

Hispanic Heritage Month

Sept. 15- Oct. 15

There are several fun activities to do with your students during Hispanic Heritage Month.

Here are some ideas:

- Assign each student, or pairs of students, a country to research and present about using the following page. Research could be completed as a homework assignment or in class if you have access to computers or laptops.
- Highlight a holiday or cultural practice from a different country every day. Use the country section in Part IV as talking points at the beginning or end of each class and show some color photos if possible.
- Give students the beginning paragraph of a traditional folktale, and then play a selection of Spanish music to inspire them to write the end of the story. Is the music sad or happy? On what kind of occasion would this music be played.
- Reenergize students between activities with a Latin dance party. Play selections of tango, salsa, merengue or folk music and ask students to feel the differences in the beat as they move their bodies.
- Create projects of cultural artifacts from different countries each week.
- Hold a Hispanic Heritage Night or Class Fiesta, where students bring in foods and dance to music from different countries.
- Invite students, their family members, faculty, or community members who are from different Hispanic countries to come in and speak to your class about their cultures.
- Compare and contrast the different holidays, including Independence Day, in the United States with Hispanic countries.
- Create Papeles Picados. Add a festive touch to the classroom with traditional Mexican punched papers called papeles picados. Fold thin tissue paper or construction paper in a variety of colors into quarters, eighths, cone style, or fan style to achieve a variety of looks. Use scissors and hole punches to create a perforated pattern. Hang the completed papers along a string using tape.
- Have students choose a famous person of Hispanic descent and have them write an autobiography as that person. Allow students to dress and act like that person for the day. (See Famous Latino Project in Part IV for details)
- Have students identify Hispanic influence in their own neighborhoods, such as local restaurants and stores, town and street names from Spanish origin, and friends and neighbors who speak Spanish.
- Present a Spanish Word/Phrase of the Day for students to practice specific phrases or idioms popular in various countries.

- Play a simple Mexican game called [Toma Todo](#). Create six-sided tops and have students spin them to see if they have to take or contribute chips into the pot. Seek out directions on the internet by searching, "Toma Todo tutorial," and "Toma Todo template." The game can be played with two or more players. Each player needs about ten chips. Dry beans, small candy or any small object can be used as chips. Everyone puts one token into a center pile to start, and then one player spins the top. When it falls, s/he follows the instructions facing up on the top. Whoever scores the most chips wins!
- Have students conduct an interview with a friend, neighbor, or community member to find out more information about their Hispanic heritage. Then have students share their findings with the class.
- Select a world city to "adopt," such as your city's [international sister city](#). Display photos of people and places, as well as a clock set to the local time. Have students report on local news events.
- Give pairs of students a pad of sticky notes and a Spanish-English dictionary. Play festive music while students label everything in the classroom with a bilingual label. When the music stops, have students take a tour of the room and practice the new words.
- Celebrate diversity in your classroom by inviting heritage speakers to share photos of their hometowns and important cultural items. If there are numerous heritage speakers in your class, ask students to investigate their own heritage and report back to the class on the origins of their ancestors. Graph the results and discuss how the class reflects, or differs from, city, state, and national demographic statistics. For current census data, visit the [United States Census Bureau](#).
- Play *Color, Colorcito*. In this traditional Spanish street game, the child who is the leader says "color, colorcito" (color, little color) and then the name of a color in Spanish. For example, s/he may say, "Color, colorcito azul." The other children must run to touch something that color in order to be "safe." Meanwhile, the leader tries to tag the children while they are seeking out that color object in the room. If s/he tags a player, he or she becomes the new leader and play continues. See the Resource section for more game ideas.
- Introduce students to the ancient Mayan alphabet and ask each student to write his or her name in Mayan glyphs on a sheet of paper. Collect all the sheets, then give each student a sheet to decode.
- Read one of the many traditional folktales from Spanish-speaking countries and then write new stories based on the traditions of these tales.