Christmas in Spanish-Speaking Countries

Name: ..... **Date:** .....

Read the text. Look at the Spanish words in brown.



Las Posadas (Mexico)

In Mexico, Las Posadas starts on December 16 and ends on December 24. For nine nights, people walk from house to house with candles. They sing a song at each door.

la posada = the inn · **la vela** = the candle



The nativity scene

Many families make a nativity scene at home. It shows Mary, Joseph, the baby Jesus, the shepherds and the animals. In Spain, the name of the nativity scene is el belén. In Mexico, the name is el nacimiento.

el belén = the nativity scene (Spain) · **el nacimiento** = the nativity scene (Mexico)



Little Candles Day (Colombia)

In Colombia, Christmas starts on the night of December 7. This night is the Day of the Little Candles. Families put small candles and paper lanterns in windows and on the streets.

las velitas = the little candles · **el farol** = the lantern



Three Kings Day

In Spain and in many Latin American countries, the Three Kings bring presents on January 6. On the evening of January 5, children put their shoes by the door. Some children leave grass and water for the camels.

los Reyes Magos = the Three Kings · **el zapato** = the shoe · **el camello** = the camel

The piñata (Mexico)

After the posada, the children break a piñata. A traditional Christmas piñata has the shape of a star with seven points. Each child gets a turn and hits it with a stick. Then candy and fruit fall out.

el palo = the stick · **los dulces** = the candy



Nochebuena

December 24 is Nochebuena. The word means “the good night”. Families eat a big dinner together late in the evening. In Mexico, the red poinsettia flower has the same name: la flor de Nochebuena.

la Nochebuena = Christmas Eve · **¡Feliz Navidad!** = Merry Christmas!



Twelve grapes (Spain)

At midnight on December 31, people in Spain eat twelve grapes. They eat one grape each time the clock rings. Each grape is for one month of the new year.

la uva = the grape · **¡Feliz Año Nuevo!** = Happy New Year!



The Kings' bread

On January 6, families eat a sweet bread in the shape of a ring. A small figure hides in the bread. In Mexico, the person with the figure gives a party for the family on February 2. This is the last Christmas celebration in Mexico.

la rosca de Reyes = the Kings' bread (Mexico) · **el roscón de Reyes** = the Kings' bread (Spain)