

People in World History Activity **6**

Profile 2

**Francisco "Pancho" Villa (1878–1923)**

Pancho Villa was a celebrated Mexican general, revolutionary leader, and bandit. Beloved by the masses, he became famous for his fierce fighting and dramatic escapes.

He was born Doroteo Arango on June 5, 1878, in Río Grande, Mexico. He adopted the name of the outlaw Francisco Villa after he killed the owner of an estate for betraying his sister—the original Villa had committed the same act. For this, Villa was forced to escape into the mountains. He spent his teen years as a fugitive, robbing trains, looting banks, and raiding mines. Later, he would use these skills as a successful guerrilla fighter.

In 1910, the Mexican people rose up against the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz. Villa joined Francisco Madero, leader of the rebel forces, who had seized control of the Mexican government. Villa was celebrated for his bravery. With his troops, he conquered many enemy strongholds, including Chihuahua, Parral, and Torreón. However, in 1912 General Victoriano Huerta, suspicious of Villa's loyalties, condemned him to death. Madero intervened and sent Villa to prison instead. Four months later Villa escaped to El Paso, Texas.

The following year, Madero was assassinated and Huerta seized control of Mexico. Villa returned to Mexico and formed a new army, the famous *División del Norte* (Division of the North). Fighting side by side with the

forces of Venustiano Carranza, Villa crushed Huerta's dictatorship. In recognition of his leadership, Villa became the governor of the state of Chihuahua soon after.



However, conflicts arose between Villa and Carranza, and Villa and fellow revolutionary Emiliano Zapata were forced to escape. Villa continued to fight, but he lost the crucial Battle of Celaya in 1915. The country's allegiance shifted to Carranza, who received U.S. backing. In reprisal for this shift in United States support, Villa killed 15 or 16 American citizens in the Santa Isabel massacre in 1916. A year later, Villa killed 17 Americans in New Mexico as a further protest against U.S. actions.


President Woodrow Wilson sent an American force to apprehend Villa. Although Villa eluded capture, many of his supporters were killed. For his valiant stand against the American troops, Villa became a hero and widely popular in Mexico.

In 1920, the Mexican government retired Villa with full pay at the rank of general. Three years later, he was ambushed and assassinated by a group of his enemies.

**REVIEWING THE PROFILE**

**Directions:** Answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Why did Villa leave his home when he was only a teenager?
2. Why did President Woodrow Wilson send American troops to capture Villa?
3. **Critical Thinking** Recognizing Ideologies. Why is Villa celebrated by the Mexican people?

 **Guided Reading Activity 6-4**

### Nation Building in Latin America

**DIRECTIONS:** Fill in the blanks below as you read Section 4.

Political ideals stemming from the successful (1) \_\_\_\_\_ in North America were beginning to influence Latin America. When Napoleon overthrew the monarchies of Spain and Portugal, the authority of the (2) \_\_\_\_\_ and (3) \_\_\_\_\_ was weakened in their colonial empires. Between 1807 and 1825, revolutionary movements enabled most of Latin America to become (4) \_\_\_\_\_.

The first real hero of Mexican independence was (5) \_\_\_\_\_. On September 16, 1810, a crowd of (6) \_\_\_\_\_ and (7) \_\_\_\_\_, armed with clubs, machetes, and a few guns, formed a mob army to attack the Spaniards. In 1821, Mexico declared its independence from Spain and became a (8) \_\_\_\_\_ in 1823.

(9) \_\_\_\_\_ believed that the Spaniards must be removed from all of South America if any South American nation was to be free. Unsure of their precise boundaries, the new nations went to war with one another to settle (10) \_\_\_\_\_ disputes. Soon after independence, strong leaders known as (11) \_\_\_\_\_ came into power, who ruled by military force.

As a result of the (12) \_\_\_\_\_ War, Cuba became a United States protectorate, and Puerto Rico was (13) \_\_\_\_\_ to the United States. The United States was granted control of a strip of land in Panama where they built the (14) \_\_\_\_\_.

Many in Latin America saw the United States as a (15) \_\_\_\_\_. A result of the prosperity from increased (16) \_\_\_\_\_ was growth in the middle sectors of Latin American society. These middle sectors sought liberal (17) \_\_\_\_\_, not revolution. Once they had the right to vote, they generally sided with the (18) \_\_\_\_\_ elites.