

Día de los Reyes Magos



Día de los Reyes Magos, Three Kings Day or Epiphany is observed in Mexico and other Spanish speaking countries on January 6th and celebrates the arrival in Bethlehem of the Three Kings who followed the star for twelve days to Bethlehem bearing gold, frankincense, and myrrh to honor the baby Jesus. This is the day that the Three Kings revealed Jesus to the world as King.

Several days before January 6th, children write letters to the Three Kings or Rey Magos, Melchor, Gaspar, and Baltasar. They ask for the gifts that they would like to receive. Children then attach their letters to colorful balloons. The balloons are released into the sky, carrying all of the children's wishes. It is a magical sight.

The night before Dia de los Reyes Magos, figurines of the Three Kings are added to nativity scenes. Before bedtime children place shoes under their beds so that the Three Kings will leave gifts for them. Grass or hay and a bucket of water are left outside for the Three Kings camels'. Children also leave cookies and milk for Melchor, Gaspar and Baltasar.

On the morning of Dia de los Reyes Magos gifts from the Three Kings are opened and enjoyed. This is a day to spend with family and friends. Preparations are made for the Merienda de Reyes, a dinner with friends and families that celebrates Epiphany. The Merienda de Reyes began with the Spaniards who brought the tradition of celebrating Dia de los Reyes Magos and sharing the Rosca to Mexico. People go to the markets and stores to purchase the needed ingredients to prepare the feast. Bakeries make the Rosca de Reyes or Kings' Cake, a sweetbread,

decorated with candied fruit The Rosca, cut by each person, symbolizing the danger Jesus was in, is served with tamales and hot chocolate. Inside the Rosca is a figurine of the Baby Jesus. The figurine is hidden because of the need to find a secure place where Jesus could be born in safety. Whoever finds the baby figurine must host Candelaria, a candlelight mass day on February 2nd.

Objectives

Students will recognize and understand diverse religious and cultural beliefs and celebrations.

Students will recognize and understand symbols and themes used in festivals.

Kindergarten-1st Grade



Activities

Paper Kings' Cake

Using small grocery bags, students stuff them with paper. Students form a baby Jesus from clay and put it in the bag. They then tie the bottom and glue it to a 12" round circle of cardboard. The result will be a cake looking structure. They will then paint the kings' cake with tempera. Decorate the cake with issue paper, glitter, buttons, sequins, and other craft items.

Dia de los Reyes Magos Shoes

Students leave their shoes out overnight in hopes of receiving gifts from the Three Kings. For this activity, each student will need a small box with the top glued on and a hole cut in the top to make it shoe-like. Alternately a Kleenex box may be used. The shoe is covered with colorful paper. Decorations are then applied. The class may leave the shoes outside the classroom door to see if the Three Kings will fill them.

Nativity Scenes

A shoebox is used for the stable. Students go for a walk to collect grass, leaves, and flowers to add to the stable. Students then paint and decorate the box. Students use toilet paper rolls to make the figures of Mary, Joseph and the Christ Child. Use construction paper to cut out the face, hair, extremities, and clothes for the figures. Paint is then applied to create features. Animals are also made from toilet paper rolls. Students make the Three Kings to add on January 6th.

State Education Standards

Social Studies:

1SS-R1- Describe how history is the story of events, people, and places in the past.

1SS-F1- Demonstrate the ability to place events in chronological sequence.

1SS-F2- Describe everyday life in the past and recognize that some aspects change and others stay the same.

1SS-F3- Use stories to describe past events, people, and places.

Arts:

1AV-R1- Identify and use a variety of art media and techniques to communicate ideas, experiences, and stories.

1AV-R2- Recognize that the visual arts are a form of communication.

1AV-R3-

Identify various subject matter, ideas, and symbols used in one's own work and work of others to convey meaning.

1AV-F1- Select and use subjects, themes and symbols in works of art.

1AV-F2- Use additional arts media, techniques, and processes to communicate a variety of ideas, experiences, and responses.

1AV-F7- Expand knowledge and use of different arts media.

3AV-R2- Know that art is a visual language and is a form of expression and communication.

3AV-F2- Understand there are various purposes for creating works of art.

3AV-F5- Describe how personal experiences and outside influences may affect the work of the artist, as well as the perceptions of the viewer.

Reading Resources

Carlson, L. (2000). *Vivan Los Reyes Magos!* New York: Lectorum Publications.

Hoyt-Goldsmith, (2001). *Three Kings Day: A Celebration at Christmas time.* New York: Holiday House.

Orozco, J. (2002). *Fiestas: A Year of Latin American Songs of Celebration.* Dutton Children's Books.

Pasuel, E. (1999). *Dias de Reyes Magos.* Madrid: Anaya

2nd-3rd Grade



Activities

Dia de Los Magos Shoes

Newsprint is torn into strips. A flour and water mixture for paper mache is prepared. Students blow up elongated balloons and tie the ends. Students dip strips of newsprint into the flour mixture and cover the balloon. Let the balloon dry. An opening is cut into the top of the paper mache shoe. The shoe is painted with tempera. All kinds of craft items are used to decorate the shoe such as glitter, flowers, buttons, beads etc.

Nativity Scenes

A shoebox is used for the stable. Students go for a walk to collect grass, leaves, and flowers to add to the stable. Students then paint and decorate the box. Students use toilet paper rolls to make the figures of Mary, Joseph and the Christ Child. Use construction paper to cut out the face, hair, extremities, and clothes for the figures. Paint is then applied to create features. Animals are also made from toilet paper rolls. Students make the Three Kings to add on January 6th.

Paper Mache Kings Cake

Students fill a paper grocery bag with crumpled newsprint. Make a baby Jesus out of clay and put it in the bag. Tie the bag with string or yarn. Put on a 12" round piece of cardboard. Newspapers are torn into strips. A very watery flour and water

mixture is prepared. Students dip strips of newsprint into the flour mixture and apply to the surface of the grocery bag until the surface is completely covered. Let dry. Paint with tempera and decorate with craft items such as ribbon, buttons etc.

State Education Standards

:

Social Studies;

1SS-F1- Demonstrate the ability to place events in chronological sequence.

1SS-F2- Describe everyday life and recognize that some aspects change and others stay the same.

1SS-F3 Use stories to describe past events, people, and places.

Arts:

1AV-F1- Select and use subjects, themes, and symbols in works of art.

1AV-F2- Use additional arts media, techniques, and processes to communicate a variety of ideas, experiences, and responses.

1AV-F7- Expand knowledge and use of different arts media.

3AV-F1- Identify and discuss the similarities and differences of art produced by themselves and others, using technology as one means of communicating personal ideas in a variety of forums.

3AV-F2- Understand there are various purposes for creating works of art.

3AV-F5- Describe how personal experiences and outside influences may affect the work of an artist, as well as the perceptions of the viewer.

Reading Resources

Carlson, L. 2000). *Vivan Los Reyes Magos!* New York: Lectorum Publications.

Hoyt- Goldsmith, (2001). *Three Kings Day: A Celebration at Christmas time*. New York: Holiday House.
Orozco, J. (2002). *Fiestas: A Year of Latin American Songs of Celebration*. Dutton Children's Books.
Pasuel, E. (1999). *Dias de Reyes Magos*. Madrid: Anaya

4th-6th Grade



Activities

Three Kings Play

Students collaborate to write about the Three Kings journey to see the Christ child. Students audition for parts in the play. One group works on creating a stage set. Old bed sheets painted with tempera may be used as a backdrop. Another group makes costumes. A group works on props, programs, and tickets. The play may be performed for parents or other classes.

Special Shoes

Students collect all kinds of shoes. They then choose one to decorate using collected craft items such as fabric, paint, glitter, glue, buttons, photographs, ribbon, pipe cleaners etc. Students collaborate to write a play about Dia de Los Reyes Magos. One

group is responsible for creating a backdrop. Old sheets and tempera may be used. Another group works on costumes. Yet another group works on making props, programs, and tickets. After auditions, playwrights conduct rehearsals. The play is performed for other classes.

Kings' Cake

This is an important traditional Dia de los Reyes Magos cake:

Christ figure

1 packet of yeast

1/4 cup lukewarm milk

3 1/2 cups all purpose flour

3/4 3/4 cups granulated sugar

7 eggs

1/3 cup melted butter

dash of salt

2 teaspoons cinnamon

1/4 teaspoon aniseed

1/2 cup raisins

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/4 cup each of the following candied items: figs, orange, lemon, cherries, citron

1 egg, beaten

granulated sugar

- 1. Dissolve yeast in 5 tablespoons lukewarm milk and let sit 5 minutes**
- 2. Add the flour, sugar, eggs, melted butter, the remaining milk, salt, cinnamon, aniseed, raisins and vanilla extract.**
- 3. Combine and knead into a ball**
- 4. Grease dough with some butter - let it rest and rise until the dough doubles in size; about 2 1/2 hours**
- 5. Grease a baking sheet**
- 6. Punch down dough and knead until soft and pliable**
- 7. Now form dough into a ring or 'rosca'**
- 8. Insert the baby figurine.**
- 9. Place the dough ring on baking sheet**

10. Decorate the top with the candied fruit.
11. Let the dough rise again until doubled
12. Preheat oven to 360°F
13. Brush with the beaten egg and sprinkle with granulated sugar
14. Bake 40 minutes or until done.

State Education Standards

Social Studies:

1SS-E1- understand and apply the basic tools of historical research, including chronology and how to collect, interpret, and employ information from historical materials.

1SS-E8- Demonstrate and apply the basic tools of historical research, including how to construct timelines, frame questions that can be answered by historical study and research, and analyze and evaluate historical materials offering varied perspectives.

1SS-E9- Describe the geographic, political, and social characteristics of the ancient civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and China and their contributions to later civilizations.

1SS-E11- Describe the major religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

1SS-P2- Demonstrate knowledge of research sources and apply appropriate research methods, including framing open-ended questions, gathering pertinent information, and evaluating the evidence and point of view contained within primary and secondary sources.

1SS-P3- Develop historical interpretations in terms of the complexity of cause and effect and in the context in which ideas and past events unfolded.

Arts:

1AV-E1- Choose the most appropriate media, techniques, and processes to enhance communication of one's own ideas and experiences.

1AV-E2- Demonstrate increasing technical ability and skill to complete visual arts assignments.

2AV-E1- Use subjects, themes, and symbols that demonstrate knowledge of contexts, values, and aesthetics to communicate intended meaning in their artworks.

2AV-E4- Describe the role art plays in culture and how it reflects, records, and shapes history in various times, places, and traditions.

Reading Resources

Carlson, L. (2000). *Vivan Los Reyes Magos!* New York: Lectorum Publications.

Hoyt- Goldsmith, (2001). *Three Kings Day: A Celebration at Christmas time.* New York: Holiday House.

Orozco, J. (2002). *Fiestas: A Year of Latin American Songs of Celebration.* Dutton Children's Books.

Pasuel, E. (1999). *Dias de Reyes Magos.* Madrid: Anaya

Websites

www.twilightbridge.com/hobbies/festivals/christmas/epiphany/mexican_celebrations.htm

www.studioporto.com/tresreyesmagos/

www.vpea.utb.edu/elnino/fiestadelosreyes2004.htm

www.stjohnwc.org/advent/Magi.htm

<http://www.recordonline.com/archive/2004/01/03/quepasa0.htm>

