

Cinco de Mayo: A Story of Courage and Celebration

A Narrative Reading for Students

Imagine a time when your country is facing a powerful enemy—an army that is larger, stronger, and better equipped than your own. This was the situation Mexico faced in the year 1862.

France, one of the most powerful countries in the world, wanted to take control of Mexico. Many people believed the Mexican army would lose because they had fewer soldiers and fewer resources.

But on May 5, 1862, near the city of Puebla, something surprising happened. The Mexican army, led by General Ignacio Zaragoza, fought against the French army—and won.

This battle is called the Battle of Puebla. It is the event that Cinco de Mayo celebrates.

The victory was surprising because Mexico was expected to lose. Instead, the soldiers showed courage, teamwork, and determination. They proved that even a smaller group can succeed against a stronger opponent.

Cinco de Mayo means “May 5” in Spanish. It is NOT Mexico’s Independence Day. Mexico’s Independence Day is celebrated on September 16.

Today, Cinco de Mayo is celebrated with music, dancing, parades, and traditional foods like tacos and tamales. Mariachi bands often play guitars and trumpets during celebrations.

It is important to celebrate Cinco de Mayo in a respectful way. This means learning about the history and culture, not making fun of it.

The story of Cinco de Mayo teaches us about perseverance. Perseverance means continuing to try even when something is difficult.

Key Facts to Remember

- Cinco de Mayo = May 5
- Battle of Puebla (1862)
- Mexico defeated France
- Led by Ignacio Zaragoza
- NOT Independence Day
- Celebrated with music, food, and parades
- Shows perseverance and courage