

About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational Page Count: 24 Word Count: 2,193

Book Summary

M Is for Mexico is an introduction to the country's history, geography, and culture. Written from the point of view of Juan Rodriguez, a fifth grader from Mexico, the book encourages readers to visit the country to see all it has to offer. Some of the highlights include the beaches of Acapulco, *Museo Frida Kahlo*, ancient pyramids at *El Tajin*, and the Great Mesoamerican Reef. Photographs, maps, and illustrations support the text.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Summarize

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of summarizing to understand text
- Identify the main idea and supporting details
- Identify and understand the use of indefinite pronouns
- Identify the meaning of suffix -est

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*M is for Mexico* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- World map, map of Mexico
- Main idea and details/summary, indefinite pronouns, suffixes worksheets
- Discussion cards



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting book on interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if books are reused.)

Vocabulary

*Bold vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on VocabularyA-Z.com.

• Content words:

Story Critical: *civilizations* (n.), *conquered* (v.), *geography* (n.), *indigenous* (adj.), *landform* (n.), *republic* (n.)

Enrichment: *cathedrals* (n.), *centuries* (n.), *colony* (n.), *conquistador* (n.), *dormant* (adj.), *empire* (n.), *mariachi* (n.), *murals* (n.), *ruins* (n.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Provide a large world map for students to observe. Write the word *Mexico* on the board. Ask a volunteer to identify the location of Mexico on the map.
- Write the following headings on the board: *Land*, *History*, *Sites*. Ask students to share what they already know about these topics as they relate to Mexico. Write the information under the appropriate heading. Invite students to share other information they know about Mexico.

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of the book. Guide them to the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what type of book it is and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author's name).

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Main idea and details**

- Explain to students that sometimes the amount of information about a topic is so large that it is grouped into sections, each one with its own main idea.
- Read page 4 aloud to students. Model identifying the main idea and details from page 4.
Think-aloud: As I read this section of the book, most of the sentences mention something about Mexico and all of the things you can do while visiting. The sentences mention Mexico's beaches, museums, historic sites, ancient ruins, mountains, wetlands, mariachi music, and local hospitality. I will underline this information. Based on what I've read, I think the main idea of the section is: There is a lot to see and do in Mexico.
- Write the main idea on the board. Ask students to identify the details from the book that support this main idea (visit museums, historic sites, or ancient ruins; relax on the shores of Mexico's many beaches; and so on). Write these details on the board.

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Summarize**


- Explain to students that one way to understand and remember information in a book is to write a *summary*, or a brief overview, of the most important information in the text. Point out that a summary includes the main idea and one or two supporting details. It often answers the questions *who*, *when*, *where*, *what*, and *why*.
- Model summarizing the main idea and details from page 4 on the board.
Think-aloud: To summarize, I decide which information is most important to the meaning of each section. To do this, I can identify the main idea and important details, and then organize that information into a few sentences. When I look at the main idea and details on the board, a summary of this section might be: There is a lot to see and do in Mexico. People can visit museums, historic sites, or ancient ruins. They can relax on the beach, go horseback riding, take a boat ride, or enjoy listening to mariachi music. There is something for everyone to see and do.
- Write the summary on the board. Have students identify the main idea and details within the summary. Discuss how you used your own words to create the summary.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- Introduce the following words from the content vocabulary, and write them on the board: *Acapulco, Cancún, Guadalajara, Mexico City, Chichen Itza, and Teotihuacán.*
- Give groups of students a copy of a map of Mexico. Explain that all of these vocabulary words are cities in Mexico. Have them find the locations of the six cities on the map, marking each in a different color.
- Remind students that *skimming* a book is a good way to quickly search for information or specific words. Have them turn to page 19 and skim to find the vocabulary word *Cancún*.
- Remind students that they should check whether words make sense by rereading the sentences in which they occur. Have them read the sentences on page 19 surrounding the word *Cancún* to find out more about it.
- Repeat the above exercise for the remaining four vocabulary words. Discuss each word with students. Use the sentences, maps, and photographs in the book to provide further understanding of each word.



- Have groups of students keep their maps of Mexico so they can circle the names of other cities they read about later.

Set the Purpose

-  Have students read the book to find out more about Mexico. Encourage them to underline or write on a separate piece of paper the important details in each section.

During Reading

Student Reading

- **Guide the reading:** Have students read from page 5 to the end of page 8. Encourage those who finish before others to reread the text. When students are ready, discuss the important information they identified.
- Model identifying the main idea and details.
Think-aloud: As I read the section titled “The Land,” most of the sentences mentioned something about Mexico’s geography and how the land is divided. I read that Mexico is divided into North and South, and it has states. It covers over 750,000 square miles and has many unique landforms, including plateaus, highlands, and a desert. Mexico is also located in an area with active volcanoes. I will underline this information in the book. Based on what I’ve read and underlined, I think the main idea of the section is: Mexico is a large country with diverse landforms and environments.
- Write the main idea on the board. Ask students to identify details that support this main idea (rural farming populations and urban, industrialized cities; 756,066 square miles; many unique landforms; active and dormant volcanoes; and so on). Write these details on the board.
- Review how to create a summary from the main idea and details. Refer back to the summary created during the introduction to the skill. Discuss and create the summary as a class and write it on the board. (Mexico is a large country with diverse landforms and environments. Its many regions include plateaus, plains, lowlands, highlands, deserts, and wetlands. The country has 31 states and extends 756,066 square miles. It is located in the “Ring of Fire,” where volcanoes in the Pacific Ocean are very active. About 106 million people live in Mexico, in both rural farming areas and urban, industrialized states.)
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read from page 9 to the end of page 13. Invite them to share the important details they underlined in each section. Write these details on the board. Divide students into groups and assign each group a section. Have students work with their group to identify the main idea from the details of their section. Discuss their responses as a class and write a main idea on the board.
- Ask each group to use the main idea and details of their section to write a brief summary on a separate piece of paper. Have them share what they wrote.
-  Ask students to read the remainder of the book. Remind them to underline important details in the book as they read.
-  Have students make a question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. Encourage them to use the strategies they have learned to read each word and figure out its meaning.

After Reading

- Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- **Discussion:** Invite students to share what they think the author's purpose was for writing this book. Discuss with them whether stopping to review the important details helped them to learn about the different places in Mexico. Ask students to share whether thinking about the details inspired them to want to visit or learn more about any of the places in the book and why.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce and explain the [main-idea-and-details/summary worksheet](#). Have them write a main idea and supporting details for one of the remaining sections of the book. If time allows, discuss their responses.

Reflect on the Reading Strategy

- Review with students how the main idea and details from each section can be used to develop a summary. Discuss with them the benefits of summarizing information they read (to understand the main point of a larger piece of writing). Invite students to share instances of when summarizing might be helpful.
- **Independent practice:** Have students write a summary using the information they wrote on their main-idea-and-details/summary worksheet. If time allows, discuss their responses.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you learned about the varied places and experiences Mexico has to offer. Now that you know this information, what does this tell you about taking a closer look at the characteristics and offerings where you live?

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: Indefinite pronouns

- Write the following sentence on the board: *You can visit some of the buildings they left behind.* Read the sentence with students.
- Cover the second half of the sentence (*of the buildings they left behind*). Reread the first half of the sentence with students. Circle the word *some*. Ask students to identify what the word *some* refers to (*buildings*).
- Explain to students that some words refer to nouns in a general way, and that these words are called *indefinite pronouns*. Write the following three examples of indefinite pronouns on the board: *one, some, and many*.
- Ask students to turn to page 10. Write the following sentence from the book on the board: *They had to learn Spanish and Latin, and many of the native languages disappeared.* Ask students to identify the indefinite pronoun (*many*) and circle it on the board. Ask what noun *many* refers to (*native languages*).
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following sentences on the board: *Frida Kahlo was one of the first successful female painters in the world. Let's begin our tour of some of the great cities to visit.* Ask pairs of students to identify the indefinite pronoun and the noun the indefinite pronoun refers to in each sentence. Monitor student responses for demonstration of understanding.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [indefinite pronouns worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: Suffixes -est

- Write the following sentence on the board: *It is one of the ten largest cities in the world.* Read the sentence aloud with students.
- Point out the word *largest*. Point out that words ending with the letter e drop the e before adding -est, and in words ending with the letter y, the y changes to an i. Ask students to identify the root word of *largest* (*large*). Erase the letters s and t from the end of the word. Ask students to explain the meaning of the word *large*.
- Add the -est suffix to the end of the word *large*. Ask students to explain how the meaning of the word changed.
- Explain to students that the suffix -est means the most of something.

- Ask students to turn to page 8 in their book. Have them locate the word *highest*. Ask them to tell the meaning of the word (the most high).
- Ask students to identify the root word of *highest* (*high*). On the board, rewrite the sentence on page 8. (*This is a fascinating dormant volcano and is a high point in the country.*) Invite students to share how the meaning of the sentence changed.



Check for understanding: Have students turn to page 16 and locate the word *greatest*. Ask them to write the meaning of the word at the bottom of the page. Invite volunteers to share their definition of the word.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [suffixes worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. Additionally, allow partners to take turns reading parts of the book to each other.

Home Connection

- Give students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends. Have students discuss with someone at home how to summarize a section using the main idea and details of the section.

Extend the Reading

Persuasive Writing Connection

Review with students the voice in which the author chose to write this book (Juan, a fifth grade student). Point out that Juan's writing is trying to persuade us to visit his country by telling about Mexico's major attractions and writing sentences such as: *Whatever you want to do or see, Mexico has something for you!* Refer to the Enduring Understanding discussion and have students create their own persuasive writing telling readers about special offerings where they live and why readers should visit.

Social Studies and Art Connection

Have students reread the "Explore More" box on page 10. Divide students into five groups and assign each group one of the following civilizations: Aztecs, Olmecs, Maya, Teotihuacán, or Toltecs. Provide opportunities for students to visit the local or school library to find resources that give more information about these cultures and civilizations. Have them collectively prepare an oral report to share with the class, complete with a poster for visual aid.

Skill Review

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided as an extension activity. The following is a list of some ways these cards can be used with students:

- Use as discussion starters for literature circles.
- Have students choose one or more cards and write a response, either as an essay or as a journal entry.
- Distribute before reading the book and have students use one of the questions as a purpose for reading.
- Cut apart and use the cards as game cards with a board game.
- Conduct a class discussion as a review before the book quiz.

Assessment

Monitor students to determine if they can:

- identify the main idea and supporting details to better understand text in discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately use main idea statements and supporting details to write a summary in their own words
- correctly understand and use indefinite pronouns in discussion and on a worksheet
- accurately identify the use and meaning of suffix -est in text and on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

- [Book Quiz](#)
- [Retelling Rubric](#)