Cinco de Mayo Trivia

Use this key to check answers and read the explanations.

1. Which date does the Spanish name Cinco de Mayo give?
   - A. May 5
   - B. May 15
   - C. March 5
   - D. June 5

   Correct answer: A. May 5
   Cinco is five and mayo is May. The name gives the date of the commemoration.

2. A museum is choosing a historic event for a Cinco de Mayo display. Which event belongs at its center?
   - A. The signing of Mexico’s 1917 constitution
   - B. The founding of Mexico City
   - C. The Battle of Puebla
   - D. The start of the Mexican War of Independence

   Correct answer: C. The Battle of Puebla
   Cinco de Mayo commemorates the Mexican victory at Puebla in 1862.

3. At the Battle of Puebla commemorated on Cinco de Mayo, which European country’s forces faced the Mexican army?
   - A. Austria
   - B. France
   - C. Portugal
   - D. Prussia

   Correct answer: B. France
   The Mexican army faced an expeditionary force from France, then ruled by Napoleon III.

4. A calendar has separate entries for Cinco de Mayo and Mexican Independence Day. Where should Mexican Independence Day go?
   - A. December 12
   - B. May 5
   - C. October 12
   - D. September 16

   Correct answer: D. September 16
   Mexican Independence Day is September 16. The May 5 entry marks the Battle of Puebla.

5. Which year belongs on a timeline label for the Mexican victory marked by Cinco de Mayo?

A. 1810
B. 1862
C. 1821
D. 1910

Correct answer: B. 1862
The Battle of Puebla took place on May 5, 1862. The other years belong to different periods of Mexican history.

6. Who led the Mexican force at Puebla on the day commemorated by Cinco de Mayo?

A. Ignacio Zaragoza
B. Benito Juárez
C. Miguel Hidalgo
D. Maximilian of Habsburg

Correct answer: A. Ignacio Zaragoza
Ignacio Zaragoza commanded Mexico’s Army of the East at Puebla. Juárez was the president of Mexico.

7. A Smithsonian record shows the Mexican president who suspended foreign debt payments in 1861. Who is in the portrait?

A. Guadalupe Victoria
B. Ignacio Zaragoza
C. Porfirio Díaz
D. Benito Juárez

Correct answer: D. Benito Juárez
The portrait depicts Benito Juárez. His decision to suspend debt payments preceded European intervention.

8. Which French ruler backed the later installation of Maximilian as emperor of Mexico?

A. Louis XVIII
B. Napoleon I
C. Napoleon III
D. Charles X

Correct answer: C. Napoleon III
Napoleon III supported the plan that brought Maximilian of Habsburg to Mexico as emperor in 1864.

9. On April 16, 1998, the U.S. Postal Service issued a Cinco de Mayo stamp. What denomination does its official history list for that issue?

A. 32 cents
B. 22 cents
C. 33 cents
D. 37 cents

Correct answer: A. 32 cents
The U.S. Postal Service lists the April 1998 issue at 32 cents. The date determines which issue the question refers to.

10. According to a California newspaper account discussed by the Library of Congress, what two languages were used in speeches at an 1867 Cinco de Mayo celebration?

A. Spanish and Portuguese
B. English and French
C. Spanish and French
D. English and Spanish

Correct answer: D. English and Spanish
The 1867 California celebration featured speeches in English and Spanish. The Library of Congress cites the Daily Alta California account.

11. Three countries initially agreed to intervene over Mexican debt in 1861. Which two withdrew while France continued its intervention?

A. Britain and Austria
B. Spain and Portugal
C. Britain and Spain
D. Austria and Portugal

Correct answer: C. Britain and Spain
Britain, Spain, and France signed the initial agreement. Britain and Spain withdrew while Napoleon III continued pursuing France’s plans in Mexico.

12. A researcher wants a document showing how news from Puebla was relayed on May 5, 1862. Which record directly serves that purpose?

A. A photograph of a 1962 centenary parade
B. A Puebla telegram received in Mexico City on May 5, 1862
C. A postage stamp issued in 1998
D. A modern museum calendar

Correct answer: B. A Puebla telegram received in Mexico City on May 5, 1862
The dated telegram is evidence of information transmitted during the event. The other items document later commemoration.

13. Puebla’s municipal archive reproduces a decree about the street where Zaragoza died. What change did the decree prescribe?

A. Open a railroad terminal named for Zaragoza
B. Rename the city as Mexico City
C. Move City Hall to the old house
D. Rename Calle de la Santísima as Calle de Zaragoza

Correct answer: D. Rename Calle de la Santísima as Calle de Zaragoza
The 1867 decree renamed Calle de la Santísima in Zaragoza’s honor. The archived decree is reproduced beside the article about civic commemorations.

14. Subtract the year of the 1862 Battle of Puebla from the year printed for the first U.S. Cinco de Mayo stamp, 1998. What is the difference between the two years?

A. 136 years
B. 126 years
C. 138 years
D. 146 years

Correct answer: A. 136 years
The difference between the printed years is 1998 − 1862 = 136. The stamp’s April release was before the May anniversary in 1998.

15. Puebla’s municipal archive lists the battle in 1862, a siege of Puebla in 1863, and the restoration of the republic in 1867. Which conclusion fits that sequence?

A. The siege in 1863 preceded the 1862 victory
B. The republic was restored before the 1862 battle
C. The 1862 victory was part of a conflict that continued for several years
D. All three records describe one day

Correct answer: C. The 1862 victory was part of a conflict that continued for several years
The archive identifies the battle, the later siege, and the restoration as different events in a longer period of Mexican history.