

# Las Posadas

## Lesson Overview

32

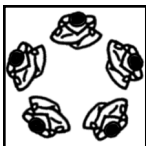
### Communication Objective

Students understand the relationship between the practices and perspectives of Spanish-speaking cultures through the reenactment of a *las Posadas* procession.

### Performance Guidelines

- Students hear a *las Posadas* story.
- Students comprehend and use phrases associated with a *las Posadas* procession.
- Students understand that *las Posadas* is a Christmas tradition in Spanish-speaking cultures in Mexico and the southwestern United States.

## Circle Time



### Vocabulary and Phrases

¡Por fin!  
Buenas noches, peregrinos.

¿Qué quieren?  
Pedimos posadas.  
¡No hay campo!  
¡No pueden entrar!  
¡Largo de aquí!  
¿Cómo se llaman?

Pasen, por favor.

At last!  
Good evening,  
pilgrims.  
What do you want?  
We seek shelter.  
There is no space!  
You can't come in!  
Go away!  
What are your  
names?  
Come in, please.

### Songs and Poems (Track #)

#### Sonrisas CD

Cada vez que nos juntamos (1)  
Mi cuerpo (5)  
Había un chorrillo (11)  
Te quiero (12)  
Mamá y papá (13)  
Buenas noches (14)  
Moscas en la leche (16)  
Gorra, camisa, pantalones, zapatos (18)  
Feliz Navidad (29)

#### Canciones Culturales CD

Aplaudimos (3)  
Estos piecitos (7)  
Estaba la pájara pinta (13)  
Las Posadas (17)  
Noche de paz (18)

## Story Time



### Book Suggestions

*The Night of Las Posadas*, by Tomie dePaola  
*Las Posadas: An Hispanic Christmas Celebration*, by Diane Hoyt-Goldsmith (English)  
*Las Posadas*, by Jennifer Blizin Gillis (Spanish)  
*Carlos, Light the Farolito*, by Jean Caivonne and Donna Clair (English)

## Art Time



Farolitos  
Ojos de dios

## Las Posadas

**Summary:** Students learn the story of *las Posadas* and act out a *las Posadas* procession.

**Supplies:** Optional: Simple costumes, such as silks and capes, felt crowns for Mary and Joseph, and headbands for the angels

**First Day**

1. Greeting and Roll Call (1.1, 1.2, 4.1)
2. Circle Time (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2)
  - Start with calendar activities.
  - Warm up with songs, chants, and poems.
  - Review with games and activities from previous lessons.
  - Before you read to students a story about *las Posadas*, have a discussion about different ways that people celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah or other winter holidays. Tell students that *las Posadas* is a Christmas tradition in Spanish-speaking cultures in Mexico and the southwestern United States.
  - After reading a story about *las Posadas* (see Book Suggestions), students will learn and act out a play (see Appendix 2, page 335). You may simply put on your play in the classroom, or you may decide to turn this into a public performance (for example, for parents, civic clubs, retirement homes, even as part of a *las Posadas* celebration in a local Catholic church). Another option is to create a student orchestra performance with the music from *las Posadas*. The story is obviously a religious one, so it's important to be sensitive to this in a public school setting; however, you can present it as a cultural study with the underlying message of opening our hearts and homes to those in need.
3. Story Time (2.1, 2.2, 3.2, 4.2)
4. Art Time (1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 4.2)
5. Good-bye (1.1)

**Second Day**

1. Greeting and Roll Call (1.1, 1.2, 4.1)
2. Circle Time (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2)
  - Start with calendar activities.
  - Warm up with songs, chants, and poems.
  - Review with games and activities from previous lessons.
3. Story Time (1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2)
  - Choose another story about *las Posadas*. Discuss the similarities and differences between the ways *las Posadas* is celebrated in each story.
  - *Carlos, Light the Farolito* and *The Night of Las Posadas* are in English and both take place in the U.S. Spanish is used throughout the stories in the way Spanish is still used in many cultures of the Southwest. When you are reading these books, and you come across a word or phrase in Spanish, discuss whether the Spanish has been adopted by English or not (for example, *tamales*, *empanadas*, *biscochito*, *luminarias*, *burro*, *piñata*, *etc.* are commonly used in the Southwest by both native English speakers and native Spanish speakers). Discuss which words are cognates (for example, *María*, *José*, *turistas*, *etc.*)
4. Art Time (1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 4.2)
5. Good-bye (1.1)

**Helpful Hints**

Depending on the extent to which you would like to explore *las Posadas*, you may want to begin studying *las Posadas* immediately following the Thanksgiving holiday. You can teach this lesson one week, and then continue with other lessons, leaving a little time in each to practice the play.

## Art Project Procedure



# Farolitos

### Summary

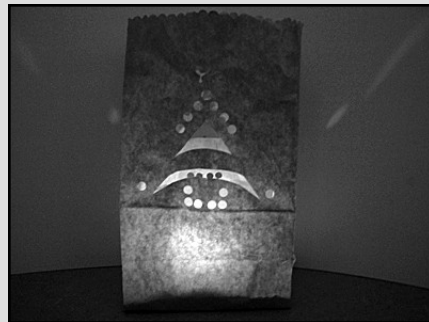
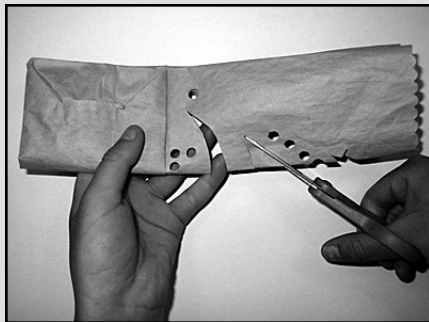
Students make *farolitos*.

### Materials

Small brown paper bags  
Hole punches (if available)  
Scissors  
Tea lights  
Sand, gravel, or dirt

### Procedure

1. Begin by modeling how to make the *farolito*:
  - Punch holes in paper bag.
  - Fold bag in half and cut designs in the side of the bag.
  - Place a handful of sand, gravel, or dirt in the bottom of the bag.
  - Place a tea light in the sand and light.
2. Pass out paper bags, scissors, and hole punches. Allow students to make their own *farolitos* to take home and light on Christmas Eve.



### Helpful Hints

You can do this project in one day. Tell students not to light *farolitos* without adult supervision.

## Art Project Procedure



# Ojos de dios

### Summary

Students make *ojos de dios*.

### Materials

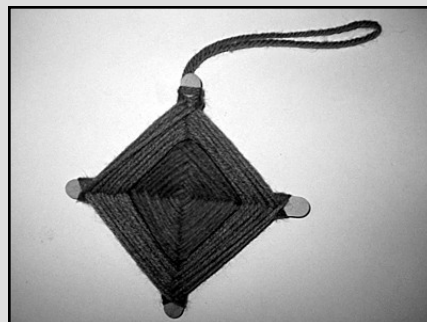
Sticks, popsicle sticks, or shish kebob skewers

Glue

Colorful yarn

### Procedure

1. Give each student two sticks and about five yards of yarn.
2. Cross the sticks and secure them together with glue or tape. With younger students, or if time is limited, you may want to tie the sticks together before class.
3. As close to the center as possible, tie a piece of yarn to one stick.
4. Wrap the yarn around that stick and then stretch it to the next stick and wrap.
5. Continue the pattern of wrapping and stretching until the yarn starts to form a diamond of color.
6. You may switch colors at any time by tying another piece of yarn to the original.
7. Finish by securing the end of the yarn to one of the sticks with a knot.
8. Trim excess yarn or use the tail to hang the *ojo de dios*.



### Helpful Hints

*Ojos de dios* make wonderful Christmas tree ornaments. For students who celebrate Christmas, these can become family keepsakes for their annual Christmas tree.

# Home Report: Las Posadas

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student \_\_\_\_\_

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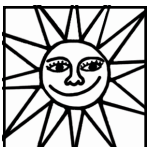
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## Home Enrichment



Have your child tell you the story of *las Posadas*.

## Las Posadas

*Las Posadas*, an old Spanish custom which celebrates Mary and Joseph seeking shelter in Bethlehem on Christmas Eve, comes from the word *posada*, meaning “inn.” The celebration began in Spain, then came to Mexico, and then to the American Southwest. There are variations in the way different communities and cultures observe *las Posadas*, but there are always pilgrims (*peregrinos*) and an innkeeper, and the celebration always reaches its climax on Christmas Eve. Joseph always asks for shelter for himself and his wife. The innkeeper refuses until he realizes who they are. Then he invites the wanderers into his home and they are all treated to a warm welcome and a delicious feast. The lighting of the lantern (*farolito*) is a lovely custom that is also practiced with *las Posadas*. The *farolito* lights the way for Mary and Joseph. The following is a simple play in which the students act out *las Posadas*.

**Characters:** Joseph, Mary, Innkeepers, Angels

**Props:** A bright golden star over a doorway labeled “*La posada*.” (You may wish to hang Christmas lights over the doorway. A simple prop like this is all you need.)

*As the play opens, Mary, Joseph, and one to several angels carrying candles are walking along the road to Bethlehem. As they walk they sing:*

¿Quién les da posadas, a estos peregrinos  
Que vienen cansados, de andar los caminos?

*The pilgrims stop and look out to see the star of Bethlehem and the lights of the city.*

**Angel:** José, María, allí están las luces de Belen.

*María and José look at each other and sigh with relief. They’ve been walking for many days and are exhausted. María is about to have her baby.*

**Maria and José together:** Por fin.

*They sing the verse again as they walk up to the first inn:*

¿Quién les da posadas, a estos peregrinos  
Que vienen cansados, de andar los caminos?

*They knock at the door. A suspicious innkeeper (or two) peek(s) out.*

**Innkeepers:** Buenas noches señores. ¿Qué quieren?

**Los peregrinos:** Por favor, señores, pedimos posadas.

**Innkeepers:** ¡No hay campo y no pueden entrar! ¡Largo de aquí!

*Mary and Joseph look at each other and sigh wearily and continue on to the next inn. They circle around to the same doorway which now represents the second inn. As they walk they sing the verse again. They knock again and the dialogue repeats itself, ending again in rejection. They repeat this a third time with rejection and then the fourth time they knock at the inn door, the dialogue is much different. This time the innkeepers answer the door with warm smiles and a welcome tone:*

## Las Posadas—continued

**Innkeepers:** Buenas noches, santos peregrinos. ¿Qué quieren?

**Los peregrinos:** Por favor, señores, pedimos posadas.

**Innkeepers:** ¿Cómo se llaman?

**Joseph:** Me llamo José.

**Mary:** Me llamo María, la madre de Dios.

**Innkeepers:** ¡La madre de Dios! Pasen por favor.

*The pilgrims and the angels enter into the inn and the entire group sings together:*

Entren santos peregrinos, peregrinos  
Reciban este rincón.  
No de esta pobre casa, sino de mi corazón.