



Name _____

What You Need to Know About Cinco de Mayo

When: May 5

On Cinco de Mayo, Mexicans remember the Battle of Puebla, fought on May 5, 1862. On that day, Mexicans won an important battle against the French army, which was invading Mexico. France had a long history of interfering in Mexico's business, dating back to the famous Pastry War of 1838. In 1862, Mexico was having big problems and owed money to other countries, mainly France. France invaded Mexico to try and get their money.

Basically, the battle is famous because the Mexicans weren't supposed to win. The French army had about 6,000 soldiers and the Mexicans had only about 4,500. The French had better guns and were better trained. The French had already beaten the Mexicans a few times as they made their way to the city of Puebla, from which they planned to go to Mexico City. No one thought the Mexicans were going to win the battle...except maybe the Mexicans!

So Cinco de Mayo isn't Mexico's Independence Day? Lots of people think so, but no. Mexico celebrates its Independence Day on September 16. That's the day when in 1810 Father Miguel Hidalgo stood up in his church and said that the time had come for Mexico to be free from Spain. That's how Mexico's battle for independence began.

How do Mexicans celebrate Cinco de Mayo? Mexicans love Cinco de Mayo! It's a day that makes them feel very proud. There are parties, parades and lots of food. There are festivals with concerts and dancing. Mariachi bands are everywhere.

True or false: Cinco de Mayo is Mexico's independence day.

Cinco de Mayo is a day to celebrate _____

How do Mexicans celebrate Cinco de Mayo? _____

Source: "Cinco de Mayo for Kids" by About.com

