

Theme: Culture-Las Posadas

Time Span: $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 class period

Level I

For Teachers:

Explain to the students that Las Posadas is a Mexican Christmas tradition. Make sure you are sensitive that there may be children of other religious traditions in your class.

Tell the story and give it to the students to take home.

Conversation topics:

Do you think Santa comes to Mexico?

What is the weather like at Christmas there?

Do you know what a piñata is?

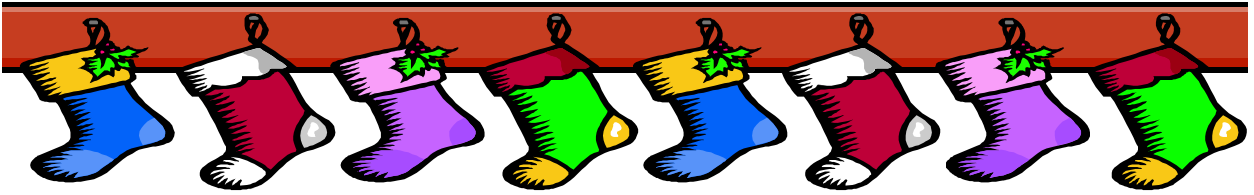
How do you decide who hits the piñata first?

Fun Activities-

Make or bring in a piñata to break on the last day.

Have a "pretend posada".

Sing *Jingle Bells* or *Oh Christmas Tree* in Spanish.



Las Posadas en México

Christmas is a very important holiday in Mexico. Mexicans celebrate many of the same things that we do on this holiday, but one important fiesta (party) that they celebrate, which we do not, is Las Posadas.

Posada means shelter. Shelter, as you may know is a warm, safe place. A long time ago Mary and Joseph, who were expecting a little baby, were making a very long trip in cold weather. They were looking for a "posada" so that they could bring their new baby there. Mexicans remember this long journey or trip by having parties called posadas.

Every December from the 16th-24th. (Do you remember how to say those numbers in Spanish?) a party is held at someone's house in the neighborhood. There are drinks, food, candy and fruit. When it starts to get dark, all of the guests stand outside of the house. A small child, who dresses up like an angel leads the other children who dress up like Mary and Joseph. The adults follow them, sometimes playing musical instruments. Everyone sings songs and carries candles. When they reach the house, one group stays outside and the other goes in. The people who are outside pretend they are Mary and Joseph looking for a "posada" or shelter. They beg at the door to be let in from the cold. When the doors open and the two groups meet again, the big fiesta begins!

Every posada ends with the breaking of a piñata. Who knows what a piñata is? The guests take turns trying to break the piñata and when it does break, the children run happily to gather it's contents-candy, toys and sometimes money!

Do you think the people in your neighborhood would like to have a Posada this Christmas holiday?



Cascabel (Jingle Bells)

Cascabel, cascabel,
Música de amor.
Dulces horas, gratas horas,
Juventud en flor.
Cascabel, cascabel
Tan sentimental.
No ceces, oh cascabel,
De repiquetear.



Qué verdes son (Oh, Christmas Tree)

Qué verdes son, qué verdes son las hojas del abeto.
Qué verdes son, qué verdes son las hojas del abeto.
En Navidad qué hermoso está con su brillar de luces mil.
Qué verdes son, qué verdes son las hojas del abeto.

Qué verdes son, qué verdes son las hojas del abeto.
Qué verdes son, qué verdes son las hojas del abeto.
Sus ramas siempre airosas son, su aroma es encantador.
Qué verdes son, qué verdes son las hojas del abeto.