

Handout 1

Exercise 1

Read the paragraph and answer the questions below. It will help you notice the key features of the paragraph.¹

The Importance of El Grito de Dolores

El Grito de Dolores is an important national celebration in Mexico and an important part of Mexico's national identity. Many people think that Cinco de Mayo is Mexico's Independence Day, but El Grito de Dolores, on September 16, is Mexican Independence Day. Each year before the 16th of September, decorations reveal that a great celebration, or *fiesta*, is coming. People hang the Mexican flag from their houses and cars. They put lights, balloons, and pinwheels² in the streets and on the buildings. Everything is red, white, and green because these are the national colors. On the evening of September 15, everyone starts to gather for an exciting social event. Families and friends go to the center of town. They eat traditional Mexican foods and dress in traditional Mexican clothes. The sound of mariachi music is everywhere. The largest gathering in the nation is in Mexico City in *el Zocalo*, which is the public square in the center of the city. Almost half a million people go there. If Mexicans live in another country, they might even watch this on TV. People shout and make noise with musical instruments. The square becomes more and more crowded. People are excited. They are waiting to watch the reenactment³ of El Grito. This is the most important and interesting part of the celebration. *El Grito* means "the cry." In the 1800s, the Mexican people had many concerns about their Spanish rulers, and they wanted freedom. Father Hidalgo was one of those concerned leaders. In 1810, he rang the bell in his small church and called the people to fight for liberty. This started a 10-year struggle for independence. Now, every September 15 at 11:00 p.m., a government leader acts like Father Hidalgo. He rings a bell and cries, "My fellow Mexicans, long live Mexico!" The people continue celebrating into September 16 by watching fireworks, singing the national anthem, and shouting "*Viva Mexico!*" El Grito de Dolores is a special and important celebration for the people of Mexico.

1. Find the paragraph head. What national celebration is the writer going to describe?
2. In the yellow section, find the phrases that the writer uses to help you see the decorations.
3. In the green section, find the word that describes peoples' feelings.
4. Do all of the supporting sentences in the paragraph help you see, hear, feel, and learn about the celebration? Yes or No?
5. The writer says that *El Grito* is a special and important celebration for the people of Mexico. What three parts, or features, of the celebration did she write about?
6. If you were in Mexico in the second week of September, what would you expect to see?
7. How do you think Mexican people feel about Father Hidalgo? Why do you think they feel that way?

¹ Adapted from: Bauer, J., Boyle M.S., Stapleton, S. (2016). Final Draft 2. Student's book. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

² pinwheel - a colorful decoration or toy that children can spin.

³ reenactment - a performance in which people repeat the actions of a historical event.

Exercise 2

Fill the blanks in the outline for "The Importance of El Grito de Dolores."

Use the phrases in the box.

crowded and excited
leader rings a bell and cries out
red, white, and green colors

PARAGRAPH OUTLINE		
Paragraph head		El Grito de Dolores is an important national celebration in Mexico and an important part of Mexico's national identity.
Feature 1. A. The decorations	Detail	1. Flags.
	Detail	2. Lights, balloons, and pinwheels
	Detail	3.
Feature 2 B. The gathering	Detail	1. Traditional clothing, music, and food
	Detail	2. Locations: in the town centers, at el Zócalo, on Tv ...
	Detail	3.
Feature 3 C. The reenactment	Detail	1. Important history
	Detail	2.
	Detail	3. Fireworks, national anthem, "Viva Mexico"
Concluding sentence		El Grito de Dolores is a special and important celebration for the people of Mexico.