

Dia De Los Muertos: Sugar Skulls

Summary: Students will be introduced to the Mexican holiday “Dia De Los Muertos” (Day of the Dead). They will explore the cultural traditions of this holiday, why it is celebrated and the artistic practices surrounding the holiday. This will be done during a discussion and by watching a clip from the Disney movie “Coco”. Students will learn about sugar skulls- how they are made and why they are made. They will then make their own sugar skulls.



Objectives:

1. Students will be able to... identify the Mexican holiday, “Dia De Los Muertos” by understanding and analyzing the characteristics of the holiday.
2. Students will be able to... create a sugar skull by applying symmetry and symbols to a human skull.

Key Questions:

1. What is Dia De Los Muertos?
2. What is a sugar skull? How is it made?
3. What do they symbols on a sugar skull symbolize?

Essential Questions:

1. What is the importance of Dia De Los Muertos?
2. How do other cultures celebrate/remember their loved ones?
3. In what ways is Halloween similar/different to Dia De Los Muertos?

Modifications:

Special Needs/Low Level Students: They can choose a pre-made sugar skull to color/draw in.

Advanced/Higher Level Students: They can create a background or a full skeletal drawing in addition to the skull. Or, create more complex patterns/symbols.

Materials:

- Blank skull outline on paper
- Colored pencils and drawing pencils
- Presentation
- Cocco movie

Standards:

- 1.1.12.D.1 Distinguish innovative applications of the elements of art and principles of design in visual artworks from diverse cultural perspectives and identify specific cross-cultural themes.
- 1.1.12.D.2 Translate literary, musical, theatrical, and dance compositions by using them as stimulus/inspiration for corresponding visual artworks.
- 1.2.12.A.1 Determine how dance, music, theatre, and visual art have influenced world cultures throughout history.

- 1.3.12.D.2 Produce an original body of artwork in one or more art mediums that demonstrates mastery of visual literacy, methods, techniques, and cultural understanding.
- 1.3.12.D.4 Analyze the syntax and compositional and stylistic principles of two- and three-dimensional artworks in multiple art media (including computer-assisted artwork), and interpret themes and symbols suggested by the artworks.
- 1.3.12.D.5 Identify the styles and artistic processes used in the creation of culturally and historically diverse two and three-dimensional artworks, and emulate those styles by creating an original body of work.
- 1.4.12.A.1 Use contextual clues to differentiate between unique and common properties and to discern the cultural implications of works of dance, music, theatre, and visual art.
- 1.4.12.A.2 Speculate on the artist's intent, using discipline-specific arts terminology and citing embedded clues to substantiate the hypothesis.
- 1.4.12.A.4 Evaluate how exposure to various cultures influences individual, emotional, intellectual, and kinesthetic responses to artwork.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1 (10/26-10/30)

- Introduction to Dia De Los Muertos
 - Ask students if they have heard of the holiday, if yes, ask one of them to explain it to the class
 - Show video about the holiday
 - Discuss what the holiday is and what it's about and key characteristics
 - Prompted questions: How is it similar to Halloween in America? How is it different?
- Introduce sugar skulls, symmetry and symbolism
 - Demo on how to create a sugar skull
- Independent work time
 - Students receive printout of skull and decorate it
 - "Coco" scenes playing in the background that describe the holiday and its importance.
- Closure: Ask for student feedback on decorating sugar skulls, go over what will take place next week (new project).