



### Notas Culturales

- ❖ Birthdays are usually celebrated with a mix of friends and family at the home of the person who is having the birthday. Birthday parties are somewhat of a "dress up" occasion.
- ❖ A custom at a birthday party is to break a piñata. The children are blindfolded one at a time and given a stick or bat to try and break open the piñata. The piñata is hanging from something and many times it is swinging. When the piñata breaks, candy and small toys fall to the ground and all of the children rush in to get their treasures.
- ❖ Saint's Day is celebrated much like a birthday. In order to have a Saint's Day celebration, a person must be Catholic and share the name of a Saint. For example, a Catholic person named Anthony would have a special party when the Catholic Church celebrates El Día de San Antonio. The child named Anthony would have a party, much like a birthday party. The godparents often give special gifts to children on their saint's day. (Be sensitive to religious differences.)
- ❖ The most special birthday for a Hispanic girl is her 15<sup>th</sup> birthday. It is somewhat like a "sweet sixteen" here in the United States, but even more special. The *quinceañera*, the fifteenth birthday, is a girl's rite of passage into womanhood. Families often go to church to celebrate this joyous occasion. After church, family and friends often proceed to a hall for dinner, music, and dancing. The girl who is 15, has selected a "court" (much like a prom court) to celebrate with her. The girls wear dresses and the boys wear tuxedos. They are all introduced as they enter the hall. After dinner, the birthday girl gives away her dolls to her little cousins, receives her first pair of high heels, and receives many precious gifts. This special event is often announced in the newspaper. (Read your class the story, "Mi quinceañera.")
- ❖ There is tradition in Mexico called la mordita. Friends gather together and give the birthday person a cake. As the person goes to take a bite, they push his or her head into the cake. A big mordita!