

# MEXICO

## Lessons for Mission Minded Kids

### Lesson 9

### School Days



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# Mexico

## Lesson 9: School Days

### Goals for Lesson 9:

- Children should realize that children in Mexico are just like them, but many haven't heard about Jesus as their personal Savior.
- Children will be able to recite Matthew 5:16 by memory, having internalized both the words and the message.

### Verse for Mexico:

"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." Matthew 5:16

### Before Class:

- Read through lesson and decide what you will use according to your age group and time allotted.
- Make copies of activities you will be using and gather pencils and crayons to be used in class.
- Have a real Mexican Flag in your room, or the picture of the flag from Lesson 3. Prepare all pictures as power point slides, or back them with sturdy paper for stability.

### Lesson Plan:

- Begin your class time with a short prayer for all of the people in Mexico who don't yet know Jesus. (5 min.)
- Read or tell the story part of the lesson, showing the pictures as indicated, and stopping to discuss or answer questions as needed. (15-20 min.)

- Discuss how school students in Mexico are similar and different from the children in your group.
- Depending on your students, choose the other activities you will do with them, or send home with them. You may also want to spend time finishing your Yarn Paintings from Lesson 6 if they are not done. (15-20 min.)
- Finish your time together with prayer for the Wycliffe Translators who are working on translating Bibles for the many people groups who still don't have even the New Testament in their language. (5 min.)

## LESSON 9

*Begin class by asking your students what grade they are in at school. Go around the room and give each child a chance to answer. Then ask what their favorite subjects are.*

Today we're going to learn about school in Mexico. Just like you, children in Mexico have to go to school. However, there is no homeschooling in Mexico; all students must go to a public or private school.

In Mexico children can start kindergarten or "Kinder" around age 4. However, they remain in that for two-three years. Here most children go to preschool at age 4 and then go to Kindergarten the following year. Just as in the USA, children start elementary or primary school at age 6; this is called "Primeria". Typically they remain in Primeria through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Then they go to "Secundaria" (Secondary school) for grades 7-9. Finally they go to "PREPA" or high school for grades 10 through 12. How is this similar or different from your school district? (*Give children an opportunity to share.*)

The school day starts early for Mexican children; it begins at 7 a.m. and ends by 12:30 or 1 p.m. There may be a recess in the middle of the morning where children can play, eat or just take a break. The entire school goes to recess at the same time. At 12:30 or 1:00 p.m., the students go home to eat their meal, and that is the end of the school day; they don't go back. There are no cafeterias in Mexican schools, so no food is provided. If a student wants a snack during recess, they can bring something with them from home. Often there is a small 'snack shack' set up where you can purchase food. Sometimes parents or people from the community will set up small food stands where students can buy tacos, chips, sandwiches, etc. It's very similar to the concession stands you see at American high school football games.

Mexican students typically stay in the same classroom all day. The teachers will switch classrooms for the various class changes. Class sizes are a bit different from school to school, but most are around 30 students per classroom. They study many of the same subjects that American students do - math, science, grammar, history and reading. Some schools also require students to study English starting in primary school, but that is not required in every state. There are no electives like art or music in public schools. There are no school sports

teams either; those activities are considered extra-curricular and cost money to participate. Private schools may have their own policies on these subjects which are specific to each school.

In Mexico, the school year generally begins in late August and runs straight through until Christmas break, which lasts for a couple of weeks. Students are off further into January than is customary in the USA because they celebrate both Christmas and Three Kings Day (January 6<sup>th</sup>, also known as Epiphany). The next school break would be for Easter, when students are typically off for about two weeks. Most Mexican families go on vacation at this time. Summer break begins in early July and lasts until late August.

After school and their afternoon meal, most children and youth like to go outdoors to play. By far the biggest pass-time for boys is soccer (known as *futbol* in Central and South America), but kids also like to play basketball, volleyball, and swim. Video games are growing in popularity, and you will also see children on their parents' phones watching Youtube videos. Girls will sometimes join with the boys in sports, but not that often. Most play typical games like house, doctor, hide and seek, etc. Kids in Mexico, even from a pretty young age, tend to have a lot of freedom to gather with other neighborhood kids to play, so you will see lots of kids playing in the local parks, plazas, or just out in the street.

COVID UPDATE - Covid 19, which also hit Mexico, caused the schools to close in late March/early April of 2020. Unlike most schools in the USA, classes in northern Mexico did not move online, so the students were off from late March until late August. In the state of Nuevo Leon, where most of our EC churches are located, all schools are being held strictly online; there are no in-school classes. Just as in the USA, this is mandated by the state and it could be different in other parts of Mexico. (Remind students that Mexico is made up of various states just like the USA; in fact the correct name of the country is the United States of Mexico.)

Unfortunately, not all children have access to the internet in Mexico, just as some don't here. But they are required to find a connection somewhere; the schools don't provide internet or computers for their students as many school districts do here. In some areas, neighbors are coming together to support one another in

efforts to provide internet for the students. If a student doesn't have internet access, the parents are required to take pictures of the work that the student has done and submit it by text message to the teacher. Things are difficult now in Mexico, and there are many questions about how to make online learning more effective given the challenges that many students face.

*(Many thanks to Shannon Beam Barrios for providing this information.)*

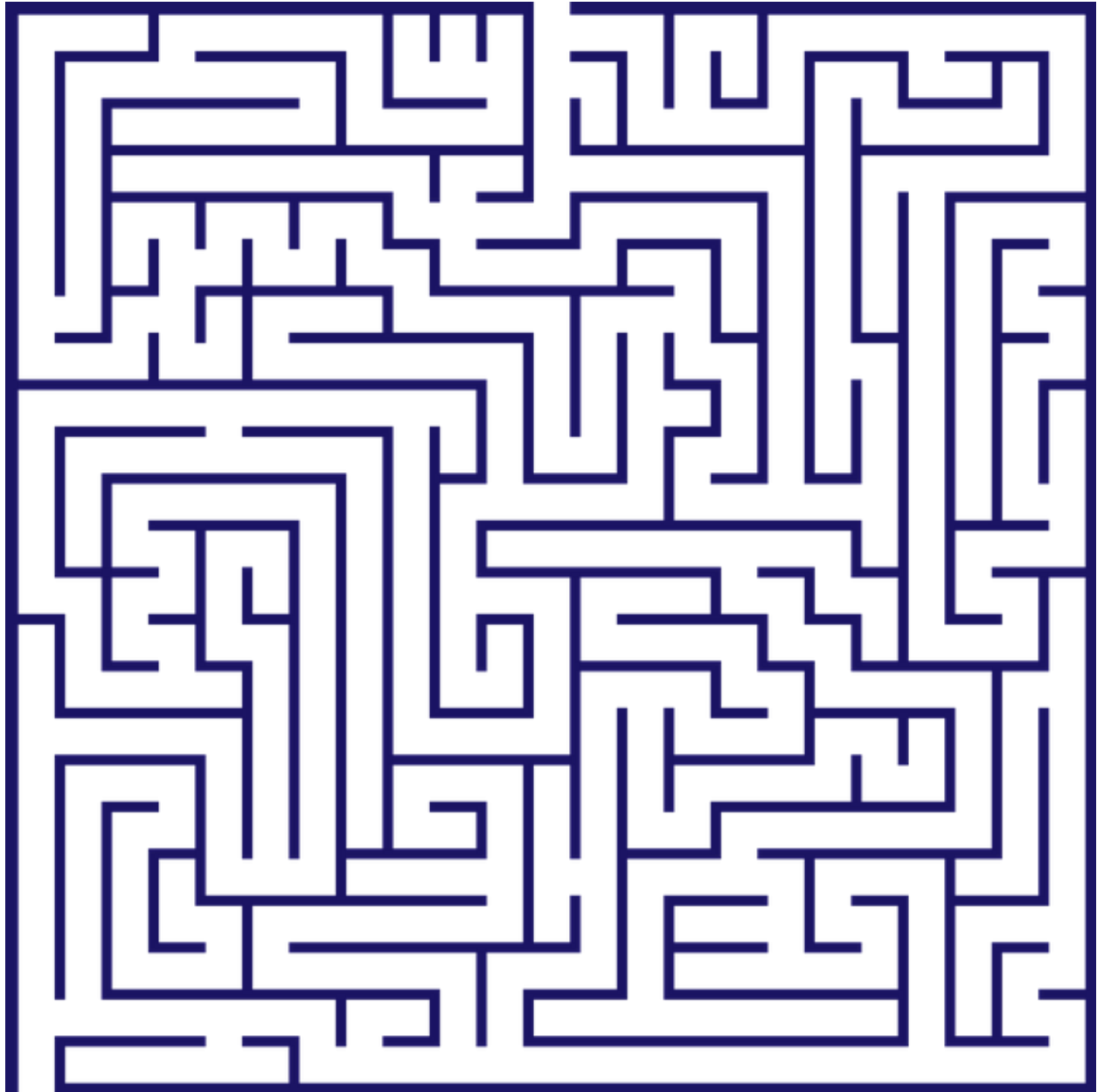


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Mexican children playing soccer



Mexican children in school



Help Jorge get his ball to the net to score a goal!