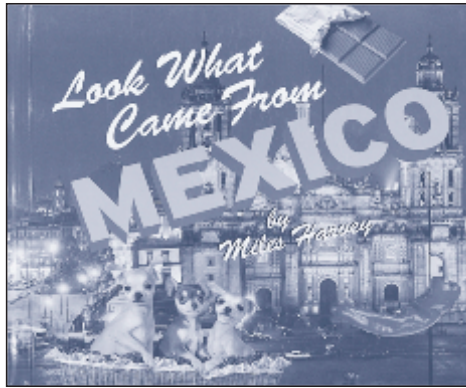


Look What Came From Mexico



by Miles Harvey
 genre: social studies nonfiction

Level O

Summary This book is part of the Look What Came From series. It is a fascinating, in-depth look at the food, inventions, music, and customs of Mexico. Glossy double-page spreads cover a range of topics supported by color photographs, reproductions of authentic art, maps, and drawings. Students learn about the land and animals of Mexico, as well as its people. On the last page, the author informs readers about something traditionally associated with Mexico that, surprisingly, actually originated in the United States!

Background Information

This photo essay reveals much about the country that borders the United States to the south. Mexico came under Spanish rule for three centuries before achieving independence early in the 19th century. It is located in North America between Guatemala and the United States, bordered on the west by the Pacific Ocean and on the east by the Gulf of Mexico.

For more information about Mexico, see www.mexonline.com/culture.htm.

Supportive Text Features

This is a robust, well-constructed photo essay. The format is reliable: each two-page spread introduces readers to a new topic. At the top of every left-hand page, students will find topic titles that match those in the Table of Contents. Inset photos also provide readers with contextual support.

Praise students for specific use of “Behaviors to Notice and Support” on page 46 of the *Guided Reading Teacher’s Guide*.

Challenging Text Features

Although the format is reliable, text structures in this book are very unpredictable. Some pages have two columns of text; other pages have single columns with inset photos. Captions and labels throughout the book compensate for some of the confusion in the layout. The book is also filled with very specialized vocabulary. Most of these words are highlighted in orange and supported with photos.

Comprehension Strategies

Understanding Chapters

Many longer books, both fiction and nonfiction, are written in chapters. Chapters help organize books into manageable sections. The chapters of this book are listed in the table of contents.

- Let's look at the table of contents. What information can we find in the book?
- Why do you think the author organized this book into chapters?
- Nonfiction books can be read from cover to cover, or each chapter can be read in isolation. How do chapters help us use the book?

Comparing/Contrasting

Reading about another place and its culture can lead us to compare the country to our own. Sometimes, seeing how things are alike and how they are different can help us gain a better understanding. Let's compare and contrast what we read about Mexico to what we know about our community.

- Let's reread page 4. The author states that today Mexico is a mix of Spanish and Native American cultures. How is this different from the makeup of our community? How is it the same?
- Look closely at the information about food on pages 8–9. Again, think about how this is the same as or different from the food you are familiar with and enjoy.
- Select another section of the book and think about how the information is the same as or different from what you already know.

Phonics and Word-Solving Strategy

Reading Suffixes

Explain to students that a suffix is "an ending added to a base word that alters the meaning of the word." Remind them that the suffix *-ful* means *to be full of*.

- Turn students' attention to the following sentence on page 4: *Mexico is a huge and beautiful country just south of the United States.*
- Point out the word *beautiful*. Explain to students that the base word is *beauty*. Then

ask them to explain how adding the suffix *-ful* changes the meaning of the word.

- Turn to page 6, and point out the following sentence: *They're delicious—but be careful.*
- Invite students to identify the word with the suffix *-ful*. Then have them discuss the base word and how adding the suffix changes its meaning.

Oral Language/Vocabulary

- Look through the book with students. Have each student select a photo of interest and discuss it with other students in a small group. Ask students to describe what is in the photo in detail, using new vocabulary from the book.
- Encourage students to learn about a language other than English. If there are Spanish-speaking students in the classroom, invite them to teach their classmates some Spanish words in addition to the ones listed on page 28. Encourage students to practice speaking the words they have learned.

Extending Meaning Through Reading and Writing

- There is a recipe for guacamole on pages 26–27. Have students read the recipe and make a shopping list. Students may need to adjust the ingredients (especially the number of tortilla chips) they will need to make enough for the whole class. Follow through with making the recipe. **(Expository)**
- Challenge students to write a blurb about Mexico for a travel brochure. Remind them to use all the information they can glean from the illustrations and text of this book to make Mexico sound appealing. **(Descriptive)**

Fluency Practice

Invite students to reread a favorite section or page of the book aloud to a partner.