

**Holy Molé! A Folktale from Mexico**  
 By Caroline McAlister  
 Illustrated by Stefan Czernecki

**Outcome:**

The students will learn about the origins of molé sauce and about Mexican culture.

**Materials:**

- Map or globe
- Paper, pencil
- 2 bowls
- Teaspoon
- 6 cotton balls
- Blindfold
- Library, cookbooks, or computer with Internet access
- (Optional): Video camera; *Thirty-Three Multicultural Tales to Tell* (Pleasant DeSpain); *Mexican-American Folklore* (John West)

**About the Book:**

Guided Reading:

L

Lexile Level:

540L

Character Traits:

Caring

Citizenship

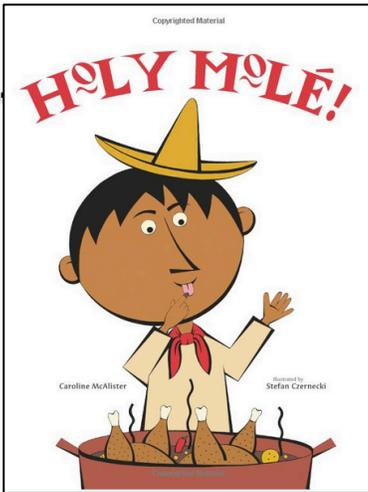
Respect

Region:

Latin America, Mexico

ISBN:

978-0-8748-3775-9



# Holy Molé!

Third Grade

## Instructional Plan

### Introduction

#### Directions:

- Locate Mexico on a map/globe. Ask students to tell what they know about Mexican foods.
- Ask students to write "Mexican Foods" as a title on a piece of paper. Make 3 columns. Label the first column "K," the second "W," and the third "L." Tell students to fill in the chart with what they **K**now, what they **W**ant to know, and what the student **L**earns about Mexican foods.
- Write 5 sentences for each column.
- Present the book Holy Molé. Ask students what they think molé is. Take a picture walk through the book.
- Ask students to share what they want to know about Mexican food and molé.
- Share the following facts:
  - Molé means stew or sauce. It can be a turkey stew or a sauce that is served over different dishes.
  - Molé is made of many ingredients and some versions contain an unexpected ingredient, chocolate.
  - Many Mexican families have their own recipe for molé that is handed down from generation to generation.
  - The ingredients in molé vary from family to family and from town to town in Mexico.
  - Molé is prepared for special feast days such as weddings, festivals, and religious and national holidays.
  - There are many stories about the origin of molé. Almost all of the stories agree that molé originated between 1680 and 1688 in a convent or monastery in Mexico.

### Common Core

#### Standards:

CCSS.ELA-  
LITERACY.RL.3.2

Recount stories,  
determine central  
message and explain key  
details

CCSS.ELA-  
LITERACY.RL.3.5

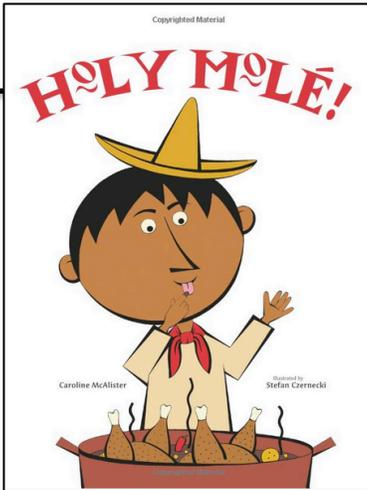
Refer to parts of stories,  
dramas, and poems  
when writing or speaking

CCSS.ELA-  
LITERACY.W.3.2.B

Develop the topic with  
facts, definitions, and  
details

### Read the Story

- Inform students that they will take turns reading aloud a book that tells one version of how molé was created.



**Common Core**

**Standards:**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of text

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3

Describe characters in story

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.10

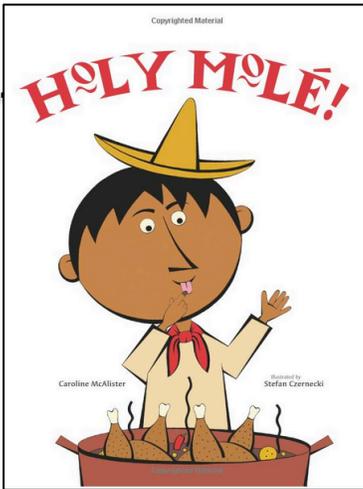
Read and comprehend literature

**Questions for Assessing Students' Comprehension:**

- What is the setting of the story?
- Name the characters in the story.
- What is the conflict or problem in the story?
- How is the conflict or problem in the story? How is resolved?
- What did Pascual tell the other brothers to do in order to prepare for the Viceroy's visit?
- Who was the Viceroy and why did they want to impress him?
- How did Brother Pascual refer to Carlos?
- What was Carlos supposed to wait for before he ate?
- How much was Carlos supposed to wait for before he ate?
- How much was Carlos paid to work in the kitchen?
- Name the spices on Brother Pascual's tray.
- What did the brother's do when the bell rang 12 times? Why?
- What did the brothers tell Carlos when he tasted the stew?
- What did the brothers do while the Viceroy tasted the stew?
- How did Pascual react to the Viceroy's praise about the stew?
- How did Carlos feel at the end of the story?
- Why did Carlos eat until he could eat no more?

**Questions for Interpretation:**

- Brother Pascual was "wringing his hands." What does that mean?
- When the Bishop told the brothers to have everything ready by noon, they realized that they had only 2 hours. What time was it?
- When the bell rang eleven times, how much time was left?
- Why did they need the bell to tell them what time it was?
- Why did Pascual say, "And here is the onion for the stew. Take it quickly before I start crying"?
- Have you ever cut an onion? What happened?
- Carlos felt a lump in his throat. What does that mean?
- How did Carlos know the stew would taste good?



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## **Questions for Interpretation Continued:**

- Why did Carlos think it was a miracle?
- Do you think that the brothers made the stew again?
- Why is the title of the story *Holy Molé*?
- Predict what you think happened next.

## **Common Core**

### **Standards:**

CCSS.ELA-  
LITERACY.RL.3.6

Distinguish point of view

CCSS.ELA-  
LITERACY.W.3.1

Write opinion pieces on  
topics or texts

CCSS.ELA-  
LITERACY.L.3.1

Demonstrate command  
of the conventions of  
standard English  
grammar

CCSS.ELA-  
LITERACY.SL.3.5

Create engaging audio  
recordings of stories

## **Follow Up Activities:**

### **Write a Diary Entry**

#### **Directions:**

- Students choose a character from the story. Write a diary entry from the point of view of chosen character for the day that the molé sauce was created.

### **Write Another Molé Story**

#### **Directions:**

- Inform students there are many stories about the origins of molé. This book tells just one version of how molé was created.
- Ask students what other ways the ingredients for the dish could have been mixed together.
- Instruct students to write another version of the story about how molé was created.
- Students share their stories with the class.
- Which stories are the most realistic? Least realistic?

### **Create a TV Commercial for Molé**

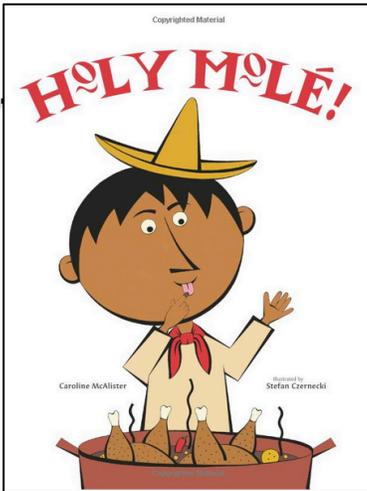
#### **Directions:**

- Place students into small groups. Students create a TV commercial for molé.
- Students consider what type of commercial they will make, who their audience is and what props they will use.
- Students perform their commercial for the class.
- Optional: Videotape the commercials

### **Molé Recipes**

#### **Directions:**

- Students research molé recipes and share them with the class.
- Compare and contrast the ingredients in the recipes.
- Optional: Make molé at home and bring it to school to share.



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### Follow Up Activities:

#### True or False

##### Directions:

- Students write 10 statements about the book. Some statements should be true and some statements should be false.
- Students exchange papers with a partner.
- Students mark T next to a statement if it is true and F next to a statement if it is false.
- Partners compare questions and answers.

#### ¡Para! (Stop)

##### Directions:

- Students draw 5 vertical lines to divide their paper into 6 columns.
- As a group, students decide on 5 categories (food, places, movies, etc.) and write those categories at the top of the first 5 columns. Each student has the same categories.
- “Total” is written at the top of the 6<sup>th</sup> column.
- One player starts the game by slowly saying the alphabet in order. The player to his/her right shouts, “Para!” at any point that he/she chooses.
- Once that player says, “Para!” all of the players write a word in each column that begins with the letter of the alphabet on which the first player stopped. (If the category was fruit and the letter was “b,” someone might write “banana.”)
- As soon as the player who was saying the letters finishes his/her list, he/she shouts, “Para!” and all players must put down their pencils.
- Players read their answers aloud. If more than one person had the same answer, they each get one point for the answer. If no one else has that answer, two points are awarded. Points are recorded in the total column.
- More rounds are played and points from all games are totaled at the end.

#### Common Core

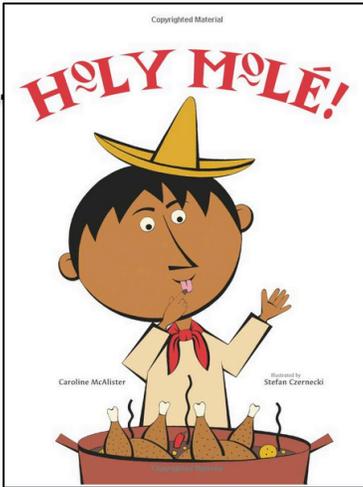
##### Standards:

CCSS.ELA-  
LITERACY.W.3.4

Produce writing appropriate to task and purpose.

CCSS.ELA-  
LITERACY.L.3.2.F

Use spelling patterns and generalizations in writing



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### **Follow Up Activities:**

#### **What Did You Know?**

##### **Directions:**

- Refer back to the “K-W-L” charts from the introductory activity.
- Students write 5 sentences about things they learned in the column labeled “L.”
- Students share information about what they learned from reading the book and completing the follow up activities.
- Students re-read what they wrote in the “K” column. If students were incorrect about anything before reading the book, students can correct the information.
- Students re-read what they wrote in the “W” column.
- Students share information they wanted to learn that was not covered in the book or the activities.
- Optional: Assign each student to research one topic that they want to know more about.

#### **Write a Letter to the Author**

##### **Directions:**

- Students write a letter to the author or illustrator of the book.
- Students tell what they liked about the book.
- Students ask at least 2 questions in the letter.

#### **Mexican Game**

##### **Directions:**

- A blindfolded person tries to move 6 cotton balls from one bowl to another using only a teaspoon with a finite number of chances determined by the class.

### **Common Core**

#### **Standards:**

CCSS.ELA-  
LITERACY.RL.3.5

Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking

CCSS.ELA-  
LITERACY.W.3.3.B

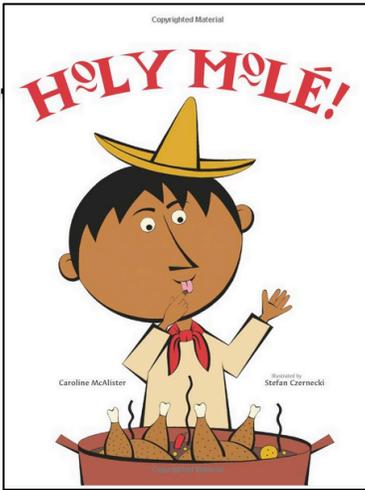
Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings

CCSS.ELA-  
LITERACY.W.3.4

Produce writing appropriate to task and purpose.

CCSS.ELA-  
LITERACY.L.3.2.B

Use commas in addresses



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## Follow Up Activities:

### Mexican Riddles

- It travels but has no feet. It talks but has no mouth. What is it? (A letter)
- Although I have feet, I can't move myself. I carry the meal on my top and can't eat it. What am I? (A table)
- I pass through the house. I pass through the kitchen wagging my tail like a chicken. What am I? (A broom)
- It flies without wings; whistles without a mouth, and you can't see it or touch it. What is it? (The wind)
- White is my dress and yellow is my heart. What am I? (An egg)
- More Mexican riddles and games can be found in *Mexican-American Folklore* (John West)

### Mexican Folktales

#### Directions:

- Remind students that *Holy Molé* is a folktale from Mexico.
- Tell students that they will read another folktale from Mexico.
- Read "Juan's Maguey Plant" on page 95 of *Thirty-Three Multicultural Tales to Tell* (Pleasant DeSpain). This is a tale about a poor but clever Mexican boy who protects his most prized possession, a maguey plant, from a coyote.

### **Common Core**

#### **Standards:**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.10

Read and comprehend literature

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.9

Compare and contrast themes, settings, plots