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STUDENT: _____ GROUP: 10°

TEACHER: JACKELINE MARÍA GÓMEZ LÓPEZ TERM: 1- 2026

UNIT 1: CELEBRATIONS AND SPECIAL DATES

My culture vs Other cultures around the world

Review: simple present tense Comparatives and superlatives

Adjectives

READING COMPREHENSION: FAMOUS FESTIVALS IN COLOMBIA

There is always a great festival happening every month in Colombia. Thanks to the vast diversity of traditions in each carnival, there are many festivals to celebrate heritage, music genres, traditional dances and even the production of flowers and coffee. If you plan a trip to Colombia and wish to include one of these carnivals on your tour, check this article to learn about 2 of the most popular and well-known Colombian festivals.

1. Barranquilla Carnival

The Carnival of Barranquilla is not only the second-largest carnival celebration in the world after the one in Rio de Janeiro. It is also the most prominent public celebration in Colombia. The Carnival offers a repertory of dances and musical expressions originating from the blend of various local traditions. Groups of masqueraded dancers, actors, singers and instrumentalists delight crowds with theatrical and musical performances as well as current events.

While Carnival is celebrated officially for only four days at the beginning of February, the pre-Carnival season formally begins in mid-January, and even before then, you can see the city coming alive with Carnival themed decorations, music, and more.

Some of the most popular pre-Carnival events include smaller parades such as la Guacherna and el Garabato. These parades happen in smaller carnivals of the city, and they give you a glimpse of a few popular dances and snippets of traditional Carnival music. The purpose of any pre-Carnival is to get you excited for the actual Carnival celebration. So, enjoy as many as you can take!

2. Blacks and Whites' Carnival

Blacks and Whites' Carnival is the largest carnival celebration in southern Colombia and one of the oldest festivals, showcasing a cultural exhibit of different races in South America. The carnival happens in the city of Pasto from the 2nd to 7th January of each year.

The festival originates during Spanish rule, when slaves were allowed to celebrate on January 5 and their masters joined them in their festivities by painting their faces black. On the following day, the slaves painted their faces white. Today, the Carnival of Blacks and Whites is a two-day wild extravaganza when people smear each other in black and white colours.

The preparation for the Carnival of Blacks and Whites begins well in advance. Pre-carnival starts with the Day of Water, when people of all ages come out on the streets and playfully celebrate this day by getting drenched with water. Following this, the carnival (El Carnavalito) begins when the kids showcase their creativity and culture.

<https://uncovercolombia.com/>

ACTIVITY 1: Practice reading aloud the text above and look for new vocabulary.

CULTURAL FESTIVALS AROUND THE WORLD

ACTIVITY 2: HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THESE FESTIVALS? (Get information about their meaning, when, where, how, etc.)

1. Holi. Step into the Rainbow.
2. Oktoberfest. A Cultural Rite of Passage.
3. Inti Raymi. A Ceremony That Shines With Spirit.
4. Día de los Muertos. Celebrate Life through Death.
5. Mardi Gras. Where Everybody is in Costume.
6. Chinese New Year.
7. La Tomatina.

ACTIVITY 3: Research how another country celebrates a special day in their culture and prepare a short presentation.

COMPARATIVES AND SUPERLATIVES

We can use comparatives to compare things and superlatives to say which thing is top in a group.

1. Cats are faster than mice.
2. Science is more difficult than maths.
3. The cheetah is the fastest animal.
4. I think art is the most difficult subject.

HOW TO USE THEM

For adjectives with one syllable, add *er* and *est*. Sometimes the spelling changes. Don't forget the *for the* superlative.

tall - taller - the tallest

I'm taller than my brother. My father is the tallest in my family.

big - bigger - the biggest

My room is bigger than my sister's room. Our parents' room is the biggest room in the house.

For adjectives with **two syllables** which end in **-y**, take away the **y** and add **-ier** and **-iest**. Don't forget the *for the* superlative.

easy - easier - the easiest

Maths is easier than science. English is the easiest subject.

For other adjectives with two or more syllables, use more and most. Don't forget the *for the* superlative.

interesting - more interesting - the most interesting

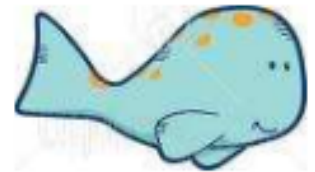
That book is more interesting than my homework. This TV programme is the most interesting!

THE ADJECTIVES GOOD, BAD AND FAR HAVE SPECIAL FORMS.

good - better - the best
bad - worse - the worst
far - further - the furthest

ACTIVITY 4: Complete the sentences with the comparative or superlative form of the adjectives in brackets.

- 1.- My sister is _____ my brother. (intelligent)
- 2.- The blue whale is _____ animal. (big)
- 3.- Iceland is _____ Spain (cold)
- 4.- This is _____ book I've ever read. (good)
- 5.- My neighbour is _____ person I know (lucky)
- 6.- Friday is the _____ day of the week. (busy)
- 7.- These trainers are much _____ those. (cheap)
- 8.- Frank works _____ most people. (hard)
- 9.- I'm _____ at English than you. (good)
- 10.- Today has been _____ day of the year. (hot)
- 11.- This is _____ CD I've ever listened. (bad)
- 12.- English is _____ Japanese. (easy)
- 13.- Which mountain is _____ in the world. (high)
- 14.- John is _____ his brother. (clever)
- 15.- English is _____ Latin. (useful)
- 16.- What is _____ word in English? (common)
- 17.- The Nile is _____ river in the world. (long)
- 18.- This is my _____ brother. Mary is their
_____ daughter (old, old)
- 19.- That skyscraper is one of _____ buildings in the
city. (tall)
- 20.- The first exercise was easy but this one is _____.
(difficult)
- 21.- Our journey took _____ we expected. (long)
- 22.- Charles is _____ student in the school. (noisy)
- 23.- Madrid's population is _____ Santander's (large)
- 24.- Nothing makes me _____ waiting on the phone. (angry)
- 25.- Five years ago I was _____ I am now, and I had _____
hair. (fat, log)



ACTIVITY 5: Compare cities/countries in Colombia and talk about their special festivals. Mention positive and negative aspects about them.

ACTIVITY 6: READING PRACTICE The Day of the Dead

The Day of the Dead (Día de los Muertos) is a traditional Mexican holiday celebrated on November 1st and 2nd. Although it falls around the same time as Halloween, it is not a scary event. Instead, it is a joyful time to remember and celebrate ancestors and deceased loved ones.

According to tradition, the gates of heaven open at midnight on October 31st, and the spirits of the dead can return to the world of the living to reunite with their families. To welcome them, families create beautiful altars (called ofrendas) in their homes. These altars are decorated with bright yellow and orange marigold flowers, candles, incense, and photographs of the departed.

Food plays a vital role in the celebration. Families place the favorite meals of their loved ones on the altar, along with a special sweet bread called pan de muerto. Another iconic symbol is the calavera, or sugar skull. These are colorful, decorated skulls made of sugar or clay that represent the sweetness of life and the cycle of death.

During this festival, the streets are filled with music, parades, and people wearing elaborate costumes and face paint that looks like skeletons. It is a beautiful celebration that teaches that death is a natural part of the human experience and that our loved ones are never truly gone as long as we remember them.

Questions

1. When is the Day of the Dead celebrated? _____
2. What is the main purpose of this holiday? _____
3. What are "ofrendas" and how are they decorated? _____
4. What does the "pan de muerto" represent in the celebration? _____
5. What is the meaning behind the sugar skulls (calaveras)? _____

READING COMPREHENSION ACTIVITIES

¿DÓNDE PUEDE VER ESTOS AVISOS?

1. **KEEP HEAD, ARMS AND HANDS INSIDE ALL THE TIME.**

- A. In a supermarket
- B. At the cinema
- C. On a bus

2. **IF YOUR CHILD IS SCREAMING, TAKE HIM/HER OUTSIDE.**

- A. At the beach
- B. In a library
- C. In a park

3. **DELICATE INSTRUMENTS, DON'T DROP.**

- A. In a soccer field
- B. In a clothing store
- C. In a music store

4. **CUSTOMERS ARE THE PURPOSE OF OUR WORK.**

- A. At home
- B. In a department store
- C. By a river

5. **Mr. Jung is sick. There's no maths today.**

- A. At school
- B. In a hospital
- C. In a tourist office

**COMPRESIÓN DE TEXTOS DESDE EL NIVEL LITERAL RESPONDA LAS SIGUIENTES PREGUNTAS
DE ACUERDO CON EL TEXTO.**

The Monach Butterfly

This amazing butterfly is easily seen by its orange and black colors. Unfortunately, one of the best areas of the monarch butterfly may soon be gone. The place is Pacific Grove, California. That town calls itself Butterfly U.S.A.

In this town, there is a woman who has a wild garden where the butterflies like to live. She wants to sell it to a building company that is interested in building homes, but the city doesn't want her to do this, because the butterflies will not have a home. Instead, people from the town would like to make it a place just for butterflies, but they cannot do this because they don't have the money to pay for it.

Millions of butterflies have followed the same paths for thousands of years. They start their trip in Mexico and return to California to leave their eggs in the trees. They go to the Pacific Grove to find the right temperature and stay warm.

The monarch butterfly is the symbol of Pacific Grove. Many people come to the city each year to see them. The money these visitors bring is very important for the town. Some people say that more butterflies used to come; not as many come now, so they think all of the new buildings will make the monarch butterflies disappear from this area.

QUESTIONS

1. For the monarch butterfly, Pacific Grove is _____
 - A. One of its homes.
 - B. Its only home.
 - C. A woman's home.

2. In Pacific Grove there's a woman who _____
 - A. Likes building houses.
 - B. Looks after butterflies.
 - C. Has a natural field.

3. People from the city worry about the _____
 - A. butterflies leaving town.
 - B. Size of buildings.
 - C. Money to pay bills.

4. What have the butterflies been doing for a long time? _____
 - A. visiting the city center.
 - B. Making the same journey.
 - C. Leaving California.

5. For the butterfly to be able to leave its eggs, it must _____
 - A. Get very cold.
 - B. Have plants around.
 - C. Return to Mexico.

6. Butterflies chose to stay in Pacific Grove because _____
- It's called Butterfly U.S.A.
 - It's beautiful.
 - It has a good weather.
7. The number of butterflies in the city is now _____
- Larger than before.
 - Less than before.
 - The same as before.
8. People think the new construction will _____
- Make butterflies die.
 - Make butterflies sick.
 - Make butterflies move.
9. These butterflies like the weather in California because _____
- it's cool.
 - it's hot.
 - it's cold.

**COMPRESIÓN DE TEXTOS DESDE LO GRAMATICAL Y LEXICAL ESCOGE LA MEJOR OPCIÓN
PARA COMPLETAR CADA ESPACIO**

WALK YOUR DOG

Controlled exercise **10** dogs in a couple of ways. They burn energy and it becomes a habit for them. The most basic exercise is a controlled walk. When you **11** your dog for a walk, have it go beside you and don't **12** it to smell everything in sight.

In addition to the training and the social hierarchy established, walking the dog **13** helps restless dogs get tired. This may be caused by **14** physical exercise, but some of it comes from your dog's mental energy once it **15** you're the one in control. That may sound strange, but avoiding distraction by concentrating on your **16** is difficult for dogs. Dogs have the **17** behavior thanks to their effort. If a dog is left **18** its own, the possibility to get in trouble **19** a lot. Be nice and give your dog a **20** exercise routine.

- | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 10. A. benefits | B. gains | C. improves | D. serves |
| 11. A. carry | B. deliver | C. bring | D. take |
| 12. A. admit | B. allow | C. accept | D. agree |
| 13. A. then | B. hence | C. also | D. indeed |
| 14. A. making | B. producing | C. doing | D. developing |
| 15. A. realizes | B. dreams | C. imagines | D. examines |
| 16. A. wishes | B. opinions | C. requirements | D. instructions |
| 17. A. better | B. well | C. best | D. good |
| 18. A. by | B. on | C. for | D. at |
| 19. A. rises | B. grows | C. raises | D. increases |
| 20. A. suitable | B. sure | C. smart | D. straight |