

LEVELED Book • J



# It's **Cinco de Mayo,** **Carlos!**



Written by Maribeth Boelts  
Illustrated by Angela Kamstra-Jacobson

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Carlos and Maria walked past the city park after the baseball game.

"It's almost Cinco de Mayo,"  
Carlos said.

"The festival is only a month away."

# MUSIC • DANCING HOT ROD CAR SI



"Miss Lopez is teaching us a special dance for the festival," said Maria.  
"We need one more boy."



"Will you dance with us?" asked Maria.

"Are you dancing in front of people?"  
asked Carlos.

"Miss Lopez will help you,"  
said Maria, smiling.



That evening, Carlos asked Abuela about Cinco de Mayo.

"There was a big battle on May 5th, in 1862," said Abuela.

"A big army came to attack the small town of Puebla."



"Only a small group of young soldiers lived in Puebla.

They were scared, but they didn't give up," said Abuela.



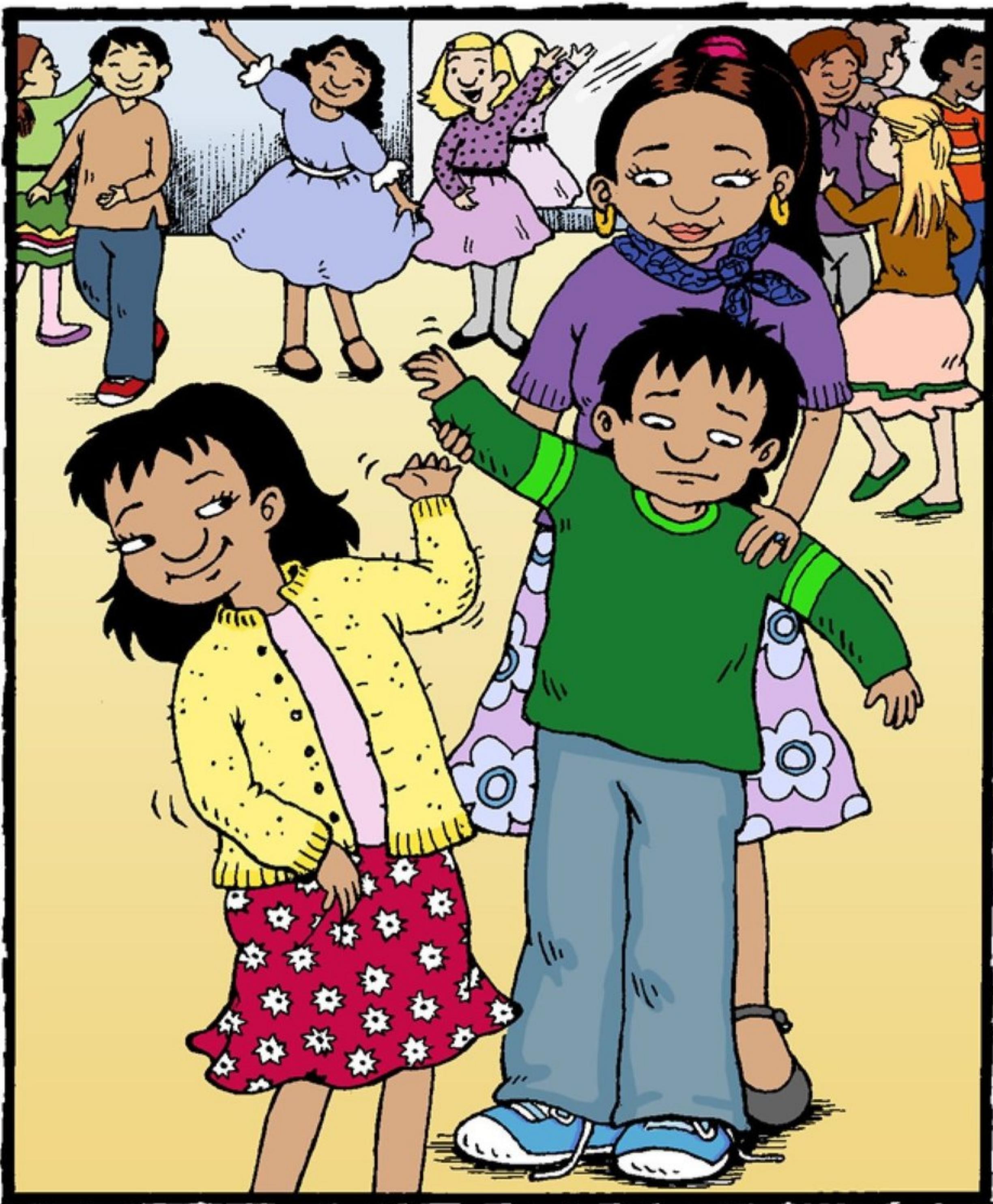
"The big army didn't think the young soldiers would fight," said Abuela.

"But the young soldiers won!" she said.

"So, that's what we celebrate on Cinco de Mayo!" said Carlos.



Carlos couldn't sleep that night.  
He thought about the soldiers.  
He thought about learning the dance.  
“I can be brave, too,” he said.



Miss Lopez showed Carlos the steps.  
He stepped on Maria's foot.  
He tripped and slipped.  
"Don't worry," said Maria.  
"You'll get better."



Carlos felt he would never learn.  
But he didn't give up.  
His father gave him a surprise  
on the morning of the festival.  
“Real cowboy boots!” Carlos said.



There were so many things to see.  
Carlos and Maria stopped to watch  
a puppet show.  
The crowd was clapping.  
“I hope they clap for us,” said Carlos.



They saw rows of shining cars.  
“Let’s look at the hot rods!” he said.

“Hurry, Carlos!” said Maria.  
“We just have time to put on  
our costumes.”



It was time for their dance.

Carlos looked at the big crowd.

His heart pounded.

"You can do it," whispered Maria.



Then the music started.

People began to clap in time  
to the music.

Carlos stomped his feet  
in his new cowboy boots.



Suddenly, the music stopped.  
It was over. He hadn't tripped once.  
The crowd cheered and clapped.  
Abuela's cheer was the loudest!

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