



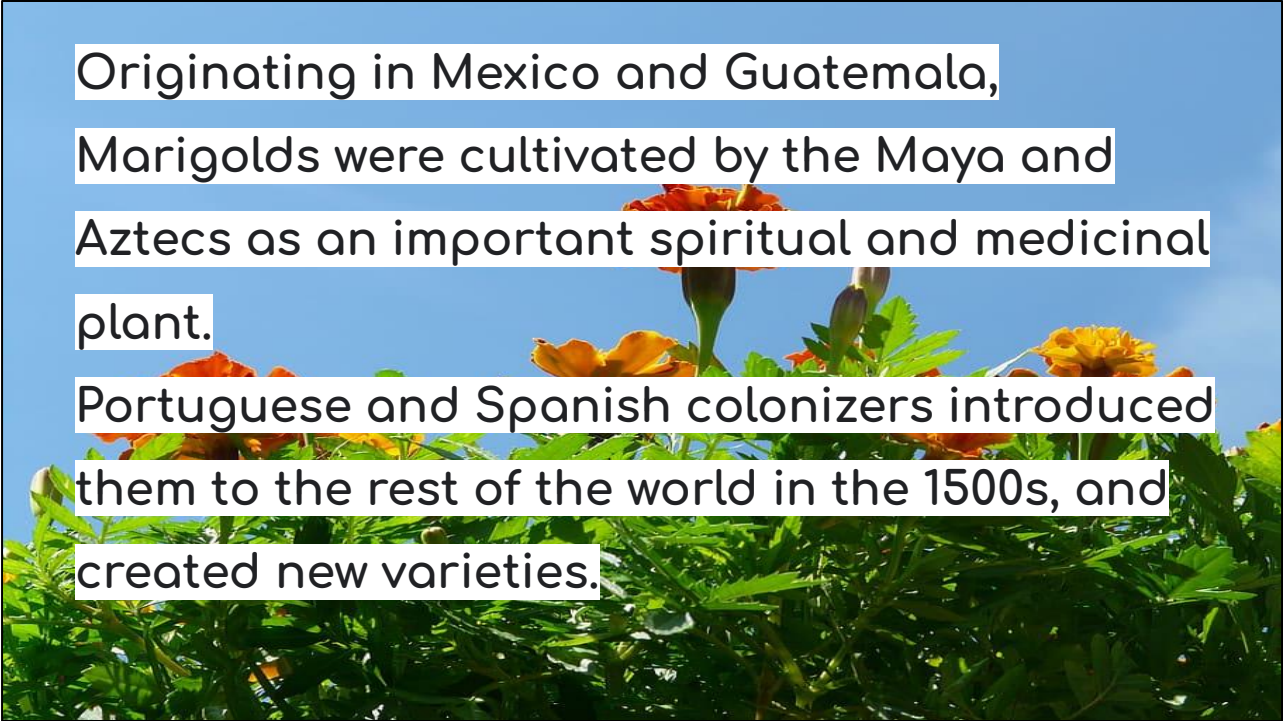
If you didn't have pre discussion with fresh flowers: Have you seen this flower before? They are common in many household gardens. Do you know what it's called? This is the Nahuatl word for it. (pronounced sempa-soo-sheel. Cempa= 20 or many petaled. Suchil= flower)

MARIGOLDS (*Tagetes* sp)



The tall varieties are often called African marigolds, and the petite ones French marigolds, but WE know they all originally come from..._____!

(Mexico!)



Originating in Mexico and Guatemala,
Marigolds were cultivated by the Maya and
Aztecs as an important spiritual and medicinal
plant.

Portuguese and Spanish colonizers introduced
them to the rest of the world in the 1500s, and
created new varieties.

How are new varieties created? (discuss selective breeding)

They are deeply rooted in pre-Hispanic Aztec rituals tied to the goddess Mictecacihuatl, or the Lady of the Dead, who helped spirits to travel back to earth to commune with and be celebrated by family members. The flower's bright color and strong scent help spirits find their way. This is now known as Día de Muertos.



Unless Spanish class has already learned about it: Have you heard of Dia de Los Muertos? (at least some students will reference the Coco movie) Brief discussion if necessary.





Look at that glowing golden bridge! What is it made of?

The Aztec and Maya used the flowers as medicine, internally and externally, for:

- Stomach pains
- Fevers
- Bruises
- Cuts and sores
- headaches



They were also used as a dye. Spiritual leaders would ritually bathe in the petals, and they are edible! (though strong tasting.) They are used in spice mixes and sprinkled on dishes. *They are very high in vitamin A, Miguel!*

In gardens, Mexican marigolds:

- Repel rabbits and deer
- Repel aphids, mites, destructive caterpillars, snails, slugs
- They are one of the only plants known to repel nematodes by excreting a chemical from their roots.
- Attract bees, ladybugs and parasitic wasps

They have a particularly beneficial relationship with tomatoes, peppers and potatoes. Hmmm.....

Discuss 'companion planting' if there is interest here. (the last part references companions that also come from Mexico)

A photograph of a butterfly with orange and black wings perched on a bright orange marigold flower. The background is filled with more green foliage and orange flowers, creating a vibrant garden scene.

How to plant Marigold seeds:

- Sow seeds directly outside after all danger of frost has passed and the soil has begun to warm up. (Mid May)
- Sow in a sunny area
- Sow seeds 1 inch apart
- Water thoroughly after planting.
- They will bloom in about 8 weeks and continue blooming into Fall.