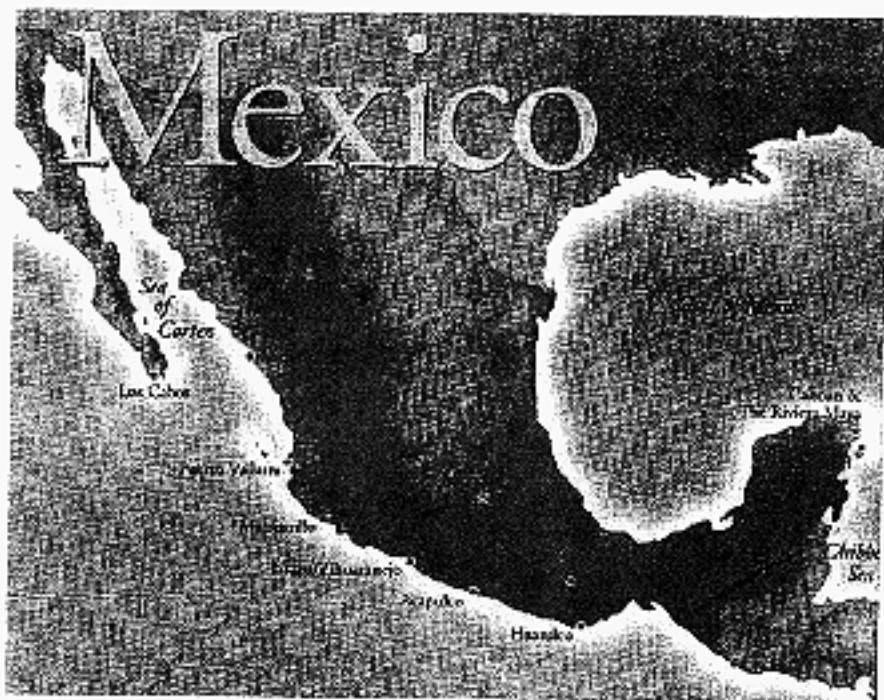


Unit of Study  
Mexico  
Grade 4



Mexico: Geography and Resources  
Britt Sorensen  
Louis F. Angelo School

## **Mexico: Geography and Resources**

### **Overview**

The lessons are intended for fourth grade students and may be completed in about six hour long periods.

**Lesson 1: Physical Characteristics and Cities of Mexico Map Activity**

**Lesson 2: Volcanoes of Mexico Graphing Activity**

**Lesson 3: Mineral Resources and Industries of Mexico Map Activity**

**Lesson 4: Mexico Research, Art, and Writing Project**

### **Massachusetts Social Science Frameworks**

**4.23** On a map of North America, locate Mexico and its major cities.

**4.24** Describe the climate, major physical characteristics, and major natural resources of Mexico and explain their relationship to the Mexican economy.

**4.25** Identify the language, major religion, and peoples of Mexico.

## Landforms and Major Cities of Mexico

### **Objectives:**

1. Students will learn names and locations of major Mexican cities.
2. Students will learn names and locations of major physical features of Mexico.

### **Introduction:**

Students should already be able to locate Mexico on a map of North America. The blank map and locations may be used as individual maps or run off on a transparency and projected to create a big map.

**Time:** One hour.

**Materials:** Geography of Mexico locations list (page 4)

Blank map of Mexico (page 5)

Overhead materials (optional)

### **Procedures:**

1. Students should already be able to locate Mexico on a map of North America before beginning this lesson and have an understanding that Mexico is a country made up of states, much like the United States.
2. The following list of locations and blank map may be used with an atlas or other reference book to be completed by the student individually or alone.
3. The teacher may also choose to have students create the map on a larger scale by using an overhead projector. Another variation would be to create separate political and physical maps.

**Assessment:** Locations are correctly labeled, spelled, and neatly drawn. Map(s) should have a title and a compass rose.

### Geography of Mexico

Use an atlas or other resources to label and illustrate the locations listed below on your blank map of Mexico.

#### Bodies of Water (draw the river and lake)

Rio Grande  
Lake Chapala  
Gulf of Mexico  
Pacific Ocean  
Sea of Cortez  
Gulf of California  
Bay of Campeche  
Gulf of Tehuantepec

#### Mountain Ranges (mark with triangles)

Sierra Madre Oriental  
Sierra Madre Occidental  
Sierra Madre del Sur

#### Other Landforms

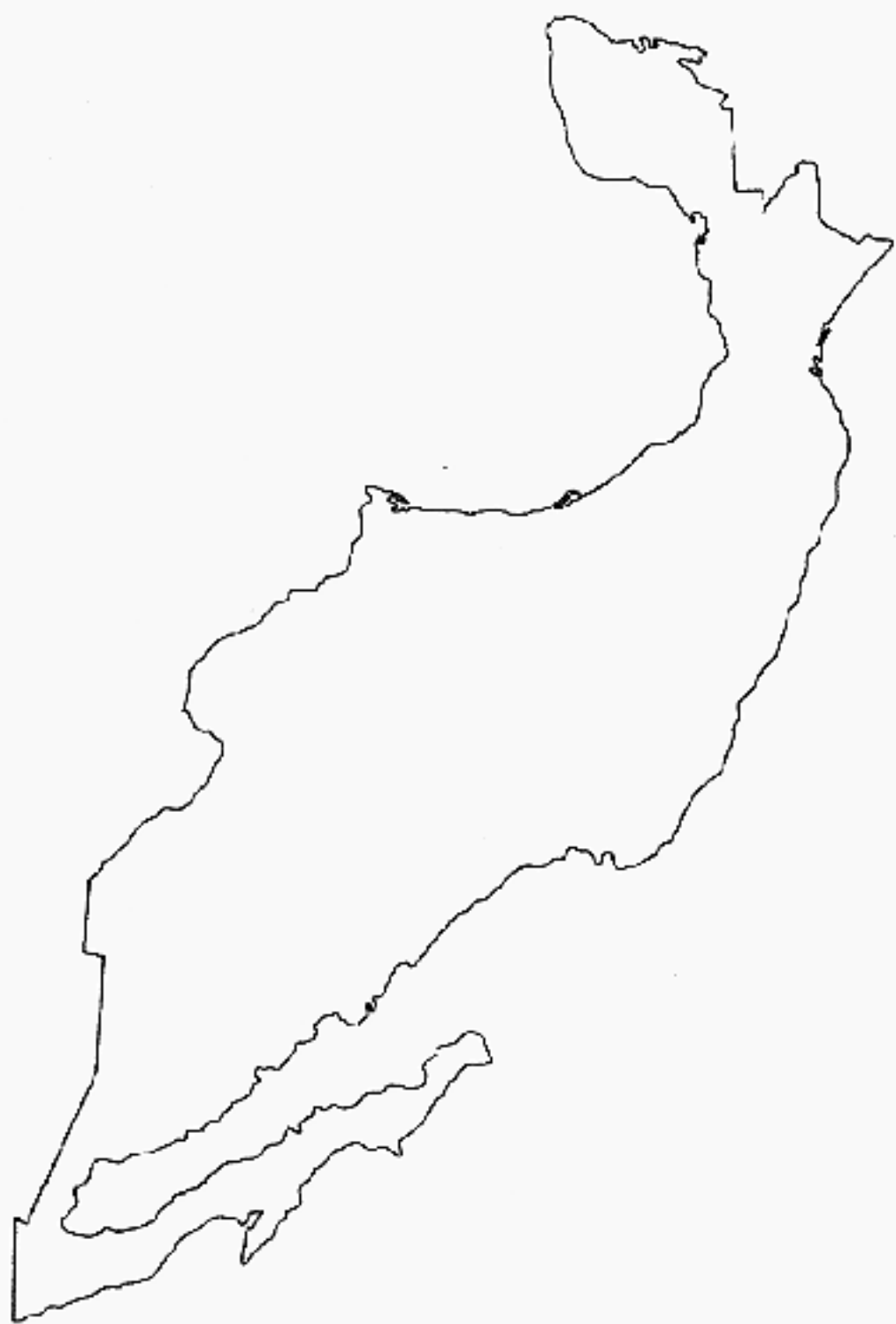
Central Plateau  
Baja Peninsula  
Yucatan Peninsula

#### Capital City (mark with a star)

Mexico City

#### Other Major Cities (mark with dots)

Guadalajara  
Hermosillo  
Chihuahua  
Merida  
Culiacan  
Mexicali  
Monterrey  
San Luis Potosi  
Puebla  
Oaxaca



## Graphing Heights of Mexican Volcanoes

### **Objectives:**

1. Students will learn names and locations of Mexican volcanoes by using map and chart reading skills.
2. Students will be able to round volcano heights to the nearest hundred.
3. Students will be able to create a bar graph to represent the data.

### **Introduction:**

Students should already be able to locate Mexico on a map of North America.

**Time:** One hour.

**Materials:** Graphing Heights of Mexican Volcanoes (page 7)

Pencils, art materials (optional)

### **Procedures:**

1. Review any necessary information with the students to introduce the data chart, rounding, and bar graphing activity.
2. Students may work individually or in pairs.
3. Review results. Students compare and discuss bar graphs.

**Assessment:** Numbers should be correctly rounded.

Bar graphs should have a title, accurately labeled x and y axes, and be correctly drawn.

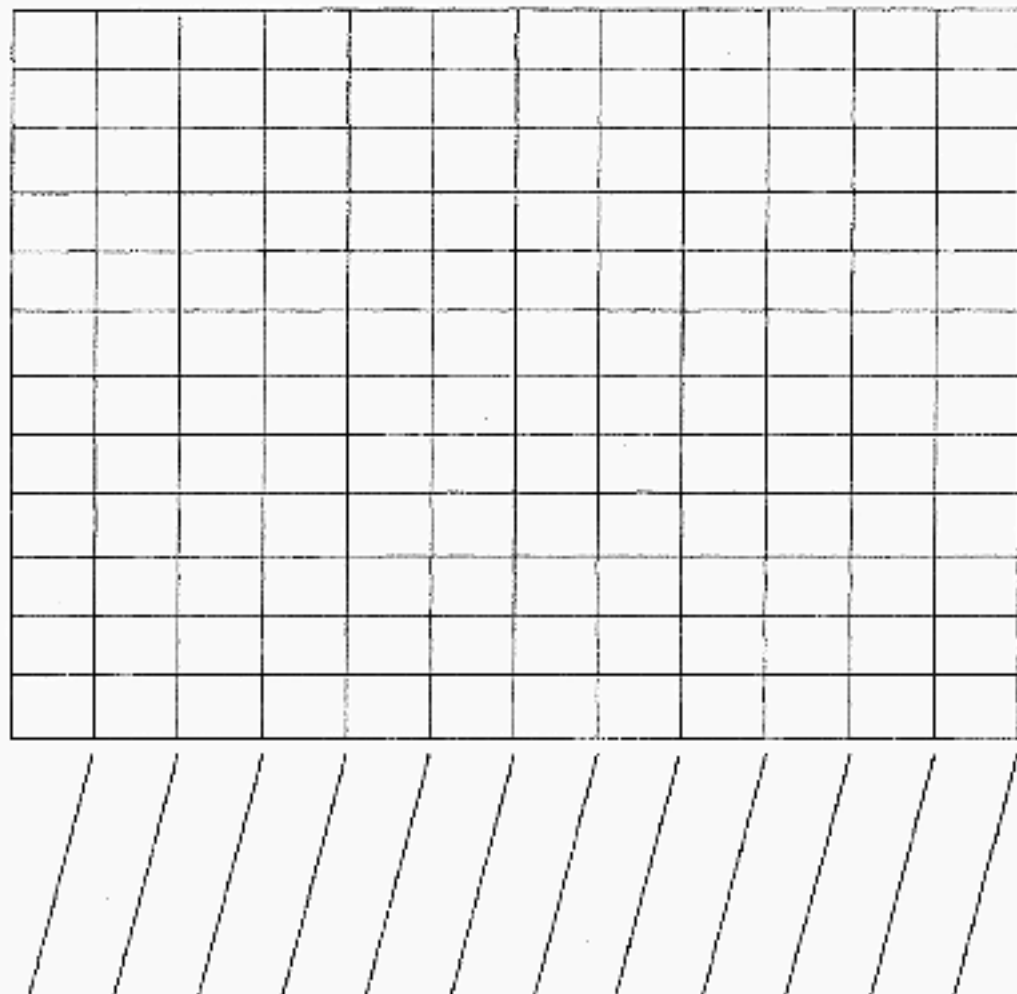
## Graphing Heights of Mexican Volcanoes

Volcano Name	Approximate Height in Meters	Height in Meters Rounded to the Nearest Hundred
Pinacate Peaks	1200	
Tres Virgenes	1940	
Socorro	1050	
Barcena	332	
Ceboruco	2280	
Paricutin	3170	
Colima	4330	
Pico de Orizaba	5636	
Popocatepetl	5426	
El Chichón	1060	
Vulcan de San Martin	1650	



Follow these directions when making your bar graph:

1. Title the bar graph at the top.
2. Label the x axis with the names of the volcanoes.
3. Label the y axis with the heights in meters. Begin at 0 and count by 500 meters.
4. Use the rounded numbers from your chart to graph the heights of the Mexican volcanoes.





## Mexican Mining and Industry

### **Objectives:**

1. Students will be able to use a map key to read a natural mineral resources and industry map of Mexico.
2. Students will use reading comprehension skills to answer questions about Mexican natural mineral resources and industries.

### **Introduction:**

Students should already be able to locate Mexico on a map of North America and have some familiarity with the natural mineral resources and industries shown on the map.

**Time:** One hour.

**Materials:** Mexican Mining and Industry (pages 10-11)

Mexican Mining and Industry Map (page 12)

### **Procedures:**

1. Review any necessary information with the students to introduce map activity.
2. Students may work individually or in pairs.
3. Review answers. Students may switch papers for #14.

**Assessment:** Answers should be checked for correct information.



## Mexican Mining and Industry



Mining is a major industry in Mexico and an important part of the economy. Mexico is the world's top silver producer, and also mines minerals such as gold, copper, lead, zinc, and sulfur. There are other industries shown on this map as well. Use the map and key to answer the questions below.

1. Name two minerals that are mined near Chihuahua.

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2. *Motor vehicles* means that automobiles are manufactured where the car symbol appears on the map. Name three cities where automobiles are manufactured.

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3. A *petroleum refinery* is a place where crude oil from the earth is refined, or changed to make useable products such as gasoline and heating oil. You may be surprised to learn that products such as ink, bubblegum, ammonia, dishwashing liquids, fabrics, and plastics also come from petroleum. Name three cities that have petroleum refineries.

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4. *Textiles* refers to the making of cloth fabric from raw materials such as cotton. Some synthetic fabrics such as rayon and spandex are also made from petroleum. Name three cities that have textiles as a major industry.

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5. Name three cities where iron is mined.

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6. Name three cities where cement is manufactured.

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7. Name three cities where chemicals are manufactured.

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8. Do you think there would be more silver north or south of Guadalajara? Explain.

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9. What two industries do Tampico and Poza Rica have in common?

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10. Name six major industries in Mexico City.

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11. Using the directions on a compass rose, how would you describe the area of Mexico in which sulfur is found and mined? \_\_\_\_\_

12. Where could you find iron and steel? Name three cities.

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13. Suppose you are in charge of planning a tour for a group of businesspeople who want to see automobile factories in Mexico. Your tour must include at least five different cities, the order in which you will visit each city, and the direction you would travel between cities. Describe your tour plan below.

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14. Now write your own question about the map for a friend to solve.

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## Mining and Industry



## Mexico Research, Writing, and Art Project

### **Objectives:**

1. Students will be able to use non-fiction resources (books, websites, other reference materials) to research information about Mexico.
2. Students will be able to use composition skills to compose a Collins writing assignment based on their research.
3. Students will create a shape "transformation" art project using the shape of the country of Mexico.

### **Introduction:**

This project may be structured a number of ways. Students may either be assigned a topic about Mexico to research (language, religion, resources, etc.) or choose their own.

**Time:** Two one hour periods.

**Materials:** Research materials (some suggested resources are given on page 16)

Mexico Research Art and Writing Assignment outline (page 14)

Mexico Research Graphic Organizer (page 15)

Blank outline maps of Mexico (page 5), one per student

Writing and art materials

### **Procedures:**

1. Decide on how students will be assigned topics and assemble research materials before class.
2. Distribute Mexico Research Graphic Organizer and Mexico Research, Art, and Writing Assignment outline.
3. Review assignment with the class.
4. Have students use research materials to complete their graphic organizers.
5. Have students follow the directions on the Mexico Research, Art, and Writing Assignment.

6. Students will create shape transformations which incorporate the shape of the country of Mexico while illustrating their research topic. (For example, an illustration of a person speaking Spanish using the shape of Mexico as a speech bubble, or an illustration of the Sierra Madre with the shape of Mexico as one of the mountains. Students come up with many creative ideas for this project.)
7. Students present their writing and illustrations to one another and learn from the research of their classmates.

**Assessment:** Writing should comply with the given FCAs and any additional expectations for writing will apply as usual. The illustrations should be carefully completed with as much detail as possible.

## Mexico Research, Art, and Writing Project

**Assignment Summary:** You will use research materials to learn about an area of Mexican geography, history, culture, and/or resources. You will compose a descriptive one or two paragraph essay and create an illustration incorporating the shape of the country of Mexico. This type of illustration is called a shape transformation.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate your knowledge of the information gathered in your research through writing and a visual presentation.

**Writer's Role:** You are writing in your own voice as a student who has learned about Mexico.

**Audience:** Your audience is your classmates, your teacher, and anyone else who would like to learn about Mexico.

**Form:** Type Three one or two paragraph report, shape transformation illustration. May be revised to a Type Four.

### **Focus Correction Areas:**

At least five facts related to your research topic (50 points)

At least five underlined vocabulary terms related to your research topic (30 points)

Fully developed paragraph(s) to explain your topic (20 points)

### **Procedures:**

1. Research a topic related to Mexico. Some possible topics may be natural resources, animals, foods, ancient civilizations, landforms, holidays, etc.
2. Complete the graphic organizer on the next page.
3. Use the information you have gathered to compose your paragraph(s). Don't forget to check your FCAs.
4. Take the blank outline map of Mexico and cut it out. How can you transform this shape into an illustration which shows something about your research topic? You may turn the shape any way you wish, color the shape, and add details around and on it.



### Mexico Research Graphic Organizer

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Fact I learned about this subject	Where I found this information (title, page)
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	



### Resources

- Armentrout, David and Patricia. (2001). *Treasures from Mexico*. Vero Beach, FL: The Rourke Book Company, Inc.
- Arnold, Helen. (1996). *Postcards from Mexico*. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn.
- Berendes, Mary. (1998). *Faces and Places: Mexico*. Mankato, MN: The Child's World, Inc.
- Hopkinson, Mary. (1992). *World in View: Mexico*. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn.
- Kalman, Bobbie. (1993). *Mexico: The People*. New York, NY: Crabtree Publishing.
- Olawsky, Lynn Ainsworth. (1997). *Colors of Mexico*. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books, Inc.
- Parker, Edward. (1998). *Country Insights: Mexico*. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn.
- Stein, R. Conrad. (1996). *Cities of the World: Mexico City*. New York, NY: Children's Press.

### Websites

- <http://www.maps-of-mexico.com>  
A variety of maps and videos about Mexico.
- <http://www.donquijote.org/spanishlanguage/numbers/numbers1.asp>  
Spanish numbers with audio pronunciations.
- [http://www.worldalmanacforkids.com/explore/nations/mexico.html#fw\\_me098400.a10.c30](http://www.worldalmanacforkids.com/explore/nations/mexico.html#fw_me098400.a10.c30)  
Comprehensive information about Mexico covering climate, history, resources, etc.
- [http://www.elbalero.gob.mx/index\\_kids.html](http://www.elbalero.gob.mx/index_kids.html)  
Mexico for Kids site run by the Presidency of the Republic of Mexico
- <http://www.kathimitchell.com/mexico.htm>  
A page with links to other sites with information, lesson plans, etc. about Mexico.