



Paper Plate Maracas

Make these quick-and-easy maracas for your Cinco de Mayo celebration.

Give each child a nine-inch paper plate and a reduced-sized copy of the pattern. Have children decorate the bottom side of the plate with markers and paints. When the plates are dry, give each child a handful of dry beans. Help children fold the plate in half and pour in the beans. Staple the plates closed for children, and have them glue the pattern onto one side of the plate. Then give children red, white, and green streamers (the colors of the Mexican flag) to glue onto the curved side of their maraca. Once children have finished, play some festive Mexican music and let them shake, shake, shake to the beat!

Standards

- Plays with a variety of musical instruments
- Understands the relationship between music and culture

Holidays Around the World

Create a collaborative class book about holidays celebrated in different countries.

Share some books about Cinco de Mayo (see Book Links at right) as well as books about other holidays that are celebrated in different countries. Have children choose a country and research one of its traditional holidays. Give children sheets of plain drawing paper, markers, and crayons and invite them to describe the holiday and draw an illustration. Remind them to include the country of origin. Make a copy of the pattern for a cover and color it; then bind the pages together to form a book of international holidays. Place in your classroom's learning center along with books about the holidays. Encourage children to explore the books and learn more about each holiday.

Standards

- Knows holidays and traditions of different societies
- Understands cultural heritage through celebrations
- Writes for a variety of purposes, such as to inform

Ponchos & Serapes

Create simple ponchos and serapes (Mexican blankets) for your Cinco de Mayo celebration.

To make a poncho, cut a hole in the bottom of a paper bag, large enough for the child's head to fit through. Then cut slits up each side of the bag. Let children decorate with paints, markers, and copies of the pattern. To give the poncho a fringed look, simply cut vertical slits in the bottom.

To make serapes, use sheets of craft paper large enough to hang over children's shoulders and down their backs. Invite children to decorate with markers. You might show children photos of serapes to give them pattern ideas. Create fringe on each end of the serape by punching a row of holes and stringing with lengths of yarn.

Standards

- Knows cultural similarities and differences in clothes
- Understands artwork in relation to culture

Tip

Cinco de Mayo means "fifth of May" in Spanish—an important date for Mexican independence. Let children teach the group how to say this date in their own first language, comparing the names for the number and month. If you have any children from Mexico in your group, invite them to bring in photos, recipes, and stories to tell how the date is celebrated in their native country.

English Language Learners



Book Links

Cinco de Mayo by Lola M. Schaefer (Pebble Books, 2001). Simple text and photographs explore the celebration.

Mexico by David F. Marx (Children's Press, 2000). Easy-to-read text introduces children to the country's culture.

Piñata! by Rebecca Emberley (Little, Brown, 2004). Bilingual text and bright pictures explore this fun tradition.