

THE STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE

GradeLevel: 6

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Length of Unit: 3-4 weeks

I. Abstract

This unit will explore Latin American revolutionary movements beginning with the colonial struggles and continuing into the twentieth century. Students will understand the economic factors in the various revolutions, and how the control of government was at stake. The students will understand the class and racial divisions that shaped the revolutions. Students will be able to identify and understand the roles of Miguel Hidalgo, Benito Juarez, Simon Bolivar, Pancho Villa, Emiliano Zapata, and other individuals who were involved in the revolution. The students will explore both the physical and political geography of Latin American countries.

II. Overview

A. Concept Objectives:

1. Students will understand the economic, social, and political factors behind a revolution.
2. Students will understand the key figures and their contributions in each of the revolutionary movements studied.
3. Students will be able to compare and contrast revolutionary movements within Latin America as well as the American and French Revolutions.

B. Content from the *Core Knowledge Sequence*:

1. The origin of the term "Latin America"
2. Haitian Revolution
3. Mexican Revolutions
4. Liberators of Latin American countries
5. New nations in Central America
6. The Cuban war for independence
7. Geography of Latin America

C. Skills to be taught:

1. Mapping
2. Brainstorming
3. Compare and Contrast
4. Critical thinking skills
5. Role Play
6. Demographic Mathematics
7. Critical Listening
8. Research Skills
9. Cooperative Learning

10. Geography

III. Background Knowledge

- A. For Teachers: *The Mexican Revolution* and *The Mexican War of Independence* from the World History Series, *What Your Sixth Grader Needs to Know* by E.D. Hirsch.
- B. For Students: It would be helpful if students had previously studied the French Revolution in fifth grade and the American Revolution in fourth grade, although it is not a necessity.

IV. Resources

Frost, Mary Pierce and Susan Keegan. *The Mexican Revolution*. San Diego: Lucent Books, 1997, ISBN 1-56006-292-4.

The Mexican War of Independence, World History Series. San Diego: Lucent Books, 1997, ISBN 1-56006-297-5.

Hirsch, Jr. E. D. *What Your Sixth Grader Needs to Know*. New York: Dell Publishing, 1993, ISBN 0-385-31467-1.

V. Lessons

Lesson One: Revolutions! (Day 1)

A. Objectives:

1. Students will understand the concept of revolution.
2. Students will distinguish between revolutions fought internally and revolutions expelling colonial powers.

B. Materials:

1. *Dictionary of Cultural Literacy* by E.D. Hirsch
2. Intermediate level dictionary
3. Webbing Chart - Appendix A
4. Poster board

C. Vocabulary:

1. revolution
2. French Revolution
3. American Revolution
4. colonial powers
5. colony
6. monarchy

D. Procedures:

1. Have students brainstorm about what revolution means to them. Record on poster board or chalkboard.
2. Have students look up the word *revolution* in the dictionary as it refers to political and historical changes.
3. Explore with your students reasons why a group of people would want to overthrow a system of government use the webbing chart to record reasons.

4. This discussion should then lead into a brief exploration/review of the American and French Revolutions. You can have students use *The Dictionary of Cultural Literacy* to aid in this discussion.

E. Evaluation:

1. Discussion with students in class.
2. Webbing chart

Lesson Two: Haiti: The First Black Republic in the West (Day 2)

A. Objectives:

1. Students will understand the significance of Haiti's rebellion against France.
 - a. Students will understand that Haiti was the first Latin American nation to gain independence.
 - b. Students will understand that this slave rebellion brought the first African republic.
2. Students will be able to identify Toussaint L'Ouverture and his contributions to the Haitian rebellion.

B. Materials:

1. *Haiti* (Cultures of the World Series), pages 20-24

C. Vocabulary:

1. Hispaniola
2. Toussaint L'Ouverture

D. Procedure:

1. Review webbing charts from yesterday. Why would people want to overthrow a system of government?
2. Locate Haiti on the map. Point out that both Haiti and the Dominican Republic share the island of Hispaniola.
3. Point out that on this small section of the island that we know as Haiti, there was one Frenchman for every 10 African slaves. Ask the students if they feel this would be a reason to try to overthrow a government.
4. Every successful rebellion needs a strong leader. Brainstorm on what qualities would make a good military leader. Record on chart paper or the blackboard.
5. Read "The Opener" on page 24 of *Haiti*.
6. Go back to your brainstorm. Ask the students if they felt that Toussaint L'Ouverture had the qualities of a leader.
7. Be sure the students know/understand that Haiti gained its independence soon after (about 30 years) the U.S. Students should also know that Haiti was the first African republic and that economic and social struggles continue in Haiti today.

E. Evaluation:

1. Brainstorm
2. Class discussion

Lesson Three: An Overview of Latin American Revolutions (Day 3)

A. Objectives:

1. Students will understand the meaning of the term *Latin America* and how it originated.
2. Students will understand the common themes in the revolutions occurring in Latin America in the 19th century.
3. Students will begin building their knowledge of the geography of Latin America.

B. Materials:

1. Classroom-sized outlined map of Mexico, Central, and South America. This map will consist of several layers, where notes, ideas, and events will be recorded on each layer. This will allow students to “see” where events took place. Layers should be constructed so that they are detachable; students can use each of the layers at their seats for research or study purposes. (Magnets, velcro or push pins would be appropriate.) The first layer should represent the vast colonial holdings around the time of 1800. Layers following will correspond to the changes taking place in Latin American boundaries. The final layer of the map will be Latin America today.
2. *The Mexican War of Independence*
3. *What Every Sixth Grader Needs to Know*
4. *Exploration into Latin America*

C. Vocabulary:

1. Latin America

D. Procedure:

1. Explain the term *Latin America*. Use *Exploration into Latin America* page 5 as well as the following explanation: Latin America was a political term used to emphasize the similarities and the unity between the “New World” and the European colonizers. It was meant to emphasize the connection between the two in both language and culture.
2. Explain to the students that Latin America was colonized by European Powers, mainly Spain and Portugal.
3. Referring to the timeline in *The Mexican War for Independence* on page 8, review with the students the struggle Mexico went through first to gain its independence from Spain and then the internal struggle over how to run the republic.
4. Explain to the students that as Mexico had its struggle, Simon Bolivar was leading a fight for independence in northern South America in the countries we know today as Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia.
5. On the map you have constructed, have students locate each of these countries. Note to students that the borders we know today were not “drawn” until each of the countries gained their independence.

Lesson Four: The “Class” Structure (Days 4-5)

A. Objectives:

1. Students will understand the racial structure of Mexico during the colonial time period.

B. Materials:

1. *The Mexican War of Independence*, pages 8-12.

2. Copies of Appendix B for each student.
3. Copies of Appendix C

C. Vocabulary:

1. Spaniard
2. creole
3. mestizo
4. Indian
5. encomiendas - parcel of land granted by the Spanish government to those they wish to reward
6. encomendero - the titleholder to the land as well as the Indians living on that land

D. Procedure:

1. Using *What Every Sixth Grader Needs to Know*, define what each of the vocabulary words means, and the rights and responsibilities of each group. See Appendix B. (Day 3)
2. Students will enter the classroom on day 4 of the unit and receive a name tag that reads either Spaniard, creole, mestizo, or Indian. (Color coding may help here.) There should be a proportional number in each. For example, in a class of 20 students have 2 Spaniards, 3 creoles, 6 mestizos, and 9 Indians. (This is not an exact replica of the percentages of the time because there were so few Spaniards, however, you want at least two students working together for this role.)
3. Give each group the four scenario cards found in Appendix C. Have them read the scenarios and decide how that scenario would affect their social class. Note: Each of the scenarios could affect each of the social classes. Students should use their rights and responsibilities worksheet (Appendix B) from the day before so they have a clear understanding of the class divisions while working on this activity. Students may also need some thought-provoking questions from the teacher to understand how a scenario might affect their class.
4. Review each of the scenarios with the class and have each group present the effect on their social class.

E. Evaluation:

1. Students completed worksheets on the rights and responsibilities of each of the social classes.
2. Student presentations for the role play.

F. Extension: (Math)

1. Have students figure out the percentages of each social class in Mexico in the 1800's. See Appendix D.

Lesson Five: Mexican Independence - Miguel Hidalgo; Father of Mexican Independence
(Day 6)

A. Objectives:

1. Students will be able to identify and understand the role of Miguel Hidalgo in the Mexican War for Independence.

B. Materials:

1. Hidalgo's speech from September 16, 1810-- Mexican Independence Day.
2. *The Mexican War of Independence*
3. *What Every Sixth Grader Needs to Know*
4. Copies of Appendix E for each student.
5. *Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla* by Jan Gleiter and Kathleen Thompson

C. Vocabulary:

1. El Grito de Dolores
2. Miguel Hidalgo

D. Procedure:

1. Open the class reading Hidalgo's speech. For the first time, have students listen. Read the speech a second time and have students write down all of their feelings and emotions. Read the speech a final time and have students write about what actions they would take after hearing this speech.
2. Discuss with the class Miguel Hidalgo's role as the "The Father of Mexican Independence."
3. Explain his capture and death, and why the Spanish government felt he needed to die. Be sure to make the point that many continued to fight for independence from Spain.
4. Have students work in groups and fill in the important contributions of Hidalgo. (Appendix E)

E. Evaluation

1. Student response papers to Hidalgo's speech
2. Class discussion
3. Chart (Appendix E)

F. Extension

1. Have a mock trial reenacting Hidalgo's trial for treason.

Lesson Six: The Rebellion Lives On... (Day 7)**A. Objectives:**

1. Students will understand that some priests used their faith to justify and encourage independence and justice for Mexico.
2. Students will be able to identify Jose Maria Morelos and his role in Mexican independence.
3. Students will be able to discuss how class division played a role in the rebellion.

B. Materials:

1. *The Mexican War of Independence*, page 24
2. Appendix E

C. Vocabulary:

1. Jose Maria Morelos

D. Procedure:

1. Miguel Hidalgo was a Catholic priest fighting for independence. Jose Maria Morelos, also a Catholic priest and a follower of Hidalgo, was also

sympathetic to the plight of the Indians, and led the rebellion upon Hidalgo's execution. Briefly discuss with students why priests would support the rebellion. Be sure that students understand that the priests felt the Spanish oppression of the Indians was un-Christian.

2. To reinforce this idea, read page 24 in *The Mexican War of Independence*. Be sure to express that this is an excerpt of a writing by a Spanish priest written over 400 years ago. (An extension would be to explore the differences in primary and secondary sources.)

3. After students understand Morelos' role, begin discussing why not all people were united in this rebellion against Spain. Make sure students understand that there were not clean breaks among the classes, however, class did influence people's attitudes toward the rebellion. (You may reflect on Lesson 3 and class structure.) Explore who would have the most to lose in a rebellion and who would have the most to gain.

4. Have students fill in important information onto Appendix E.

E. Evaluation:

1. Appendix E
2. Class discussion

Lesson Seven: Independence Won or Independence Lost? (Day 8)

A. Objectives:

1. Students will be able to identify and the significance of Agustin de Iturbide.
2. Students will understand that after independence from Spain is won, turmoil still characterizes the Mexican government and its peoples.

B. Materials:

1. Appendix E
2. *The Mexican War of Independence*, pages 53-62

C. Vocabulary

1. Agustin de Iturbide
2. Santa Anna
3. The Alamo

D. Procedure:

1. Give students notes on Agustin de Iturbide to fill in his contributions in Appendix E. Be sure to explain how the character of the revolution changed, and how the revolution was won under his leadership.
2. Ask students if the Mexican people, now under the leadership of Iturbide, would be satisfied with a new monarchy, or does that continue to be what they were fighting against.
3. Explain the transition of leadership from Iturbide to Santa Anna.
4. Give students notes on Santa Anna to fill into their charts. Be sure to point out that Mexicans were upset with his mistakes in the war with the United States, which lead to growing opposition against him.

E. Evaluations:

1. Charts

Lesson 8: Tug-of-War (Day 9)

A. Objectives:

1. Students will be able to identify and characterize the following key figures in Mexican history: Benito Juarez; Pancho Villa; Porfirio Diaz; and Emiliano Zapata.

B. Materials:

1. *What Every Sixth Grader Needs to Know*
2. Appendix E
3. *The Mexican Revolution*

C. Vocabulary:

1. Hacienda

D. Procedure:

1. Before students enter class, using rope or yarn, map out a large area of your classroom floor that will represent the land area of Mexico.
2. Explain to the students that if Santa Anna was in power, only about 4 of your students would own land. (Use the rope to divide the “land” into 4 large sections and chose 4 landowners.) Ask the students what the rest of their roles would be. They would be peasants working for the 4 large landowners. Divide the rest of the students among the 4 land owners.
3. Along comes Juarez. Being a poor Indian, he understands the struggles of the poor, and forces landowners to sell their land so that each farmer can have a small plot of land to farm for himself. Using the rope, divide the “land” into equal sections so that each person has a small plot of land.
4. The wealthy, being unhappy having to sell their land, instigate a civil war and Diaz comes into power. Diaz then changes the law so that wealthy Mexicans, Americans, and Europeans could buy the land, thus forcing many of the peasants off their land. Designate a wealthy Mexican, a wealthy American, and a wealthy European and re-divide the “land” into 3 large portions. You might want to discuss why opening the doors to buy land to the Americans and Europeans was good economically for Mexico, but also how it hurt the poor. Who is angry now? Allow chaos to overcome the room for 30 seconds, which would be equated with the 10 years of fighting in Mexico.
5. Zapata and Villa were peasant leaders who lead the revolution against Diaz and tried to win back the lands for the peasants. (End of role play.)
6. Have students fill in as much of their charts as they can. Give them notes to add details about Juarez, Diaz, Villa, and Zapata.

E. Evaluation:

1. Participation in the land division activity.
2. Chart

F. Extension:

1. If you wish to discuss more about the Mexican Revolution, the book *The Mexican Revolution*, found in our bibliography, is an excellent resource.

Lesson Nine: The Liberators (Day 10)

A. Objectives:

1. Students will be able to identify and list major contributions of Simon Bolivar and Jose de San Martin.
2. Students will locate important South American countries and their capitals.

B. Materials:

1. An outline of the South American continent and the countries.
2. *What your Sixth Grader Needs to Know*
3. *Bolivia - Cultures of the World Series*, Pages 25-26
4. *Simon Bolivar* by Frank De Varona
5. *A Picture Book of Simon Bolivar* by David A. Adler
6. *Benito Juarez* by Frank De Varona
7. *Benito Juarez* by Jan Gleiter

C. Vocabulary:

1. Simon Bolivar
2. Jose de San Martin

D. Procedure:

1. Gather your personal notes on Bolivar and San Martin.
2. Using *Virtual World*, CD ROM, print an outline map of South America for each of your students.
3. Introduce Simon Bolivar and the region he helped to liberate. This region includes the countries that are now Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and the country named for him, Bolivia. Be sure to let students know that the countries were divided after they were liberated. You may also note that it was the hope of Bolivar that this region would remain one unified, powerful country.
4. Have students shade the areas that Bolivar helped to liberate in one color. You may also have them take notes on their maps.
5. Introduce the region that San Martin helped to liberate (Argentina and Chile, today).
6. Have students shade in a different color these countries that San Martin helped to liberate.
7. Compare and contrast the two liberators.

E. Evaluation:

1. Student maps and notes.
2. Compare and contrast discussion or charts

Lesson Ten: Central America Gains Independence (Day 11-13)

A. Objectives:

1. Students will effectively research a given country.
2. Students will present the information and follow the given outline.

B. Materials:

1. Appendix F
2. Books on each of the countries - See the resource list

C. Vocabulary:

1. The Federation of Central America

D. Procedure:

1. Put students into five groups and assign each a country: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, or Nicaragua.
2. Explain to the students that they are going to research their countries following the given outline, Appendix F.
3. Give a brief explanation of what the Federation of Central America was and how it should fit into their presentations.
4. Distribute the appropriate books to each group.
5. Allow 2-3 days for students to research and prepare presentations.
6. Have students present their information. You may have each group evaluate the other group members or have students grade the presentations.

E. Evaluation:

1. Presentations
2. Student evaluations

Lesson 11: Brazilian Independence (Day 14)**A. Objectives:**

1. Students will recall important information and events in the Mexican independence movement.
2. Students will compare and contrast the Mexican and Brazilian independence movements.

B. Materials:

1. *Brazil - Visual Geography Series*
2. *Brazil - World In View Series*
3. Copies of Appendix G for each student

C. Vocabulary:**D. Procedure:**

1. Review the Mexican independence movement with students and have them fill in their charts.
2. Give students notes on the Brazilian independence movement. Be sure to contrast the following:
 - a. Brazil's independence was won from Portugal, not Spain, and accounts for the fact that today Brazilians speak Portuguese, not Spanish.
 - b. Brazil had no war.
 - c. Brazilians knew they would become a constitutional monarchy; they were not looking to become a democracy.
 - d. Brazil's movement was lead by Prince Pedro I, son of the Portuguese king.
 - e. Independence did not bring freedom for slaves in Brazil. This would be a battle that Brazil would face in the future.

E. Evaluation:

1. Discussion

2. Appendix G

Lesson 12: Cuban Independence (Day 15)

A. Objectives:

1. Students will recall information about Brazilian and Mexican Independence movements.
2. Students will compare and contrast the Brazilian, Mexican and Cuban independence movements.

B. Materials:

1. *Cuba* - Cultures of the World Series

C. Vocabulary

D. Procedure

1. Review with the students the charts they started the previous day.
2. Give students notes on the Cuban independence movement to fill onto their charts. Be sure to compare and contrast the following:
 - a. Cuba had a significant economic importance to Spain because of its sugar and tobacco exports.
 - b. The U.S. had offered to buy Cuba from Spain.
 - c. The U.S. sent a battle ship to Havana which sparked a war between Spain and the U.S.
 - d. Creoles want independence, but they disagreed on what independence would look like.
 - e. Jose Marti (page 22) and his contributions.
 - f. Cuba's slaves were not freed with independence.

E. Evaluation

1. Discussion
2. Charts - Appendix G

VI. Unit Extensions

1. Create *Daily Oral Geography* questions that correspond to the country or region studied that day. Have students answer questions individually or answer them as a class, using maps, globes, and atlases.
2. Bring in primary sources from the community that have traveled or are recent immigrants from the countries studied. A good source is people who have recently returned from the Peace Corps.
3. Have kids write biographies on the significant figures in Latin American history.
4. Science/Math Extension - Use paper mache to create a topographic map of Mexico and South America. You can use the entire floor space of your room and scale the entire map. Include all major mountain ranges, bodies of water, rainforests, etc.
5. Science Extension - Teach a lesson on the rainforests in Brazil.
6. Have a Fiesta. Have students use cookbooks to find authentic Mexican and South American dishes. Have a day where each student brings in a dish and dig in for lunch!
7. Create a bag-of-words that we use from the Spanish language such as: rodeo, patio, macho, marina, poncho, tornado, tomato, cafeteria, alligator.
8. Use the book *Colors of Mexico* by Lynn Ainsworth Olawsky; have students create poems or short stories using the Spanish pronunciation of the colors of words.

9. Using paper mache and a balloon, make a pinata.
10. Art Extension - Have students create a mural depicting Mexican Independence Day.
11. Using the book, *Look What We've Brought You from Mexico* by Phyllis Shalant, use the directions for the Indian Kickball and Dona Blanca (pages 36-39) as a physical education extension.

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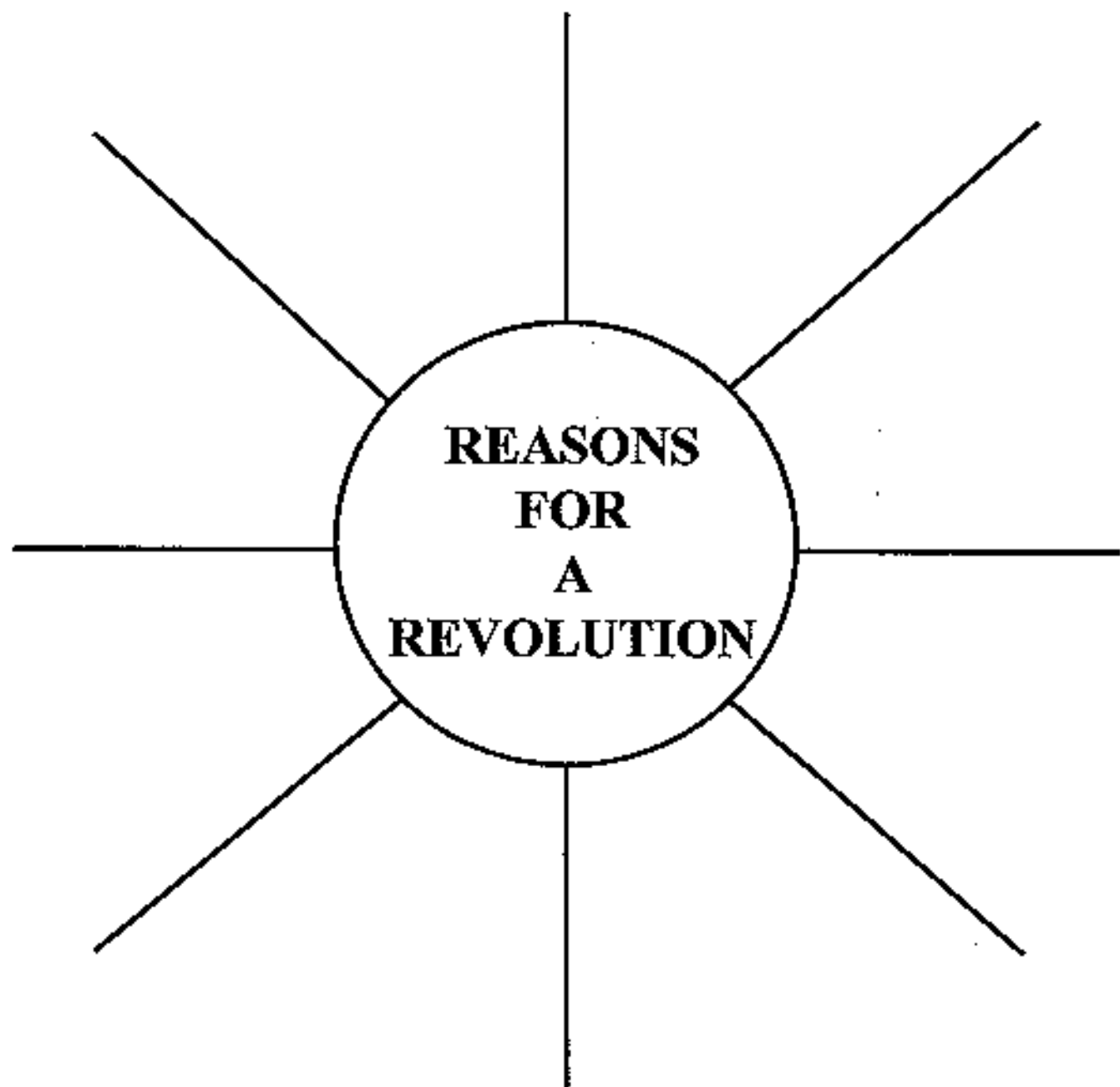
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Appendix A:

Below, list reasons why groups of people would want to overthrow a system of government.



Appendix B:

Complete the chart below listing the rights and responsibilities of each of the social classes in Mexico

Spaniards	Creoles	Mestizos	Indians

Appendix C:

Scenario Cards

Scenario 1:

The government of Spain has taken away an encumienda from a creole who has refused to pay all of his taxes.

Scenario 2:

The Spaniards have decided to take away all property rights from anyone with Indian blood.

Scenario 3:

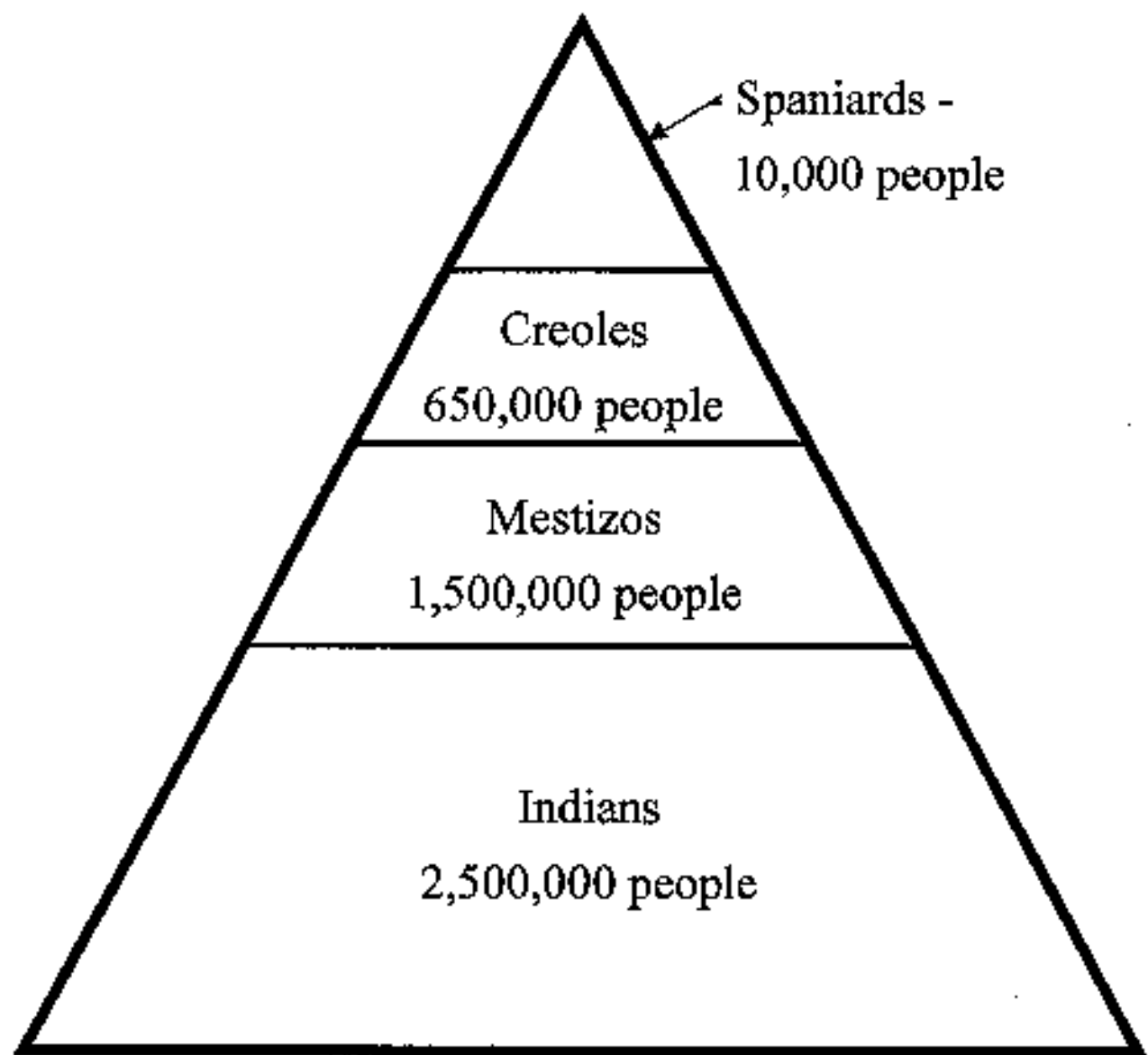
A creole marries a mestizo, and in his will he leaves his land to his children. The government cites the law stating that no mestizo may own land.

Scenario 4:

A creole encomendero has become increasingly cruel. The Indians that work his land feel they have little to lose and revolt.

Appendix D:

Using the graphic below, calculate the percentage each social class represented in the early 1800's in Mexico.



Percentages:

Spaniards = _____ % Mestizos = _____ %
Creoles = _____ % Indians = _____ %

Appendix E:

Teachers, you may want to duplicate this chart on larger paper. Students can do this chart individually or as a group.

Key Figures in Mexican History

Person	Major Role	Time Period (Important Dates)
Miguel Hidalgo		
Jose Maria Morelos		
Agustin de Iturbide		
Santa Anna		
Benito Juarez		
Porfirio Diaz		
Pancho Villa		
Emiliano Zapata		

Appendix F:

Use the following outline to create your presentation for the class.

Your presentation will be on _____.

A. Colonization

1. Briefly describe how Spain colonized and governed your country.
2. What were some grievances that colonists in your country had against Spain ?

B. The Road to Independence

1. Describe what events lead the people of your country to seek independence.
2. Name any key figures in your country's fight for independence.
3. Review significant dates in your country's struggle for independence, include the time spent in the Federation of Central America.
4. Who was the first leader of your country after independence was won ? What legacy did he leave ?

Appendix G:

Fill in the following Chart, comparing and contrasting each independence movement.

Mexican Independence	Brazilian Independence	Cuban Independence