

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_



## MEXICAN INDEPENDENCE

For 300 years, the land that is now Mexico was part of what was then called "New Spain." New Spain was a Spanish colony and was ruled over by the Spanish king. However, after the successful American Revolution, the people of New Spain began thinking about getting rid of the Spanish and running things for themselves.

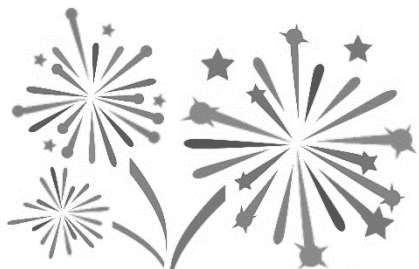


On the morning of September 16, 1810, Miguel Hidalgo, the parish priest in the town of Dolores, rang the church bells to call his people together. When the people had gathered, the priest gave a fiery speech urging them to join him in driving the Spanish out of Mexico. This speech, known as "*el Grito de Dolores*" ("*the Cry of Dolores*"), started Mexico's War of Independence.

For almost a year, Father Hidalgo led the fight for independence. But then in 1811 he was captured and executed (killed). It took 10 more years of fighting before Mexico finally won independence from Spanish rule.

Today, Hidalgo is considered the father of Mexico, and Mexican Independence Day is celebrated on September 16, the day of Hidalgo's famous Cry for Independence.

Each year, on the night of September 15 (the eve of Independence Day) the people of Mexico gather for a celebration of *el Grito*. The celebration begins with the president of Mexico ringing the same bell that Hidalgo rang to call the people to the church at Dolores. This bell is now kept at the National Palace in Mexico City.



The president then reads the Cry for Independence. The people join in by shouting out the names of the heroes of the independence movement. The ceremony ends with fireworks lighting up the sky and everyone shouting "VIVA MEXICO!"

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_



1. For 300 years, Mexico was a colony of \_\_\_\_\_.
2. When is Mexican Independence day? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What happened on this day in 1810?
4. Who is considered the Father of Mexico?
5. What happened to Hidalgo?
6. How long was Mexico's struggle for independence?
7. What event does the celebration on the eve of Mexican Independence Day commemorate (remember)?
8. How is it celebrated?