



Activities for *Uncle Snake*

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Subject Links

Read this story to complement class studies of reptiles, meteorology (weather), myths, legends, folklore—including music and storytelling—and culture of the Americas. Can you chant parts of the story? What sort of role did music play in ancient Mexico?

Art Project to Decorate School or Classroom

Create one or two outlines of squiggly snake bodies 6-12” in length, maybe 2-3” thick. Run off copies so that students may cut out and color their snake with markings from the book illustrations or from their own imagination. Have them cut out a photograph of their face and glue it onto their cut-out snake. Then arrange each work in a mural against a background sky.

Creative Writing Jump-off Points

Have students sit quietly with pencil and paper for two minutes. Then read them one of the following jump off points and let them write freely or doodle for five minutes. Tell them not to worry about the spelling or grammar YET. (Save the editing and revising for another day. All that matters now is the flow of ideas.) After they've written from at least two jump-off points, let them choose which story that they'd like to complete or develop.

1. Recalling the story: What if Uncle Snake had not danced at each fiesta? What if he had not set out offerings for the cave? Would he and the cave snakes still be trapped inside?
2. Thinking beyond the story: You're walking barefoot along a sandy beach. Suddenly, by your feet, you hear a rattling in the bushes. The rattling grows louder, more distinct with each moment, as if a thousand rattlesnakes were watching your every step.
3. Your parents left you alone in the house but told you not to open the door to the hallway closet. Under the door you see darkness. What can be inside the closet? You're watching a movie, eating popcorn, when you hear a faint scratching noise behind the door.