Latin American Revolutions
WebQuest
We’ve learned about the French Revolution, which inspired people in other parts of the world to rise up as well. **Find out about revolutions in Latin America!** **Follow the WebQuest to answer the questions on your sheets.**
#1-3 The Basics

Click on the map to answer questions 1-3 for some general background on Latin American Revolutions. Read *The Independence of Latin America* (first section).
Social Classes in Spanish Colonies

- Peninsulares
  - Iberian [Spanish] Aristocrats
- Criollos [Creoles]
  - Descendents of Peninsulares
- Mestizos
  - Caucasian/Indian
- Mulattoes
  - Caucasian/African
- Native American Indians
- African Slaves

Source: John Osborne et al., Global Studies, N & N Publishing (adapted)

^^ Click the image above to answer question 5.
Simón Bolívar (1783-1830): Simón Bolívar, known as el Libertador of much of South America, was born in 1783 in Caracas to wealthy Creole parents. Bolívar’s parents died when he was a young boy, leaving him in the care of tutor Simón Rodríguez. From Rodríguez, Bolívar learned of and was inspired by Enlightenment thinking, as well as the French and American Revolutions. When he was sixteen, Bolívar left Caracas for Europe. In Paris he observed the coronation of Napoleon Bonaparte, which symbolized to the young Venezuelan both the failure of republicanism and the power of an individual to change history. In 1807, Bolívar returned to Caracas, already committed to independence for all of Latin America. When a provisional junta was established in Caracas in 1810 in response to the forced abdication of King Ferdinand in Spain, Bolívar retreated from political life because the junta refused to consider full independence. Finally in 1811, the junta declared independence for Venezuela and created the First Republic. Bolívar fought for the republic against royalist forces, but after a devastating earthquake in 1812 convinced the populace of the divine folly of autonomy, the First Republic fell to Spanish troops. Defeated, Bolívar fled to New Granada where he led a successful campaign against the Spanish. By 1813, Bolívar had amassed a sizeable army. Marching into Venezuela, he delivered a number of stunning victories for independence and took Caracas on August 7, 1813, in what later was known as the Admirable Campaign. The Second Venezuelan Republic was established but the Spanish refused to accept independence and launched a successful counterattack in 1814. Bolívar once again fled, this time heading to the Caribbean. In Jamaica, Bolívar wrote his famous Letter from Jamaica, which called for Latin American independence and the creation of a unified Latin American republic. Never one to accept defeat, Bolívar quickly returned to Venezuela and led yet another military campaign against the royalist forces. After stunning victories in the Battles of Boyaca and Carabobo, Bolívar secured independence for Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador. Still hopeful of confederation, he declared the creation of Gran Colombia out of the liberated territories. Bolívar was appointed President of Gran Colombia, but as he was a liberator at heart and much of South America remained in royalist control, he quickly abandoned his political duties. At the Battle of Junin on August 6, 1824, Bolívar defeated the Spanish and forced them out of Peru, bringing independence to the last major royalist stronghold. The Congress of Upper Peru declared itself the autonomous state of Bolivia and made Bolívar the President. As ruler of much of South America and a hero to the people of the region, Bolívar sensed that his goal of a unified Latin American republic was in reach. Alas, it was not to be. Political problems contributed to instability in Gran Colombia, and as each territory asserted its autonomy, Bolívar’s prize fell apart before his eyes. In 1830, Bolívar left South America for Europe, where he later died of tuberculosis.

Adapted from https://library.brown.edu/create/modernlatinamerica/chapters/chapter-2-the-colonial-foundations/figures-in-colonial-latin-american-history/
South America and Simon Bolivar

^^Click on the picture of Simon Bolivar watch a video about his life.
Bolivar Continued

#9

^^Click on the picture of Simon Bolivar to read a primary source document.
South America and Jose de San Martin

Click on the picture of Jose de San Martin to learn about his life...and where he’s buried.
Toussaint L’Ouverture (1743-1803): François-Dominique Toussaint L’Ouverture was born a slave around 1743 in Saint-Domingue (modern-day Haiti). Toussaint’s master was relatively liberal and allowed Toussaint to get an education. At the age of 33, Toussaint was given his freedom but he chose to stay on at the plantation as a salaried employee. In 1791, Saint-Domingue erupted in a massive slave revolt. Toussaint initially joined the rebellion as a field doctor but quickly rose through the ranks and helped secure an alliance between the rebels and the Spanish of Santo Domingo (present-day Dominican Republic). On February 4, 1794, the French government declared abolition of slavery in Saint-Domingue. Toussaint responded by shifting his allegiance from the Spanish to the French. The British, never keen on missing an opportunity for colonization, promptly invaded Saint-Domingue and sided with the Spanish. Now leading the French forces on the island, Toussaint fought a long campaign against the Spanish-British alliance and by 1797 held de-facto control over Saint-Domingue. Events in France upset the delicate balance that had been established. In 1799, Napoleon Bonaparte took over France and promised to issue a series of new laws restricting the autonomy of its colonies. Toussaint responded with the Constitution of 1801, making him governor-for-life of Saint-Domingue. Despite the insubordination, Toussaint still considered himself a Frenchman and wrote to Napoleon explaining his position. In 1802, Napoleon dispatched General Charles Leclerc to bring Saint-Domingue back into the French fold through diplomacy. Leclerc, sensing it would not be possible to peacefully assert French authority, ordered Toussaint to be arrested and transported to France. Toussaint L’Ouverture died in prison on April 7, 1803. His death inspired a second full-scale rebellion in Saint-Domingue that resulted in complete independence and the establishment of the Republic of Haiti.

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Toussaint L'Ouverture and Haiti

Click the image below to watch a video about Toussaint L'Ouverture.

#11-13
#14-15  **Father Miguel Hidalgo and Mexico**

Click on the picture to read a brief biography and watch a video about Father Hidalgo.
The term *caudillo* originates from the Spanish word for head, *cabeza*, and describes the leader of a political faction, often linked to a band of armed men. Used in Spain since the time of the Reconquista, the term became increasingly common in Spanish America during the wars of independence. It initially had the positive connotation of a man fighting in defense of his land, but it gradually became linked to authoritarian rule by a strongman and was used pejoratively. *Caudillos* began their careers at the local level, and some garnered national support. Many took over the government of a country and were successful in maintaining it, while others faced strong opposition. In some areas they derived their power from the army, while in others they counted on their dependents.

Adapted from
#17 Santa Anna and Mexico

Click the photo to learn more about Santa Anna. →
Benito Juárez (1806-1872): Benito Juárez was a liberal politician and leader of La Reforma in Mexico. Born in Oaxaca to Zapotec Indian parents, Juárez overcame poverty to become a leading lawyer and judge. In 1854, he helped write the Plan of Ayala, which called for the overthrow of Santa Anna and the establishment of a liberal government. When the liberals came to power in 1855, Juárez and his colleagues instituted La Reforma, a series of liberal reforms that included restricting the power of the Church, breaking up large land holdings by the Church and indigenous communities, and abolishing fueros, special courts for soldiers and clergy. The conservative coalition in Mexico responded to La Reforma by launching the War of the Reform (1857-1861). Juárez led the liberal forces during the war and claimed victory in 1861, becoming President of Mexico in the process. The following year, French forces invaded Mexico under Napoleon III and installed Maximilian, an Austrian, as Emperor. Juárez once again led the rebel forces against Maximilian, eventually deposing and executing the foreign ruler. Juárez returned to the Mexican presidency in 1867 and died in office in 1872.

Adapted from https://library.brown.edu/create/modernlatinamerica/chapters/chapter-3-mexico/figures-in-mexican-history-biographies/
Role of the U.S.

Click on the political cartoons to learn more about the relationship between Latin American countries and their neighbor to the north.
Cuba

Click the map to learn more about Cuba’s gaining independence a bit later than everyone else in Latin America.
Click on the photo of the canal to watch a quick video about it.

Click on the map to learn more about Panamanian independence.