A.5. CURRICULUM SAMPLE – First Grade Writing

Grade Level	Content Area	Course Title	Unit Title
First Grade	**Expository Writing**	**N/A**	**Writing is a Fiesta!**

Length of Unit	Time of Year Taught	Expected Prior Knowledge
5 Lessons in 5 days	**3rd Quarter**	How to make a list, summarize ideas, write journal entries to document learning. Students should know that a complete sentence includes a capital letter at the beginning, complete thought, and punctuation. Students should have some training in the use of graphic organizers, specifically a Venn Diagram and a Web. Student should possess basic knowledge about the geography of Mexico and its Indian and Spanish heritage.

Unit Description

This unit integrates a cultural study of the country of Mexico with an expository writing unit. At the conclusion of the unit, students will complete a writing piece discussing the cultural holidays of Mexico.

Common Core Standards	**CCSS 1.W.2.** Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.
Summative Assessment	Students will be assessed on Standard 1.W.2. The students will write 5 sentences about holidays in Mexico when given a topic sentence. The page they are given will say, "In Mexico, they celebrate many holidays." Students will add 5 sentences on this paper using their writing journal to help them include all their learning from the unit.
Assessment Scoring	The writing assessment will be worth 15 points. Students are expected to write a total of 5 sentences. Each sentence will be worth 2 points. This will make a total of 10 points. Sentences will be given one point for having correct conventions, and 1 point for having a factual topic. Additionally, students will be given 3 points if all sentences are on topic, and 2 points if the piece has a sense of closure. See the rubric at the end of this lesson. Mastery: 80%.
Materials/Resources Needed	Mexico: A New True Book, student writing journals, pictures of piñatas (paper or electronic), paper bags and candy to make piñatas, copies of Venn diagrams. Poinsettia plant, pictures of people celebrating Las Posadas, Day of the Dead by Tony Johnston and Jeannette Winter

	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lesson 5
Lesson Instruction	Objective: Students will demonstrate understanding of what a fiesta is and that a fiesta often includes a piñata through a pictorial representation and sentence. Read pages 37-43 in *Mexico: A New True Book.*	Objective: Students will identify Independence Day as an important day in Mexico. Students will write 2 facts about Mexican Independence Day. Review what a fiesta is in	Objective: Students will demonstrate knowledge of Christmas in Mexico. Students will make a web about Christmas in Mexico. Gather the children together and show them a	Objective: Students will demonstrate knowledge of the Day of the Dead. Ask students what they do for Halloween. Ask if they know when Halloween is celebrated. Tell students that in	Objective: Students will show an understanding of important Mexican holidays by writing 5 sentences. First, remind students that

	Emphasize that a fiesta is a party. Have students make a t-chart in their writing journal of when they have parties in their family. Tell students that in Mexico, a piñata is used at fiestas to help celebrate. A piñata is filled with candy so that when it is broken the candy comes out. Children always enjoy piñatas. Ask students if they have ever had a piñata at one of their parties. Allow students time to share about this tradition. Show students pictures of piñatas and people playing with them at parties. Direct students in the making of piñatas by decorating paper bags and filling them with candy.	Mexico. Ask students what their favorite holiday is. Take all answers. Direct conversation to the 4th of July. Students should be able to tell you why we celebrate the 4th of July because this was previously taught in the American Revolution Unit. Remind students that It's our Independence Day. Tell students that Mexicans have an Independence Day too. Read pages 22-26 in *Mexico: A New True Book*. Compare our Independence Day to Mexico's Independence Day using a Venn Diagram. Direct students on how to fold their paper in half and what is expected on each half of their paper. One half will have a drawing of celebrating Mexican Independence, and one half will have a drawing of celebrating American independence.	poinsettia plant. Pass it around so they can have a good look. Ask them what they notice about the plant, and then tell them a little about it. Tell them that this plant is important to Mexican Christmas traditions. Depending on time, read Tomie DePaola's <u>The Legend of the Poinsettia.</u> If time does not allow, share a basic version of this legend. Explain that most Mexicans celebrate Christmas. In Mexico, the people do not just celebrate for one night! Christmas holidays start on December 16th and last 9 nights. Their celebrations focus more on the religious aspect of the holiday. Each night families act out the journey that Mary and Joseph made to Bethlehem. They knock on doors asking for shelter (a place to keep warm and dry). At the last	Mexico, they celebrate a holiday called "Dia de los Muertos" which means, "The Day of the Dead." It is celebrated at the same time as our Halloween, but is a very different celebration. This day is for remembering family members that have dies, and it is an extremely important day in Mexican families. Read students <u>Day of the Dead.</u> Discuss the things that people in Mexico do on the Day of the Dead. Give students a calavera mask. Talk about the skeleton as a symbol of Day of the Dead. Discuss why the skeleton would be a symbol. After students have colored their masks and assembled them, have students open their writing journals. Students should draw lines on their paper to divide it into 4 boxes. In	different countries have different holidays. Tell students that today you are going to write about holidays in America so they have a sample of what you expect. Model the sample of what is expected (you could write this as a class). Then, give students a paper that says, "In Mexico, they celebrate many holidays." Students will then write 5 additional sentences that go with this topic and show a sense of closure.

		Tell students the expectations for writing two sentences about Mexican independence based on what was learned today.	place, the families are welcomed in and celebrate with a piñata and fiesta. Have students act out their own Posada by going to prearranged classrooms on campus and seeing if there is "room." On a large piece of chart paper, make a web that students can see. Have students give words that tell about Mexican Christmas celebrations. Get students started with 3 or 4 words, then have students create their own webs with more words, including new words.	each box they should draw and label a picture that tells something about the Day of the Dead.	

	Lesson 1	**Lesson 2**	**Lesson 3**	**Lesson 4**	**Lesson 5**
Student Activities	Students will listen attentively to the reading of a story. Students will create a t-chart in their writing journal about holidays. Students will participate in a discussion of piñatas and share their background knowledge. Students are going to make their own piñatas. See if they remember what is usually	Students participate in a review of fiestas. Students will share their favorites holidays. The students fill in their own Venn Diagram with teacher guidance and modeling. Students will fold a piece of paper in half and draw	Students will observe and talk about a fiesta. Students will listen to the story of The Legend of the Poinsettia. Students will listen to an explanation of Christmas in Mexico and participate in a Posada through different classrooms.	Students will participate in a discussion about Halloween and what they do on that day. Students will listen to a discussion of what Dia de los Muertos is. Students will listen to a reading of the book Day of the Dead.	Students will participate in the writing of a class paragraph about American holidays. Students will write their 5 sentences on the appropriate paper about Mexican holidays.

	inside a piñata (candy). Pass out paper bags, bags of candy, scissors, glue, and tissue paper to the students. As a final assessment of this lesson, have students draw a picture of a fiesta with a piñata in their writing journals. Have students write one sentence at the bottom telling about their picture.	a Mexican Independence day celebration on one half, and an American Independence Day celebration on the other half. To assess learning from this day, students will write two sentences about how Mexican Independence Day is celebrated in their writing journals.	Students will give input to create a web about Christmas in Mexico. Then, they will create their own web in their writing journals.	Students will make and color calavera masks. Students will draw 4 pictures about the Day of the Dead and write a word or two about each picture in their writing journals.	

Grade 1 Writing Assessment: Writing is a Fiesta!

Rubric for Final Assessment

5 Sentences:

Sentence 1: _____/2

Sentence 2: _____/2

Sentence 3: _____/2

Sentence 4: _____/2

Sentence 5 _____/2

All sentences are on topic _____/3
1- Few Sentences are on topic
2- Most Sentences are on topic
3- All Sentences are on topic

The piece has a sense of closure _____/2
1- There is a final sentence, but it doesn't "close"
2- There is a clear feeling of closure

Total Score: _____/15 (12 points needed for master