

SEPTEMBER 16

MEXICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY



On September 16, in Mexico, the El Grito de Dolores or the Cry of Dolores is celebrated. It is also known as the Cry of Independence. This event occurred in the small town of Dolores, near the town of Guanajuato, on September 16, 1810. According to historians, the priest, Miguel Hidalgo of Costilla, made a speech before citizens of Dolores to encourage them to fight against the bad colonial government of Spain. He delivered this speech with two other Mexican independence leaders, Juan Aldama and Ignacio Allende.

September 16, as well as May 5 (Battle of Puebla), is the most important civil holiday celebrated in Mexico. The Cry of Dolores has an exceptional patriotic component for Mexicans because, with this act of rebellion, the war against Spanish rule began. It ended with the declaration of independence proclaimed by Agustin of Iturbide (Plan of Iguala), later ratified with the Cordoba treaties, signed on September 27, 1821, by which Spain recognized the independence of Mexico.

A few days before this event, Miguel Hidalgo had participated in a conspiracy attempt to rebel in the city of Queretaro. When this was discovered, they took refuge in the parish of Dolores. In fear of being arrested, Miguel Hidalgo decided to call the insurrection.



According to the accounts, Miguel Hidalgo rang the church bell twice around 6:00 am. The exact words of the speech are not known for sure because the speech was not written down. Only parts of the discourse are known, but not its entirety, which has given rise to multiple interpretations of its exact political intentions.

Experts agree that this speech started the pursuit of independence in Mexico. After his speech, other messages with clear political and anti-Spanish hints were added, possibly by Miguel Hidalgo, when the war against Spain was in full swing.

At first, the Cry of Dolores did not condemn the monarchy represented by Ferdinand VII in Spain, nor did it criticize the unjust social order typical of their hierarchical society. It didn't criticize the commitment to the Catholic religion, which was practiced by most of the Mexican population and by the Spanish. Hidalgo's speech was important because the discomfort felt by the people stemming from the colonial government and the metropolis, which was invaded by the French army of Napoleon Bonaparte, was increasing. The patriotic and anti-Spanish, Mexican creole class, with a desire to remove themselves Spanish rule, began a liberation war that, after a decade of fighting, ended with the triumph of the independence cause.

The first Mexican leader to celebrate the date was General Ignacio Lopez Rayon, on September 16, 1812, in the town known as the Chapitel, belonging to the city of Huichapan (Hidalgo state). It was a very sober ceremony. Thanks to the initiative of Jose Maria Morelos, the date was recognized as an important holiday by two constitutional congresses held in the years 1822 and 1824, was recognized as a national holiday in 1825.



Every year on September 15 at eleven o'clock p.m. on the balcony of the National Palace in Zocalo, the president of the Republic rings the bell that Hidalgo rang in Dolores, after which he addresses the audience with a reenactment of Hidalgo's Cry of Dolores speech ending with him shouting, "Long live Mexico! Long live Mexico! Long live Mexico!" The president of Mexican waving the national flag before a delirious and happy crowd of half a million.

A similar ceremony is performed in all the cities and towns of the Mexican state and even in the Mexican embassies throughout the world at the same time. The following morning, a lavish military parade takes place starting in the plaza and ending on the Paseo de la Reforma, the capital's main avenue.



Name _____ Date _____



Answer the questions.

1. How many times does the president repeat "Viva Mexico!" when they symbolically pronounce the cry of Dolores in the National Palace?
 - a. twice
 - b. three times
 - c. just one time
 - d. twice, but in between they pronounce "Long live independence!"
2. What year was the Cry of Dolores recognized as a national holiday?
 - a. 1812, because of General Ignacio Lopez
 - b. 1825, at the initiative of Jose Maria Morelos
 - c. during the presidency of Lazaro Cardenas (1934-1940)
 - d. 1824, at the second constitutional congress
3. What other two leaders accompanied the priest Miguel Hidalgo when he uttered the cry?
 - a. Juan Aldama and Benito Juarez
 - b. Juan Aldama and Ignacio Allende
 - c. Ignacio Allende and Jose Maria Morelos
 - d. Ignacio Allende and Porfirio Diaz
4. How did Miguel Hidalgo gather the villagers of Dolores?
 - a. He sent them a letter.
 - b. He had his friends tell them to gather.
 - c. He rang the church bell.
 - d. He had told them to come at the church service the week before.
5. In which city did Miguel Hidalgo and a few more leaders against the bad Spanish government rebel days before?
 - a. Guanajuato
 - b. Queretaro
 - c. Michoacan
 - d. Jiquilpan