

#10398

MEXICO: ITS LAND, RESOURCES & ECONOMY

RAINBOW EDUCATIONAL MEDIA, 2002
GRADE LEVEL: 4–8
18 MINUTES



DESCRIPTION

Surveys Mexico's geographic diversity, natural resources, and economy. Describes the variety of land forms in its six regions; notes silver, petroleum, and natural gas as its most valuable resources; and lists its economic strengths.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Subject Area-Geography

- Standard: Understands the characteristics of ecosystems on Earth's surface.
 - ♦ Benchmark: Knows ecosystems in terms of their biodiversity and productivity and their potential value to all living things. (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 1.)
- Standard: Understands the concept of regions
 - ♦ Benchmark: Knows the characteristics of a variety of regions. (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 1.)
 - ♦ Benchmark: Knows areas that can be classified as regions according to physical criteria and human criteria. (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 1.)

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

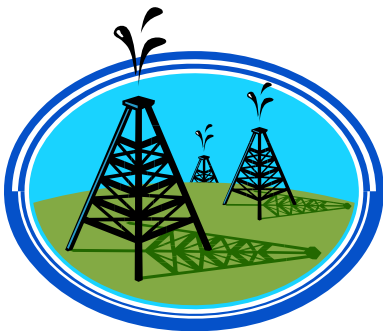
1. To introduce Mexico's geography and the different biomes that exist there.
2. To present the different resources and agricultural products that maintain Mexico's economy.
3. To observe some of the different occupations available for Mexico's people.

VOCABULARY

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. agricultural | 16. occupation |
| 2. aquamarine | 17. papaya |
| 3. canyon | 18. petrochemical |
| 4. caves | 19. plains |
| 5. economy | 20. plateau |
| 6. enduring | 21. precious metal |
| 7. export | 22. rainforest |
| 8. geographers | 23. region |
| 9. grasslands | 24. resource |
| 10. land forms | 25. sulfur deposits |
| 11. limestone | 26. transportation |
| 12. maize | 27. tourists |
| 13. mango | 28. volcanic soil |
| 14. mesa | 29. volcanoes |
| 15. natural resources | |

BACKGROUND

Mexico, so near and yet so foreign, exotic, and unknown. Few travelers are prepared for the reality they find when they set foot in this, at times, surrealistic country. The colors, aromas, and contrasts surprise them all. There is something magical about the exotic flower and fruit markets; the chile stores and the street vendors' stalls; the bakeries and chocolate mills, with their incredible aromas; and the bands playing at the local kiosks. You may go to a *tianguis* ("market" in old Nahuatl language), where you will find it difficult to believe what you see: the diversity of flowers; live animals, including goats and turkeys; squash flower used to prepare soups; jeans and traditional costumes; imported electronic watches and pre-Hispanic utensils; parrots, snakes, and edible grasshoppers; and effigies of our Lady of Guadalupe, side by side with Batman and Nintendo's latest games.



Mexico—like Argentina, Brazil, and Chile—is a semi-industrialized nation. The nation is valuable in industrial resources, including petroleum and several metals. Mexico's manufacturing output includes many basic goods, such as steel, machinery, and petrochemicals, as well as a wide range of consumer goods. Agriculture still provides more jobs than industry, however. Many farm families earn barely enough to survive, and many city dwellers are unable to find jobs.

Since the Revolution of 1910, Mexico's most famous economic achievement has been the sharp reduction of foreign ownership of the means of production, while maintaining overall national growth. The economy is a combination of private, state, and mixed-capital enterprises. In addition,

C a p t i o n e d M e d i a P r o g r a m

private capital is barred from investment in certain activities. Private capital interests, with a majority of shares owned by Mexican nationals, control most industrial manufacturing activities, while semiautonomous state corporations operate the petroleum industry, generate and distribute electricity, run the banks, and oversee the telephone and telegraph systems.

DURING SHOWING

1. View the media more than once, with one showing uninterrupted.
2. Pause the media after each region is discussed. Emphasize the different characteristics of each region.

AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. List the natural resources of Mexico, including agricultural products. What is the most important resource in Mexico? Why is it important? What is the primary export?
2. What minerals are found in Mexico? What is the importance of these minerals? Mexico is the leading producer of what mineral?
3. What occupations are found in Mexico? Why are these jobs important? How do you benefit from these workers?
4. How would your life be different if you lived in Mexico? How would it be the same?
5. What is the nation's capital?

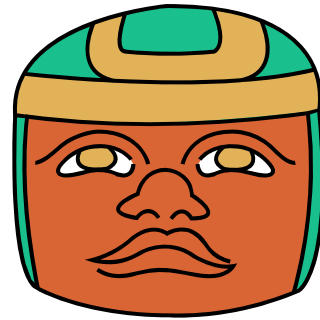
Application and Activities

1. Discuss the different land forms that make up Mexico. What climatic differences do these land forms create? What similarities and differences do these different regions have?
2. Divide students into small groups and make a model of the biomes shown in the media. Have them include plants found there, climate and elevation information, and people's occupations in that portion of the country.
3. Have students research the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Who were the people involved in the agreement? What are the terms of the treaty? What difference has it made? What would it be like if the treaty was never signed?
4. Assign each student an occupation shown in the media. Have the students create a report or speech about it.
5. Have students research the imports and exports of Mexico. Where are the exports going? From where did the imports come?



C a p t i o n e d M e d i a P r o g r a m

6. Have students discuss Mexico's natural resources. Why are they important? How do these resources help the country's economy? What does Mexico do with these resources?
7. Have students research the history of Mexico. Who were the Mayas and the Aztecs? What was their culture and life like? What happened to them? What have they left us to study?
8. Have students research the holidays of Mexico: Cinco de Mayo (Fifth of May) and El Dia de los Muertos (The Day of the Dead). Why are these holidays celebrated? How are they celebrated? What events take place on these days?



RELATED RESOURCES

Captioned Media Program

- [*Holiday Facts & Fun: Cinco de Mayo #10392*](#)

World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **MEXICO ONLINE**

<http://www.mexonline.com/>

Contains pictures and information on Mexico's holidays, current weather and news, maps, city guides, businesses, and a wealth of other information.



- **MEXICO FOR KIDS**

http://www.elbalero.gob.mx/index_kids.html

Overviews the history of the country, the biodiversity of the area, and the government of Mexico.

- **MEXICO MAP**

<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/mexico.html>

Includes several maps of Mexico.

- **BLUE PLANET BIOMES**

http://www.blueplanetbiomes.org/world_biomes.htm

Contains information on the biomes of the world and a map of where these biomes are located.

