

MEXICO

Lessons for Mission Minded Kids

Lesson 1-2

Mae Royer's Mexico



Mexico

Lesson 1-2: Mae Royer's Mexico

Goals for Lesson 1-2:

- Children will be introduced to Mae Royer, our first E.C. worker in Mexico.
- Children will be introduced to Matthew 5:16, and understand that just like Mae, they can let their light shine before those around them.
- Children will begin to learn about the Mexican people; their lifestyle, their culture, and their need for Jesus.

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. Divide the material so you use it for two lessons.
- Make copies of coloring pages and activity sheets as needed.
- Prepare Mae Royer's picture by putting it on a power point slide to show the children, or by backing it with sturdy paper for stability.
- Purchase small, inexpensive (key chain type or liquid crystal glow-stick) flashlights, one for each student. Bring a larger one from home for yourself. Make necessary preparations for darkening the room and producing your own light show, as described in the Lesson Plan. **If you purchase keychain lights (Oriental Trading has them), plan to keep them to use in Lesson 4. If you purchase glow-sticks, you will need to purchase a second batch for Lesson 4.
- Write the verse on a blackboard or poster board so that everyone can see it. Even if you have non-readers, it is important that they see the words and know that these are God's words, taken from the Bible.
- Prepare materials for Mexican placemat, as described.

Lesson Plan:

- Open your time together with a brief prayer. (5 min.)
- Display verse so that everyone can see it. Darken the room as much as possible. Tell the children that the Bible tells us that people who do wrong things like to do them in the dark. Ask them why they

think this is true. (People like to hide the wrong things they do because they are ashamed of them.) Then talk about good deeds and why they would not want to hide them in the dark. Talk about the idea that Jesus is the light of the world, and that our good deeds can be like lights, reflecting the light of Jesus. Tell them that the verse for Mexico tells us how to live our lives before everyone we meet. Shine your flashlight on the verse and read it out loud, pointing to each word as you say it. Talk about what it means to “let your light shine”, and sing “This Little Light of Mine” if it is age-appropriate. Have each child raise their hand and tell the group one good thing they could do. As each child has a turn, give them a small flashlight. When everyone has a flashlight, tell them to listen carefully to the directions you give, as they are going to put on a light show. If possible, have everyone sit or lay on the floor. Give the following directions: (15-20 min.)

Shine your light in the center of the ceiling. Now shine your light in all the corners of the room, twice. Now point your light at the verse. Let’s say it together. Draw a star with your light. Pretend to paint a wall with your light. Now point your light at the verse. Let’s say it together. Point your light on the floor and make the light move like ocean waves. Now shine your lights every which way. Now shine your lights on the verse. Let’s say it together one last time.

- Turn on the lights and have everyone return to their original seats for the rest of the lesson. Read or tell the story part of the lesson, showing the picture as indicated, and stopping to explain or answer questions as necessary. (15-20 min.)
- Clear a work area on the floor or on tables and pass out the materials for the placemat. Explain that many native people in Mexico still weave their own rugs, mats and blankets, using reeds, grasses or colorful yarns. Even young children will be able to weave a colorful mat. If a younger student is having trouble, pair them up with an older student, or someone who gets done with theirs quickly. You can choose whether or not to cover them with clear contact paper, either just on the front, or on both sides. You may want to plan to keep them to use for your fiesta in Lesson 4. (15-20 min.)
- Use the coloring sheets for those who finish their mats quickly, or send them home as a reminder of Mae Royer’s brave journey into the heart of Mexico as a young lady riding on a small pony. (5-10 min.)

LESSON 1 – MAE ROYER'S MEXICO

The E.C. connection to Mexico began in the first half of the 20th century with a woman named Mae Royer. Mae was born in 1908, the oldest of six children and grew up in Lancaster County. There were a variety of Christian influences in her early life. Her mother was a member of the Moravian Church, and for a time she attended a Mennonite church next to her schoolhouse.

WWI came, and with it, the flu. Mae's mother died from the flu, and Mae, who was not quite 12, had to take over the care of her younger siblings. Her grandparents helped all they could, but the majority of the responsibility fell on her.

Mae's father had not been a believer, but after his wife's death he was converted and joined the Brethren church. Mae also was baptized into the Brethren Church and followed that tradition until she was 16. In her autobiography she writes, "Then followed a few years of bitterness, worldliness and disillusionment, until I came back to the Lord at 19, and had a deeper experience."

Mae went forward to the altar at a revival service at Grace E.C. Church in Ephrata, and there prayed for forgiveness and gave her life to the Lord. It was there she experienced a calling, hearing a voice say "Come, follow me." Mae met students from the Practical Bible Training School in Binghamton, NY and was convinced that God wanted her to go there. However, she was still taking care of her younger siblings and felt that responsibility. God provided by having her father remarry shortly before the school year began, so Mae felt free to go away to school.

Mae graduated and did evangelistic work until 1936, when her father died. The conviction had grown in Mae that God was calling her to the mission field. In those days a single female missionary had only two choices; be a teacher or be a nurse. Mae took a course in obstetrics and practical nursing at a hospital in Philadelphia and acquired her license as a registered midwife. While in Philadelphia, she took Spanish lessons from a student at a nearby seminary and applied to Mexican Indian Mission in preparation for serving in Mexico. They suggested she attend Wycliffe Translators' summer camp in Arkansas to get more training. Mae did this and was approved as a missionary by the MIM board.

Mae left for Mexico in 1939, with only \$3.00 in savings and without any pledged support. Yet she had faith that she was doing what God had called her to do and that He would provide for her needs, which He did. Mae's first assignment was to an Aztec Indian village called Chapulhuacanito (*cha-pull-hwa-con-EE-toe*.) The village was in south central Mexico, a few hours from Mexico City.

At that time there were no roads to such remote places, just muddy burro paths through the tropical forests and through the occasionally flooded streams. Many tropical animals like parrots, monkeys and snakes lived in those forests, along with the native Indian people who had lived there for many hundreds of years. In Chapulhuacanito, a stream ran through the village, effectively dividing the Aztec Indian families from their Spanish-speaking neighbors. There were cultural as well as language differences between the two groups, and Mae had to be careful how she acted within each group. In the beginning of her time there, she had to take along a young Aztec woman to interpret for her, because while Mae spoke Spanish, most of the Indians only spoke Aztec. Eventually Mae learned enough Aztec to feel comfortable traveling without an interpreter.

Even for that time period, the living conditions were very poor in the Indian village. There wasn't any indoor plumbing; the people got their water from the creek. There wasn't even an outhouse to use; Mae had to go up a hill, pass two houses and climb over a stone fence to a grove which the local people used as an outdoor toilet. She was so happy when the owner of the lot next to the clinic gave permission for an outhouse to be built there for Mae and the clinic to use.

Mae lived in a little mud hut with a thatched roof, and her living room was the clinic where people came for treatment. Initially Mae had to walk to visit patients, many of them in the hills away from her little village. Eventually she was given permission and raised money to buy a sturdy little pony that would take her around the mountains, visiting sick patients and helping to lead evangelistic meetings. Unfortunately, that caused problems with some of her Aztec neighbors. To them, only the Spanish rode horses; Indians used burros. *(Show picture of Mae's house and clinic.)*

Mexico at that time was filled with many Indian tribes, including the remaining ancestors of the ancient Mayan and Aztec civilizations. Since the country had been ruled by Spain for hundreds of years before gaining its independence, many Spanish Europeans had intermarried with the Indians, creating a large population of *mestizos* (people of mixed Spanish and Indian blood) who spoke Spanish. Spanish had become the official national language, but many Indian tribes still spoke their own languages and kept their own customs. Unfortunately, there was a lot of hard feelings between the Indians and the Spanish-speaking people. The Indians tended to be poorer and have less land to farm or graze their animals. They blamed this on the Spanish *conquistadors* who had stolen land from the native Indian tribes when they came ashore many centuries before.

The Spanish rulers had brought Roman Catholicism to Mexico and made it the national religion. Although there were established Protestant Christian churches in many parts of Mexico when Mae arrived, she soon found that there was a constant friction between the Spanish speakers and those who spoke the native Indian languages, and between the Catholic people and the Evangelical Christians. Many Evangelical Christians at that time were persecuted and not allowed to live and worship in peace. Gangs of robbers and even government armies often attacked Evangelical Christians and destroyed their homes and churches, making it very dangerous to be a Protestant Christian in some areas of Mexico.

Another issue was lack of education and health care for the Indians. Mae came to vaccinate children at the school one day, and there were only a handful of students, even though the area had several hundred children. She learned that, since school was only taught in Spanish, the Aztec children wouldn't come. And there was no school for the Aztec children, since there were no teachers who spoke Aztec.

The Indian tribes tended to be very superstitious, which caused some problems for Mae in treating their illnesses. They didn't believe in the existence of germs; they thought illness was caused by evil spirits or by having a curse put on them by an enemy. She had to work patiently to teach them the importance of washing hands, boiling water from the creek before drinking it, etc. The most common problems Mae had to deal with were wounds, sores, eye problems and worms. The more serious illnesses were tuberculosis (an infectious lung disease), malaria (carried by mosquitoes), anemia (caused by poor diet) and dysentery (caused by contaminated food or water). In this era, these

diseases could leave a person seriously ill or even kill people since the antibiotics used to treat them weren't yet invented, for the most part. During Mae's time in Chapulhuacanito she was able to obtain a supply of sulfa drugs which was used to treat pneumonia. Before these drugs, getting pneumonia was usually a death sentence. Because she never knew for sure what she would be dealing with, in addition to medications, Mae learned to carry soap, towels, jars of soup, newspapers and a spray gun for disinfecting with her when she would go to treat patients.

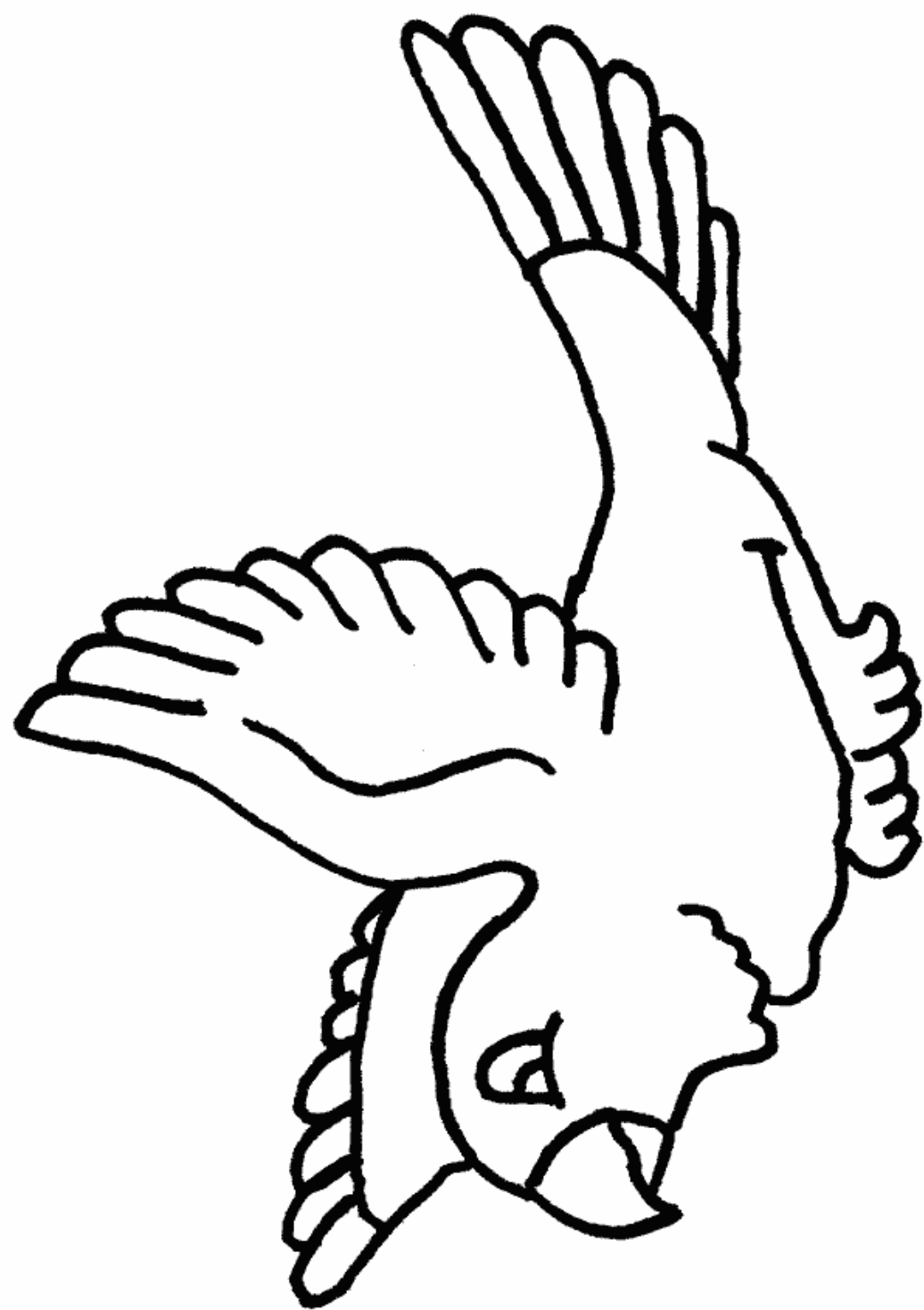
Mae spent six years in this little Indian village, teaching the people about hygiene, nutrition and Jesus. She made many friends and saved many lives in that time, but her own health often suffered. Along with flea and tick bites, over the years she suffered from typhoid, amoebic dysentery and malaria. At one point she had all of the last three at the same time. Because her chronic malaria continued to worsen, her doctor told her she would have to move out of the tropical area of Mexico, or the malaria would eventually kill her.

In 1945, Mae moved to the little town of Zimapan, (ZEE-mah-pahn) just north of Mexico City. This area was not as tropical, although still high in the mountains. In Zimapan, God allowed Mae to open a Home for Needy Children, providing a large old dilapidated house on a large plot of land. With help from many, Mae began to rebuild the house, and eventually built a church on that property. Orphaned and abandoned children started to show up at the door of the half-built house, and before it was even finished, there were twelve children living with Mae. Although they had very little, God always supplied, and soon they were caring for over forty children who needed a home and the love of Christ. While living there, Mae adopted two young boys, brothers, whose names were Anastasio and Isidro. But everyone called them Benny and Pepe. Both eventually became pastors in E.C. churches, one in Texas and one in Mexico.

About 15 years went by before Mae once again was in danger because of her health. This time it was her heart. The doctor said that she would have a heart attack if she didn't move away from the thin air of the mountains. A friend found a ranch in the hot, dry desert area of northern Mexico and asked her to move her children there. She would be out of the dangerously thin air, and she would be closer to the United States. By this time, many of the E.C. churches were taking a strong interest in Mae and the children in her home and wanted to be more involved in her work.

So, in 1960, Mae's Home for Needy Children moved north to the ranch near Monterrey. It became "El Retiro Juvenil" (the Children's Retreat). While there, Mae adopted another Mexican child, this time a little girl, named Ana Maria, whose nickname was Anita. Eventually many work teams from the EC churches in the USA would go to Mexico to help build and improve the buildings at the children's home and EC churches.

(Show picture of Mae Royer from the lesson cover) Mae spent the rest of her life caring for these children, planting churches, and helping people wherever she was. Mae has gone on to Heaven now, but the Light of Jesus she brought with her to Mexico is still shining through the many people she led to Christ. The people of Mexico need the Light of the World. Mae wasn't afraid to let her light shine through her good works, and God has used her life to bring good to many Mexican people, and to bring glory and praise to Himself. Just like Mae, God can use your life to shine the Light of Jesus to those who need to know Him and bring glory to Himself through your good works.



WHAT ITEMS DID MAE CARRY IN HER MEDICAL BAG BESIDES MEDICINE?

Circle all below that apply



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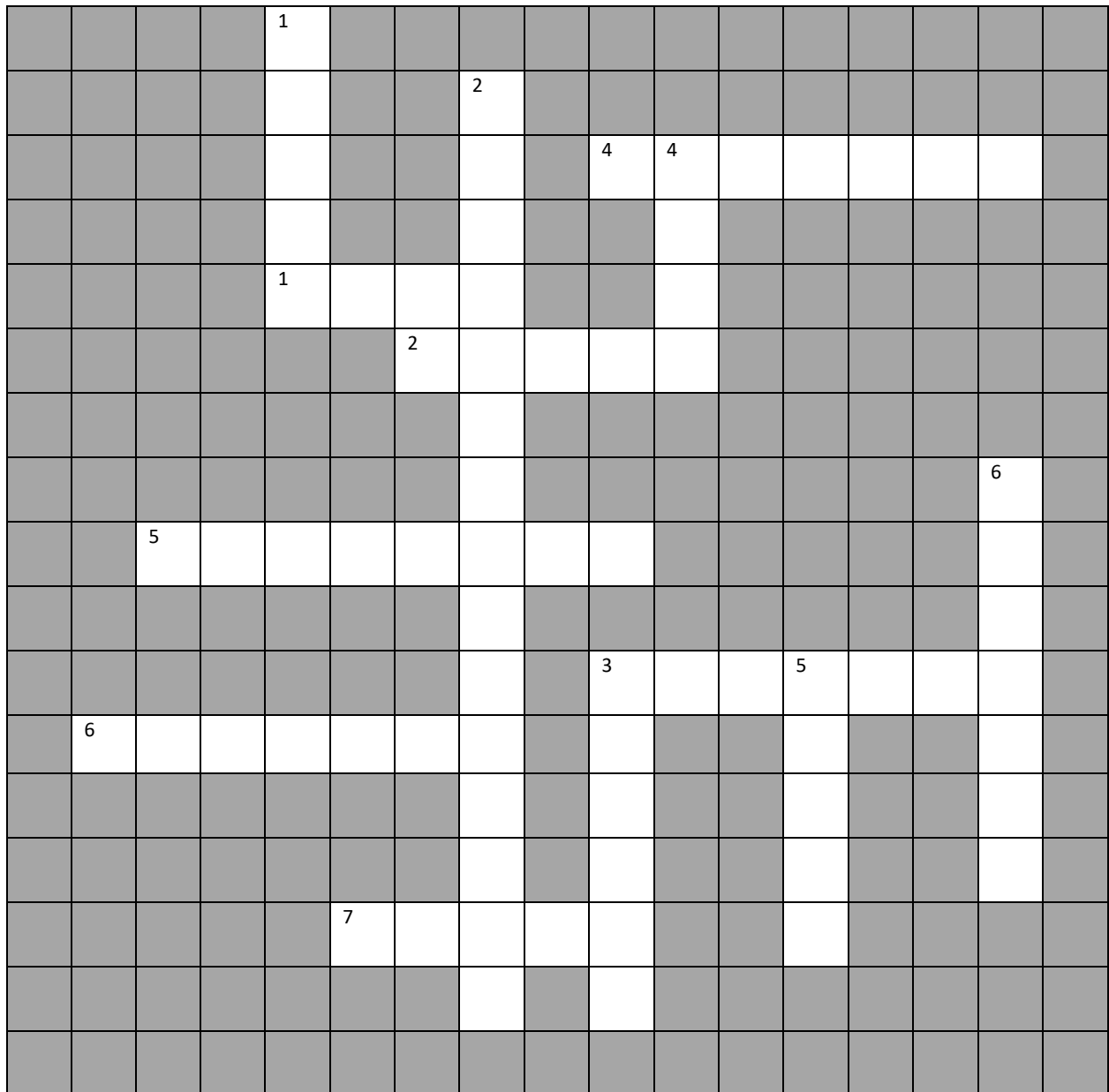


(above) Mexican Indian women in traditional bright shawls
(below) Mexican Indian children in colorful clothing



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CROSSWORD PUZZLE



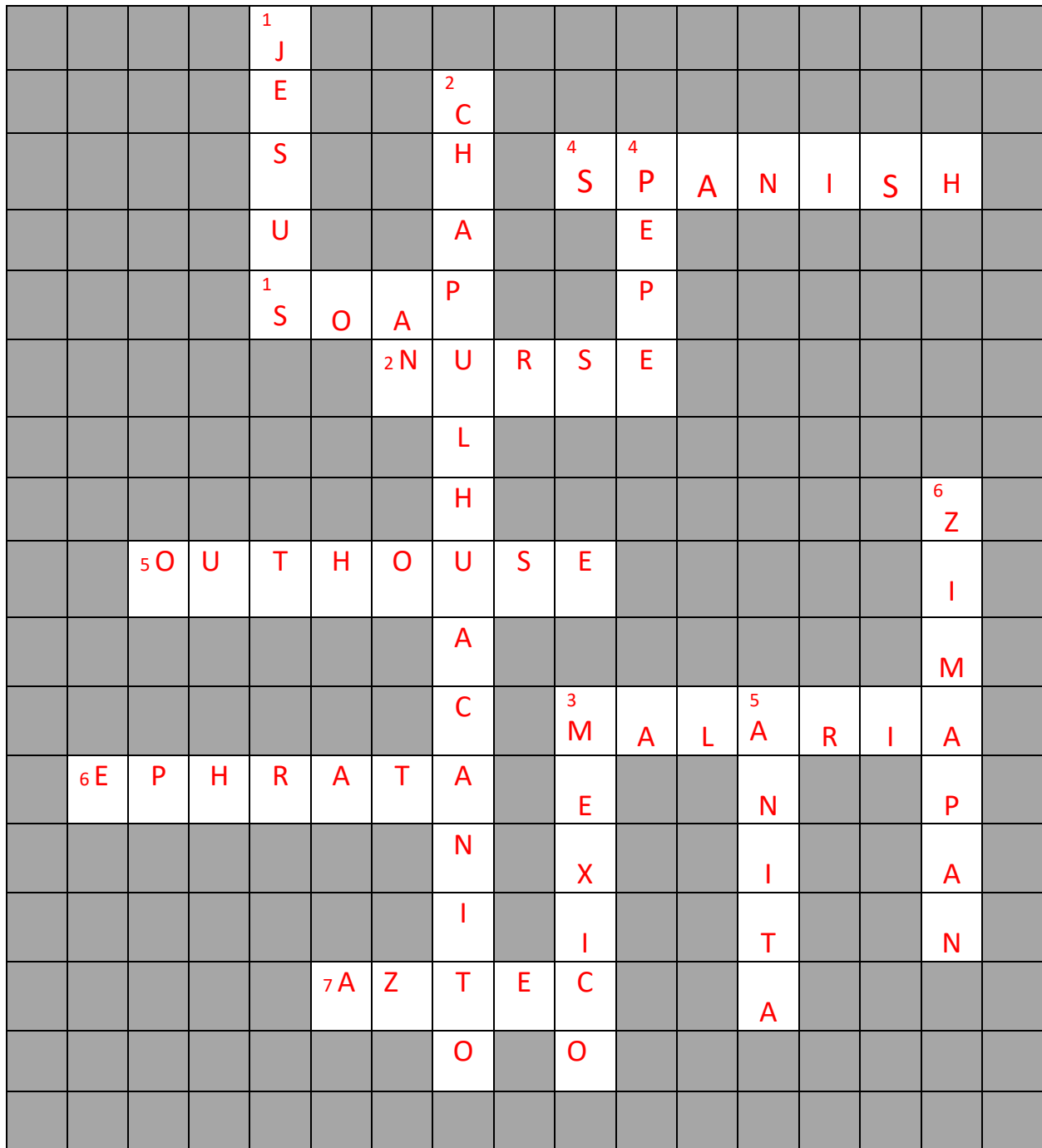
DOWN

1. Who did Mae tell people about?
2. Name of town where Mae first lived
In Mexico
3. Name of country where Mae lived
4. Isidro Royer's nickname
5. Nickname of Mae's daughter
6. Name of town where Mae moved to

ACROSS

1. Mae carried this to clean when she visited patients
2. What was Mae's job?
3. Illness carried by mosquitoes
4. Language spoken by most people in Mexico
5. Where Mae had to go because she didn't have a toilet
6. Name of Mae's hometown in PA
7. Name of Indian tribe to whom Mae first ministered

CROSSWORD PUZZLE -answers



DOWN

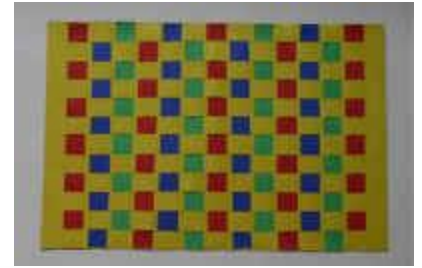
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Mexican Place Mats

This craft offers children an opportunity to learn the basics of weaving. Many native people use weaving in Mexico today to make baskets, mats, blankets and clothing for their daily use, and to sell in the marketplaces.



Materials:

- scissors
- glue
- ruler
- pencil
- one 18" x 12" piece of construction paper for each mat.
 - this larger piece will become the background color for the placemat
- 16 strips of construction paper for each mat, in a single color or multiple colors
 - these strips should be 1 inch wide by 12 inches long
- Optional: clear contact paper.

Instructions:

- Take the large piece of construction paper and fold it in half across the width.
- Along the open edge, use a ruler and pencil to make one line, 1 inch from the edge of the paper.
- Draw lines one inch apart down the length of the paper, along the folded edge.
- With the paper still folded and starting at the fold, cut along the lines being careful to stop at the line, which is one inch from the open edge.
- Unfold the paper to reveal the loom that you have created.
- Weave the one inch strips through the loom. If you are using multiple colors be sure to alternate them for the most colorful effect.
- Glue the ends of the strips to the edges of the loom to hold them in place.

OPTIONAL:

- Use clear contact paper to 'lamine' one or both sides of the placemat to extend its life.

