount crosses on unfinished buildings, followed by fireworks and picnics at the construction site.

**May 5: [Cinco de Mayo](#)** is the Mexican national holiday that honors the Mexican victory over the French army at Puebla de los Angeles in 1862.

**May 10: [Mother's Day](#)**, Due to the importance of the mother in Mexican culture, Mother's Day is an especially significant holiday.





## Mexican Holidays-cont.

**June 1: Navy Day** is an official Mexican holiday.

**June 24: Saint John the Baptist Day** is celebrated with religious festivities, fairs, and popular jokes connected to getting dunked in water.

**June 29: Fiesta of Saint Peter and Saint Paul** notable celebrations in Mexcaltitcñ, Nayarit and Zaachila, Oaxaca. **September 1: Annual State of the Union**, Though this date is an approximation, the President delivers the address in the autumn.

**September 13: Los Niños Héroes**, Heroes of the Mexican-American War 1847. The President of Mexico commemorates their sacrifice at a wreath-laying ceremony at the monument to Los Niños Héroes in Chapultepec Park.

**September 16: Mexican Independence Day** celebrates the day that Miguel Hidalgo delivered *El Grito de Dolores*, and announced the Mexican revolt against Spanish rule.

**October 12: Día de la Raza**, This day celebrates Columbus' arrival to the Americas, and the historical origins of the Mexican race.

**November 1&2: Día de los Muertos** is an important Mexican holiday that merges Pre-Columbian beliefs and modern Catholicism. Europe's All Saints' Day and the Aztec worship of the dead contribute to these two days that honor Mexico's dead.

**November 20: Mexican Revolution Day**, This official Mexican holiday commemorates the Mexican Revolution of 1910. Celebrated Monday, November 16, 2009.

**December 12: Día de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe**, or the day of the Virgin of Guadalupe is celebrated with a feast honoring Mexico's patron saint.

**December 16: Las Posadas** celebrates *Joseph and Mary's search for shelter in Bethlehem* with candlelight processions that end at various nativity scenes. Las Posadas continues through January 6.

**December 25: Navidad**, Mexico celebrates the Christmas holiday.

FROM: <http://www.mexonline.com/holiday.htm>

# Handicrafts & Jewelry



Mexicans are proud of their exquisite handicrafts and jewelry. Visit the area of your city where handicrafts are sold, and check these out!

## 1) Talavera-

Where is it made?

What is special about it?

How do I know if it is authentic?

What were the original colors?

## 2) Black Pottery

Where is it made?

What is the legend associated with it?

## 3) Silver-

Where are the most famous mines?

Peru is the top producer of silver, but Mexico is very close behind!

## 4) Mexican Fire Opal

What makes it distinct from other types of opals?

Where is it mined?

## 5) Leatherwork-

What areas are famous for this?

## 6) Weavings-

What materials are used?

What areas are famous for this?

## 7) Huichol Beadwork

Where do the Huichols live?

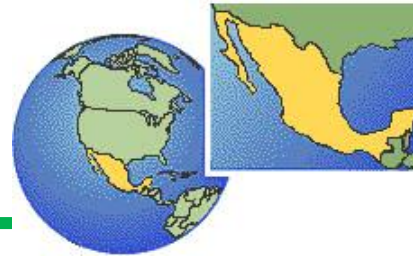
Ask how much a few items cost.

## 8) Ironwood

Where is ironwood found?

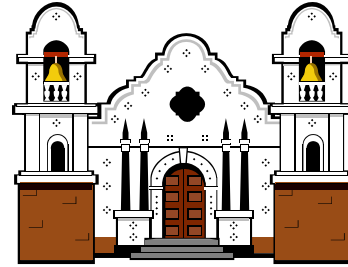
What figures are popular?

# Geography



- 1) Learn the names of all the states of Mexico. If you have children, buy a "foamy" puzzle and work with them to learn the names and location of the states
- 2) Meet people from at least 10 different Mexican states and discover:
  - the most famous landmark from their state
  - a typical meal from their state
  - the biggest social problem that state faces and what they would do to resolve it.
- 3) As you walk or drive around your city, jot down the names of the Mexican states you see as part of the names of the business. How many state names did you find? What, if anything, does this imply? Is there a pattern? Are certain states associated with certain things? Turn this into a game with your kids.
- 4) Discuss with your Mexican friends why certain areas or states have certain stereotypes or reputations associated with them. For instance, why are the people of Monterrey considered stingy? Why are the people of Baja California Sur considered to be lazy by many? Why do the people of Guerrero have a reputation for violence?
- 5) Get together with Mexican friends and ask them to plan their ultimate dream vacation in Mexico. Where would they go? What would they do? What would they eat? Since money is no object in an imaginary game, there are no cost limits.
- 6) Watch Willy Sousa's beautiful video, "Mexico en Tus Sentidos."  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3jBUZHsuGgE> He has made short videos for each state as well.

# Architecture



## GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS/CHURCHES

Visit two older government buildings. What years were they built? What material was used to build them? Is there a style of architecture common to their design? Ask someone about the history of the building.

Visit two newer government buildings. Answer the questions listed above.

Take a tour of a famous original Catholic church in your city. Find out on-line or from the tour guide which architectural styles were used. What details do you observe on the tour? What building material was used?

Visit two or three other churches (any religion). What differences do you notice? What similarities?

## PLAZA/HOMES

Go to the downtown plaza area of three Mexican towns. Observe the similarities and the differences of the three downtown areas. Ask a Mexican what this area is used for. Ask an elderly Mexican what the plaza was originally used for.

Try to visit several different styles of homes:  
Older house with the inner courtyard

Newer house (Fonatur style) in a sub-division  
Ranch

Adobe house

Tar paper shack

Notice the styles, building materials, decorations, colors, patios, fountains, gardens, etc. What similarities do you see? How are houses different than typical houses from your country?

Like any other culture, favorite pastimes depend on the climate, resources, background and education of the population of the particular city or area.

# Pastimes

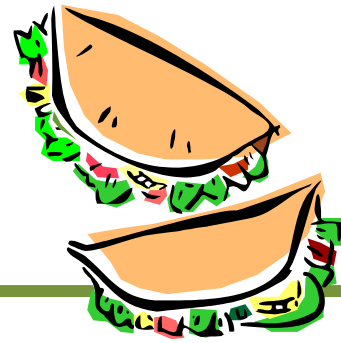


• Ask ten Mexicans to name three favorite pastimes. Try to ask a variety of people. What are the most commonly named pastimes?

• Take an hour or two to try a Mexican pastime that you have never experienced. This could be something as easy as learning to play dominoes or as complicated as arranging a deep sea fishing expedition.

- 1) **Soccer:** Find out the names of the main professional teams in Mexico. Ask grade school children to name the teams and their favorite players. Note the use of nicknames for the players.
- 2) **Bullfighting and cockfighting:**  
Which cities or states are famous for bull fighting or cockfighting?  
Find out how much tickets cost for a bull fight.  
Visit a pet store that sells roosters for fighting. Ask about the prices.
- 3) **Telenovelas:** Ask women and men if they watch telenovelas. You can ask which programs are their favorites and how long they have been fans. How often do telenovelas appear on television?

# Mexican Food



- 1) Go to the market. See how many fruits or vegetables you can find that are unfamiliar to you. Try to learn the names for 5 of them. Buy two or three to take home and try.
- 2) Visit a tianguis market (flea market). What differences do you note in the foods for sale here than in a supermarket or even a local market? (Besides the food aspect, what do you note about this type of market?)
- 3) As you are driving or riding around in the area, notice what food dishes are most commonly advertised on restaurant billboards or on menus. Try one or two of these dishes. How are they the same or different than what you had expected of "Mexican" food?
- 4) Go to a supermarket. What products do you notice that are surprising to you? Or is it the packaging or something else that you especially notice?

# Music



- 1) Look up "Banda", "Mariachi", "Salsa", and "Corridos" on youtube.com and listen to these popular varieties of Mexican music.
- 2) Ask five Mexicans which of these (or other music) is their favorite.
- 3) Go to a restaurant where one of these styles is the live music.
- 4) Attend a folkloric dance program in the plaza or cultural center.

# Clothing

1) Go to a public place and find a place to sit where you can observe people without being obvious about it--perhaps a shopping plaza, an airport, a plaza. Observe adults, children, and young people.

What do you notice in their dress that is different than or similar to your home culture?

Also, what differences do you see between old and young?

2) Go to a shopping mall. Notice the kinds of stores that are most common with regard to clothing.

The traditional dress code for women consisted of a skirt accompanied by a tunic called huipil. They used a shoulder cape by the name of quechuemiltl to cover their shoulders and a rezobo shawl to take over the head. The clothing for men bears likeness to European style clothing. Trousers and shirts are common but with the native addition of the large blanket cape known as sarape. This attire is not complete without boots. As for the celebration dresses, you will find that the Mexicans have different costumes for special days in the year which are worn to complement the feel of the occasion.  
From [www.answers.com](http://www.answers.com)

3) Research the traditional clothing of four areas of Mexico. You can find dolls dressed in traditional folkloric dress or see a traditional folkloric dance program.





- 1) Draw a time line that includes major Mexican historical events. This can begin at the time of the Spanish landing here, or if you prefer, you can go back before that time. This can be something you do little by little as you learn things over the next number of months, or you can do it all at once early on. This project can be worked on as a couple or a family, and can be done on paper, or if you like you can do a 3D model and involve the whole family.
- 2) Ask four Mexicans to tell you who they think are the three most important persons in the history of Mexico and why.
- 3) While you are in Guadalajara, take the Tapatio Tour (double decker bus). It will be informative with regard to the history of the city.
- 4) Visit a historical museum or investigate a historical site. Take notes to share with your coach.
- 5) Buy a Mexican flag. Find out what the significance is of the items on the front. You could ask a Mexican first, but you may also need to check a book or the internet for more information.



# History

Although Mexico calls herself a "Roman Catholic" country, anthropologists would point out that Mexico's main religion is classified as a "**Popular Religion**," consisting of magical-religious beliefs syncretized with Shamanic (communication with the spirit world) and Catholic traditions. See articles on *Religion in Mexico* and *Catholicism* from Handbook.

- 1) Visit two mission churches and discover their history.
- 2) Ask three different Mexican Catholics about the influence of Catholicism in his life and his country.
- 3) Ask three different Mexican believers from Catholic backgrounds how their friends and families reacted when they were first converted.
- 4) Read Martin Gonzalez's research paper on Protestantism in Mexico.

# Catholicism



- 1) Find ten images of the Virgen of Guadalupe in your city. (Look for some unusual ones.)
- 2) Compare an image of the Virgen of Guadalupe with the traditional image of the Virgin Mary. What differences do you notice?
- 3) View an illustrated narrative about the Virgen at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RC0v9xZktEw>
- 4) Read the following articles:  
<http://www.sancta.org/>  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Our\\_Lady\\_of\\_Guadalupe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Our_Lady_of_Guadalupe)
- 5) More recently, the "virgencita" cartoon-like image has appeared all over Mexico.  
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Virgencita-Plis/48804724847>
- 6) Ask veteran missionaries how they approach the topic of the Virgen of Guadalupe with unbelievers.

# *The Mexican Evangelical Church*



Attend three different churches.

- How is the worship service similar to a service in your country? What is distinctly Mexican?
- How long is the service? Did it begin on time? Do people stay to visit with each other or leave quickly? Do people sell things after the service?
- Are the worship songs translated from English or are the authors Mexican? What instruments are played? Do they clap? How expressive are they in their worship? What else do you notice?

- What was the style of preaching?
- Who is allowed to participate in the Lord's Supper?
- What kind of church government do they have?
- What roles do women take?

# Current Events



- 1) Before researching this on the internet, ask three Mexicans to describe the major political parties of Mexico (PAN, PRI, PRD, PT, Green). Find out what party is in office in your city and state as well as nationwide.
- 2) Notice election campaign techniques during the months prior to a local or national election. What is different than in the USA or Canada?
- 3) The map on the next page gives an idea of the continuing problems with drug cartels in Mexico.

[http://www.stratfor.com/graphic\\_of\\_the\\_day/2011/028-mexicos-areas-cartel-influence-and-smuggling-routes](http://www.stratfor.com/graphic_of_the_day/2011/028-mexicos-areas-cartel-influence-and-smuggling-routes)

While we have not had major problems where there are TEAM-missionaries, it is good to be aware of the situation.

- 4) Research what Mexican animals are considered endangered and find out how Mexico is trying to protect at least one of them.
- 5) Some of the major issues facing Mexico are the economy, erosion, the breakdown of the family, human trafficking, illegal immigration, pollution, etc. Pick one of the issues and give a brief verbal report to your coach.

<http://hermosillo.usconsulate.gov/issues.html>

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mx.html>

[http://www.eoearth.org/article/Current\\_environmental\\_issues\\_in\\_Mexico](http://www.eoearth.org/article/Current_environmental_issues_in_Mexico)

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-1306299/Mexico-drug-wars-people-trafficking-city-tours-offered-travel-firms.html>

# Current Events, cont.

## AREAS OF CARTEL INFLUENCE, WITH SMUGGLING ROUTES

