

Name: _____

Biographies: Benito Juarez



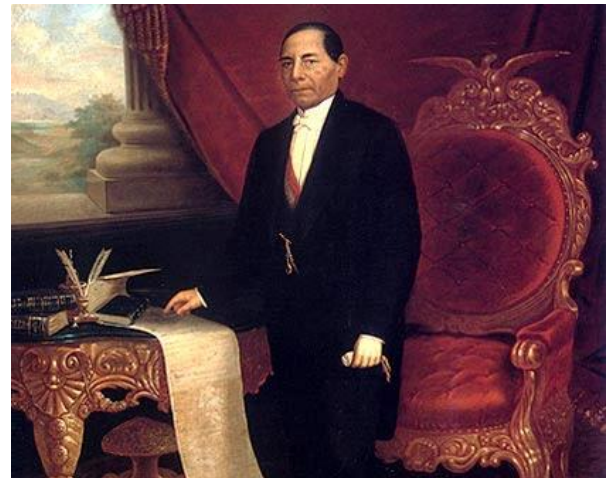
Benito Pablo Juarez Garcia was born on March 21, 1806, in San Pablo Guelatao, State of Oaxaca, Mexico. He was of poor and indigenous origins (Zapotec ethnic group). Some of Benito Juarez's many accomplishments were becoming a prominent Mexican lawyer and politician. He became president of Mexico, was elected several times in the tumultuous years from 1857 until his death in 1872. Benito Juarez spoke Zapotec and Spanish and could read passages in Latin, French, and English.

When Benito was only three years old, his parents Marcelino Juarez Lopez and Brigida Garcia died; so, the children were raised by their paternal grandparents who were of indigenous origin, Pedro Juarez and Justa Lopez.

When his grandparents died, his uncle Bernardino Juarez raised him. There he began to work as a field worker and as a shepherd.

His uncle taught Benito the Spanish language. Without a school in town, Benito could not get a complete education. Benito realized that those who improved their education and learned to read were those who moved to other cities.

In 1818, when he was twelve years old, Benito decided to leave his hometown with the desire to get a good fundamental education. By then, his older sister, Josefa, worked for the family of a wealthy merchant in the city of Oaxaca, named Antonio Maza; so, Benito asked him for a place to stay. Mr. Maza hired the young Benito to take care of the farm, giving him a steady salary. In time, Mr. Maza's adopted daughter, Margarita, would become Benito's wife.





After a few years, a Franciscan priest named Antonio Salanueva gave young Benito a job as an 'apprentice bookbinder'; he helped him to enter one of the schools in the city to learn the Spanish language well. After some time, Benito left school because of the misery he suffered, along with other indigenous children, of discrimination by their classmates due to their race. Juárez asked the priest, Salanueva, to help him enter the Seminary of Santa Cruz, in Oaxaca.

In October 1821, at the age of fifteen, Benito began his studies at the Seminary of Santa Cruz. He studied the arts, Latin, philosophy, and theology. Benito left the seminary a few years later, wanting a career in law.

Benito Juárez studied 'jurisprudence' at the Institute of Sciences and Arts of Oaxaca and earned his degree as a lawyer issued by the Court of Justice of Oaxaca in 1834, at the age of 28.

He served as director of the Institute of Sciences and Arts of Oaxaca and was elected as a Councilman by the city of Oaxaca. His political career had begun.

Benito Juárez was building political positions, until in 1847, he was appointed Governor of Oaxaca during the war with the United States. By 1858, he became president of Mexico for the first time.

However, his political career was not easy; on several occasions, he was imprisoned or exiled. When France invaded Mexico in 1864, the French army entered Mexico City, forcing President Juárez to establish his government in the northern part of the country. After the French were forced to leave, Benito Juárez resumed power. Benito had received international orders to return the Maximiliano to France. But, on June 18, 1867, Benito ordered the execution of Maximiliano, the Archduke of Austria, and a self-appointed Emperor of Mexico.

Benito Juárez and Margarita Maza had five children. On July 18, 1872, at the age of 66, Benito Juárez died from a heart attack.

Since 1887, June 18 was added to the Mexican civic calendar and commemorated as a national holiday in memory of Benito Juárez.

Name: _____

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

1. Where was Benito Juarez born?

- a. City of Oaxaca
- b. San Pablo Gualatao
- c. Puebla
- d. Vera Cruz



2. Who gave young Benito a job as an apprentice bookbinder?

- a. Bernardino Salanueva
- b. Antonio Maza
- c. Antonio Salanueva
- d. Pablo Gualatao



3. Where did Benito Juarez study?

- a. at the Seminary of Santa Cruz
- b. at the Institute of Sciences and Arts of Oaxaca
- c. at a school in the city of Oaxaca
- d. All of the above

4. The Franciscan priest, Antonio Salanueva, helped Benito Juarez with his education.

- a. True
- b. False

5. When was the French emperor of Mexico shot?

- a. July 18, 1872
- b. March 21, 1806
- c. On June 18, 1887
- d. On June 19, 1867

