

# **MEXICO**

## **Lessons for Mission Minded Kids**

### **Lesson 5**

#### **El Retiro Juvenil**



# Mexico

## Lesson 5: El Retiro Juvenil

### Goals for Lesson 5:

- Children will see the long term influence that the Light of Jesus shining through Mae Royer has had on many Mexican children.
- Children will be able to apply Matthew 5:16 to their own lives, and realize that the Light of Jesus shining out of them can influence many lives.
- Children will learn compassion for the needy children of Mexico.

### 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.
- Prepare the picture of the children on the cover by making it into a power point slide to show the children, or by backing it with cardstock for stability. Get the picture of Mae Royer from Lesson 1 and have it ready to review with the children.
- Make copies of the two puzzle pages and make plans to pair the younger children with older students who can help them. Gather pencils to complete pages.
- Make copies of extra activity sheets to use in class or send home.
- Use white cardstock to make a copy of the prayer cube for each student. Collect scissors for students to cut out the cubes, or cut them out yourself ahead of time. Make one for yourself before class to demonstrate how they go together. Collect tape for the children to use in assembling their cube.

## Lesson Plan:

- Begin your time together with prayer.
- Review the verse for Mexico once, acting out your charades as you say the verse. Turn the poster board over or put it away.
- Pass out copies of the coded verse. Even non-readers can match a symbol with a letter and copy it onto the line. Have older students paired with those who might need help. When most are finished with the puzzle, read/say it together, and talk about why this is God's message to Mexicans and to us. (God wants each of His children, to let His light shine out of them, no matter where they live.)
- Read or tell the story part of the lesson, showing the pictures where indicated, and discussing and explaining as necessary.
- Pass out copies of the Prayer Cube and use your own cube to instruct the children in assembling their own cubes.
- Play the "Prayer Cube" game.
- Pass out copies of the word search puzzle. Young children can find letter sequences in simple word search puzzles, even if they can't read the words. If you have non-readers, let them try to find the words, and pair them with older students who can help them. Talk about the words they are searching for, and why they are significant.
- For very young children and non-readers, use the coloring and activity sheets for extra class activities, or to send home.

## Lesson 5 Story: El Retiro Juvenil

Do you remember when we talked about Mae Royer? **(show her picture from Lesson 1)** In 1960, Mae began a home for children in the northern part of Mexico. The home was called “El Retiro Juvenil” (El Reh-TEE -row Hoo-ven-EEL) or “The Children’s Retreat”. We often shorten the name to just “El Retiro”. We are going to learn more about this children’s home today. Maybe you worked this past summer to bring money to VBS so that a new roof could be put on the Dining Hall at El Retiro. That work has been done now, along with some work on the laundry and storage area at the back of the building. The children are enjoying their new, dry eating area, and the nice enclosed laundry area.

Right now there are 32 children living at El Retiro. **(Show picture of El Retiro children from lesson cover-this isn’t all of them, obviously, but they are waving to say “hello” to all of the Americans who will see this picture)** Some of them are orphans who don’t have any parents, but many of them have at least one parent living, and can go home to stay with relatives over vacation or holiday times. All of the children living at El Retiro though, are there because they need help from loving adults. Maybe you remember that Carlos and Martha Reyes (RAY-yay-ss) are the directors there. Carlos and Martha, along with several other staff members, provide a safe, happy, loving home for these needy children. They teach them about Jesus and make sure they get medical and dental attention and a good education.

The children wake up at 6:00 every morning. They quickly dress in their uniforms for school and make their dorm rooms neat. Breakfast is at 6:30, and then by 7:00, those who go to school in the morning are on their way. Since there are many different ages of children at El Retiro, there are also many different school schedules. Do you remember that school in Mexico only goes for half a day? Depending on what grade the children are in, they either go in the morning, or in the afternoon. Drivers have to take the

groups of children back and forth to their schools in Montemorelos (Moan-tay-more-RAY-low-ss), which is 8 miles away.

The children who are not at school have chores to take care of. They all clean their own dorm rooms and bathrooms, and then some of them help with the cooking in the kitchen. Others work outside in the garden, or with the orange trees. El Retiro has a grove of orange trees that they can use to supply oranges for their own use, as well as selling the extras to earn some money to help support the home. They also grow lots of vegetables in a garden for the children to eat. They grow squash and tomatoes and green beans and peppers and lettuce. Of course, having several buildings and supporting 32 children and the staff, takes a lot of work, so everyone needs to do their share.

After school each day, there is time for homework and for playing. The boys all love to play futbol (soccer) with Carlos. The younger girls like to play on the tire swing or in the small playhouse in the yard. The older girls like to talk among themselves, or with Martha. By 7:00, it is time for supper. The children eat and then finish the day's activities, bathe and prepare for bed.

Carlos and Martha have three children of their own and their own house, on the El Retiro campus. So besides taking care of the El Retiro children and staff, they must also take care of their own family and home. Their children mix in with the others, eating, going to school, and playing with them. Carlos is also the pastor of "La Morita" church near Montemorelos. On Sundays, everyone at El Retiro goes to church together at "La Morita". The children can go to Sunday School and enjoy the activities there. They learn to love and serve Jesus, and learn that He is with them always, to help them and guide them through each day.

Please pray for the children who live at El Retiro. Also pray for Carlos and Martha Reyes and their children, and the staff who work to care for the children.



Find the following words by circling them in the puzzle below:

- Mexico
- mountains
- sheep
- shawl
- burro
- tamales
- tacos
- idols
- Mae Royer
- El Retiro

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C	H	A	I	F	C	K	E	P	B	R
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Me llamo es  
(My name is) \_\_\_\_\_





# Scripture Search and Prayer Reminder

Code:

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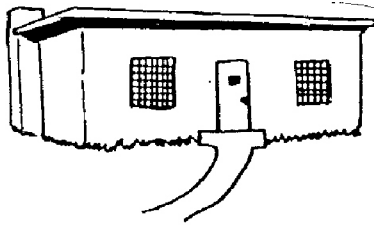
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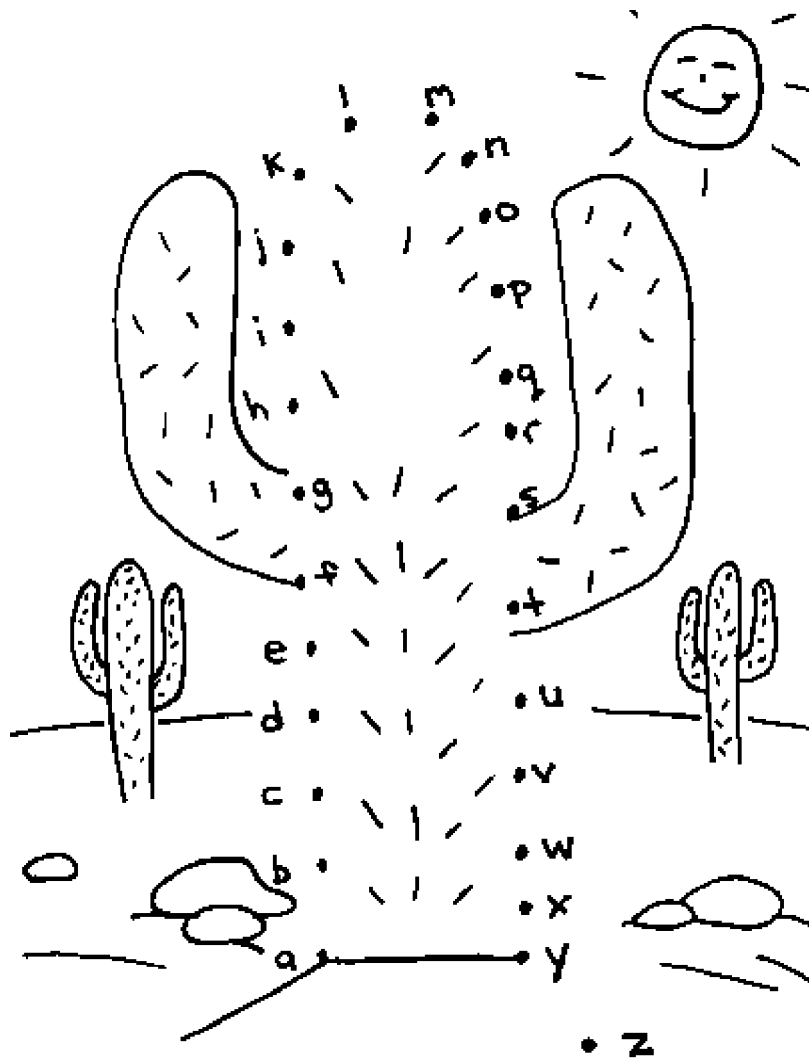
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Instructions: De-code God's message for Mexicans and for us !



## EL RETIRO





A cactus grows in the hot Mexican desert near El Retiro.



Traditional Mexican Dolls: cornhusk or rag dolls wearing cultural outfits are popular souvenirs from Mexico.

## Prayer Cube Game

**Preparation:** Prepare a space where everyone can sit on the floor or around a table in a circle, or plan to divide the group into two or three circles, with one adult helper in each circle. As each child makes their own cube, talk about each picture and what it represents in the lives of those who live at “El Retiro”, as outlined below.

### To Play:

- Children should sit in a circle on the floor or around a table, with their prayer cube.
- Choose a starting place (maybe yourself to demonstrate), and take turns by moving around the circle.
- Each child in turn should gently toss their cube into the center of the circle.
- The picture that lands on the top will represent one aspect of life at “El Retiro”.
  - The **Bible** would represent learning about Jesus and building a deep relationship with Him.
  - The **Food** would represent having enough of all of the necessities of life; food, shelter, clothing, etc.
  - The **School** would represent education and learning.
  - The **Adults** are the staff of adult workers at El Retiro, who take care of all the children’s needs.
  - The **Church** would represent “La Morita” church where Carlos Reyes is the pastor, and the children of El Retiro attend Sunday School.
  - The **Children** are the needy children who live at El Retiro and only go to visit relatives during holiday times.
- The child who tossed their cube should say a short prayer about some part of the picture that landed on top.
- When the next child tosses their cube, if the same picture lands on top again, he should toss his cube again. Make sure each picture is prayed over once before accepting “repeats”. Continue around the circle until each child has had a turn, and each picture has been prayed over at least once.

# Prayer Cube Template



- To make the prayer cube:
1. Cut around the outside of the cube on the solid black line.
  2. Fold on the dotted lines so the pictures face out.
  3. Tape or glue the sides together, placing the tabs on the inside of the cube.
  4. Fold the lid down and tuck in the flap.
  5. For extra stability, tape the edges closed.
  6. Toss gently and pray for the topic facing up.