



# Who Owns Cinco de Mayo?

Read the passage and answer the questions. (CEFR B1–B2)

Class \_\_\_\_\_ No. \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

**1** Every spring, the same debate returns in the United States: is Cinco de Mayo a celebration of Mexican culture, or just a marketing event? Critics point out that the holiday became nationally famous only after beer importers launched advertising campaigns in the late 1980s. They also object to party costumes such as giant sombreros and fake mustaches, which they see as stereotypes rather than respect.



**2** Yet David Hayes-Bautista, a UCLA professor who studies Latino history and health, argues that the story begins much earlier. Reading Spanish-language newspapers from the 1860s, he found that Latinos in California celebrated the victory at Puebla almost immediately, while the American Civil War was still being fought. For them, the fight against the French invasion and the fight against slavery were connected struggles for freedom. In his view, Cinco de Mayo is not a Mexican holiday borrowed by Americans, but an American tradition created by Latinos.

**3** Both views contain some truth. Commercial interest certainly helped the holiday spread, but it also reflected the growing economic power of Latino communities. Perhaps the real question is not who owns the day, but whether people take a moment to learn the history behind the party.

## Comprehension

### 1. What is the main idea of the passage?

- (A) Cinco de Mayo is Mexico's most important national holiday.
- (B) Beer companies created Cinco de Mayo in the 1980s.
- (C) Professor Hayes-Bautista wants Americans to stop celebrating Cinco de Mayo.
- (D) People disagree about whether Cinco de Mayo is a cultural celebration or a marketing event, and both views have some truth.

### 2. According to the critics, when did Cinco de Mayo become nationally famous in the United States?

- (A) During the American Civil War
- (B) After beer importers launched advertising campaigns in the late 1980s
- (C) In the 1860s, when Spanish-language newspapers were printed
- (D) When UCLA started studying Latino history

### 3. What did Hayes-Bautista find in Spanish-language newspapers from the 1860s?

- (A) Latinos in California celebrated the victory at Puebla almost immediately.
- (B) Mexican soldiers fought in the American Civil War.
- (C) The French army won the battle at Puebla.
- (D) Beer companies paid for the first celebrations.

### 4. How would Hayes-Bautista probably answer someone who says Cinco de Mayo is 'just a beer holiday'?

- (A) He would agree that the holiday has no history.
- (B) He would say the holiday should only be celebrated in Mexico.
- (C) He would point out that its roots go back to the 1860s and are connected to freedom.
- (D) He would say that beer ads were the main reason it began.

### 5. In paragraph 1, the word 'stereotypes' is closest in meaning to

- (A) expensive party goods
- (B) fixed and too simple ideas about a group of people
- (C) old Mexican songs
- (D) official holiday rules

### 6. Why does the writer end with 'the real question is not who owns the day, but whether people take a moment to learn the history behind the party'?

- (A) To suggest that learning the history is more important than arguing about ownership.
- (B) To argue that Latinos should own the holiday.
- (C) To ask readers to stop going to parties.
- (D) To show that the history of the holiday is not important.



# Vocabulary, Paraphrase & Summary

Match the words with the definitions. Then rewrite and summarize.

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- |                |                                                                            |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. launch      | a. to show or be a sign of something                                       |
| 2. campaign    | b. to start something new, such as a plan or a product                     |
| 3. object to   | c. a planned set of activities to reach a goal, such as selling a product  |
| 4. stereotype  | d. to say that you do not like or agree with something                     |
| 5. immediately | e. a fixed and too simple idea about what a group of people is like        |
| 6. invasion    | f. right away, without waiting                                             |
| 7. struggle    | g. an attack in which an army enters another country to take control of it |
| 8. reflect     | h. a long and hard effort to get or do something                           |

## Paraphrase — say it in your own words

1. “Critics point out that the holiday became nationally famous only after beer importers launched advertising campaigns in the late 1980s.”

Hint: Start with 'Some people say ...' and use 'became popular across the country'.

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2. “In his view, Cinco de Mayo is not a Mexican holiday borrowed by Americans, but an American tradition created by Latinos.”

Hint: Use 'He thinks ...' and 'did not take ... from Mexico'.

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3. “Commercial interest certainly helped the holiday spread, but it also reflected the growing economic power of Latino communities.”

Hint: Make two sentences. Use 'Companies wanted to sell ...' and 'This also showed ...'.

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## Summary

Summarize the passage in about 50 words.

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# Debate & Opinion Essay

Prepare for a debate. Then write your opinion (100–150 words).

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**Motion: The commercialization of holidays is a good thing.**

## FOR 賛成

- Commercial interest helps a holiday spread, as beer ads did for Cinco de Mayo across the United States.
- It can reflect the growing economic power of a community and make its culture more visible.
- Shops and events give more people a chance to join the celebration and become curious about its history.

**Add your own reason:**

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## AGAINST 反対

- Ads focus on tacos and beer, not on the battle, so many people still do not know what the day remembers.
- Party products like giant sombreros and fake mustaches can spread stereotypes instead of respect.
- When a holiday is mainly about selling things, people may enjoy the party without learning why it exists.

**Add your own reason:**

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|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Opinion</b>    | <i>I believe / I think that ...</i><br><hr/>     |
| <b>Reason 1</b>   | <i>First, ... For example, ...</i><br><hr/>      |
| <b>Reason 2</b>   | <i>Second, ... In fact, ...</i><br><hr/>         |
| <b>Counter</b>    | <i>Some people say ... However, ...</i><br><hr/> |
| <b>Conclusion</b> | <i>In conclusion, ...</i><br><hr/>               |