



The Rockwell Museum

El Dia de Los Muertos

Pre and Post Visit Materials

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OBJECTIVES

Students will learn about the Mexican celebration, El Dia de Los Muertos (The Day of the Dead), using the Museum's collection of paintings, sculptures, and Native American art.

- Students will recognize that different cultures have unique celebrations.
- Students will learn the customs surrounding this celebration are based on ancient traditions traced to the Aztec civilization in Mexico.
- Students will understand the Day of the Dead is celebrated in Mexico and in certain parts of the United States and Central and South America.
- Students will be introduced to specific vocabulary associated with the Day of the Dead celebration and learn the Spanish pronunciation of these words.
- Students will create a traditional style, El Dia de Los Muertos folk art craft.

New York State P-12 Common Core Standards for English Language Arts

Speaking and Listening Standards 6-12

Comprehension and Collaboration

1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher led) with diverse partners on *grade 6, 7, and 8 topics, texts, and issues*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

c. Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed.

d. Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

4. Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume and clear pronunciation.

Conventions of Standard English

1. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading or listening.

a. Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.*

Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration

1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

2. Integrate and evaluate information.

Integration of Knowledge and ideas

7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

NVS Common Core K-8 Social Studies Standards

Standard 1: History of the United States

Key ideas 1: Elementary

- know the roots of American culture, its development from many different traditions, and the ways many people from a variety of groups and backgrounds played a role in creating it.
- explain those values, practices, and traditions that unite all Americans

Key ideas 2: Elementary

- gather and organize information about the traditions transmitted by various groups living in their neighborhood and community.
- recognize how traditions and practices were passed from one generation to the next.

Standard 2: World History

Key Idea 1: Elementary

- explore narrative accounts of important events from world history to learn about different accounts of the past to begin to understand how interpretations and perspectives develop
- study about different world cultures and civilizations focusing on their accomplishments, contributions, values, beliefs, and traditions

Key Idea 3:

- understand the roles and contributions of individuals and groups to social, political, economic, cultural, scientific, technological, and religious practices and activities

Key Idea 4:

- explore the lifestyles, beliefs, traditions, rules and laws, and social/cultural needs and wants of people during different periods in history and in different parts of the world

Standard 3: Geography

Key Idea 1:

- locate places within the local community, state, and nation; locate the Earth's continents in relation to each other and to principal parallels and meridians (Adapted from National Geography Standards, 1994)

Learning Standards for the Arts

Standard 1: Creating, Performing and Participating in the Arts

- b. Know and use a variety of sources for developing and conveying ideas, images, themes, symbols, and events in their creation of art.
- c. Use the elements and principles of art to communicate specific meanings to others in their art work.
- d. During the creative process, reflect on the effectiveness of selected mediums or techniques to convey intended meanings.

Standard 2: Knowing and Using Arts Materials and Resources

- a. Develop skills with a variety of art materials and competence in at least one medium.
- c. Take advantage of community opportunities and cultural institutions to learn from professional artists, look at original art, and increase their understanding of art.

Standard 3: Responding to and Analyzing Works of Art

- c. Compare the ways ideas and concepts are communicated through visual art with the various ways that those ideas and concepts are manifested in other art forms.
- d. Compare the ways ideas, themes, and concepts are communicated through the visual arts in other disciplines, and the various ways that those ideas, themes, and concepts are manifested within the discipline.

Standard 4: Understanding the Cultural Dimensions and Contributions of the Arts

- a. Demonstrate how art works and artifacts from diverse world cultures reflect aspects of those cultures.
- b. Demonstrate the ways in which some particular art works and artifacts reflect important aspects of the diverse cultures of the United States.
- c. Create art works that reflect a particular historical period of a culture.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Art:

- Principles of design
- Exploration of mediums
- Using themes, symbols, events, and personal experiences
- Defining the artist
- Cultural awareness
- Analysis

English Language Arts:

- Listening
- Speaking

Social Studies:

- Geography
- US History
- Culture

Language Other Than English:

- Spanish

MUSEUM Manners

Please go over these basic rules with your students before their visit; and if possible, make copies for your chaperones.

- Number One Rule- Do Not Touch.
- Stay at least one foot away from the works of art and one foot away from cases containing art.
- Please do not lean on walls.
- Groups must stay together at all times.
- Walk; don't run.
- Talk; don't yell.
- Raise hands to speak.
- No eating, drinking, or chewing gum in the galleries.
- Backpacks must not be carried through the museum but may be left in our coatroom.
- Use pencils only for sketching or notes.
- No flash photography.
- Cell phones should not be used during museum visits.

PLEASE NOTE

Teachers and chaperones are responsible for maintaining the same discipline as you would in the classroom.

VOCABULARY

All Saints Day: The Western Christian holiday of All Saints' Day falls on November 1, followed by **All Saints' Day** is observed on the first Sunday in November to remember deceased members of the local church congregation. A candle is lit as each person's name is called out, followed by a prayer offered for each soul. Many Latin American communities in the United States hold celebrations around November 1 and 2, linking with All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day (November 2). These celebrations are part of the Day of the Dead, also known as *Dia de los Muertos*.

EL Dia de los Muertos: Day of the Dead. A celebration held in Latino communities in the United States and throughout Latin American on November 1 and 2.

Marigolds: Considered the flower of death.

Calaveras: colorful sculptures of skull used during Dia de los Muertos.

Ofrenda(s): an offering, often in the form of an altar, used to honor ancestors and others during *Dia de los Muertos*.

Pan de Muertos: special rolls made in the shape of skulls.

Calacas: the skeletal figures that represent death

Papel picado: paper cut-out

Folk art: encompasses art produced by an indigenous culture and is characterized by a naive style, in which traditional rules of proportion and perspective are not employed.

GEOGRAPHY REVIEW

Please point out California, Nevada, and Utah and explain these States were once territories of Mexico. Identify AZ, CO, INY, and New Mexico and explain that portions of these States were once territories of Mexico as well.



The Rockwell Museum
Exterior Photo 2001
Photo Credit: Frank J. Borkowski



Diego Romero, *Never Forget Jim Thorpe, All - American*
(2000) The Rockwell Museum

IMAGE ANALYSIS DIRECTIONS

- Project the image of The Rockwell Museum to show students where their visit will take place.
- Project the image of *Never Forget: Jim Thorpe, All American* (2000) by Diego Romero. Please let your students know that they will be seeing this sculpture when they come to The Rockwell Museum.
- Have students observe the image and complete the *Analysis Worksheet* on page 13. You will need to make one copy for each student.

This activity will encourage students to feel free to answer questions and share their ideas on the tour.

ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

Pottery: *Never Forget: Jim Thorpe, ALL-American (2000)*

Artist: Diego Romero

Project the image of the ceramic

pot. Step 1: OBSERVATION

List five details you see.

Step 2: CONCLUSIONS

Based on what you wrote above, what do you think the artist is trying to tell us about this person?

Step 3: PURPOSE

Why do you think the artist created this piece?



Facts:

- When Jim was 6 yrs. old, he ran home from school 20 miles away.
- A fellow football player said "trying to tackle Jim Thorpe was like trying to tackle an oak tree that runs the 100 in 10 seconds flat".
- Is considered one of the greatest athletes of the 20th Century.
- The shape of this sculpture is like the pots used in ancient Greek culture. The artists choose this shape because it was the Greeks who started the first Olympic Games. The statement on the urn tells us that it is a memorial: "Never Forget"
- At the time Thorpe won his gold medals Native Americans were living on reservations and didn't feel good about themselves. The artist wants to remember a hero.

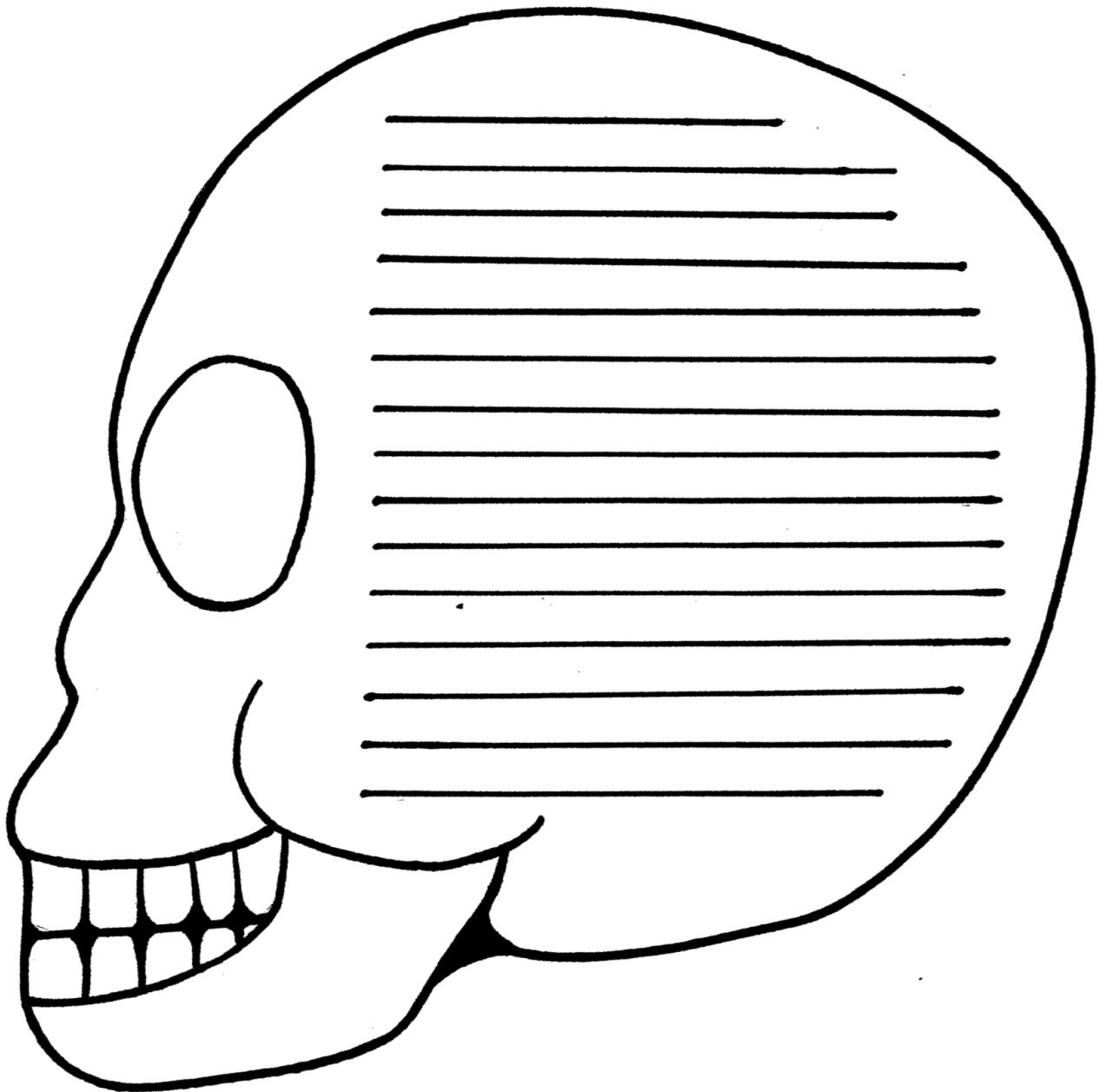
A lot of the Day of the Dead celebrations takes a humorous approach. For example, Calaveras (skull poems) are short poems that describe funny anecdotes or habits of both the deceased and those still alive.

Here's an example of a Calavera:

***There's a mean old lady that lives next door
She yells and she screams and stomps on the floor One
day she sneezed so hard that her hat fell down I picked it
up and looked at her frown
She was really a skeleton from her toes to her head
Don't be scared, one day you'll look like me, she said!***

Taken from: <http://www.quickenloans.com/blog/hispanic-heritage-month-day-of-the-dead#ixzz27gzvkEsb>

CALAVERAS POEM



Ofrendas (offerings) are often set up in the home displaying portraits, personal *goods*, clothing, favorite *foods*, and possessions of the deceased. Customs vary within different states in Mexico and even from village to village but some of the traditional items placed on the ofrenda are listed below.

tJ

Water to quench the thirst after a long journey home.



The smell of incense helps the souls find their way home.



The scents of marigolds help the souls find their way home.



Pan de Muertos (bread of the dead) traditional sweet bread prepared and eaten during the holiday.



Soap and water is provided to allow the souls to clean-up and be refreshed. Before they partake of the treats.

L

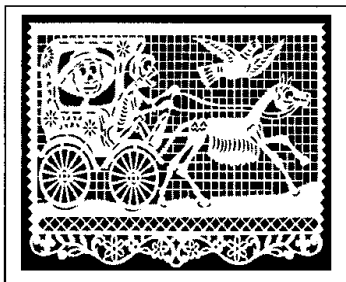
The flames from candles help guide the spirits on their journey home.



Fresh fruits and vegetables to enjoy.



Skulls and skeletons are the symbols of death.



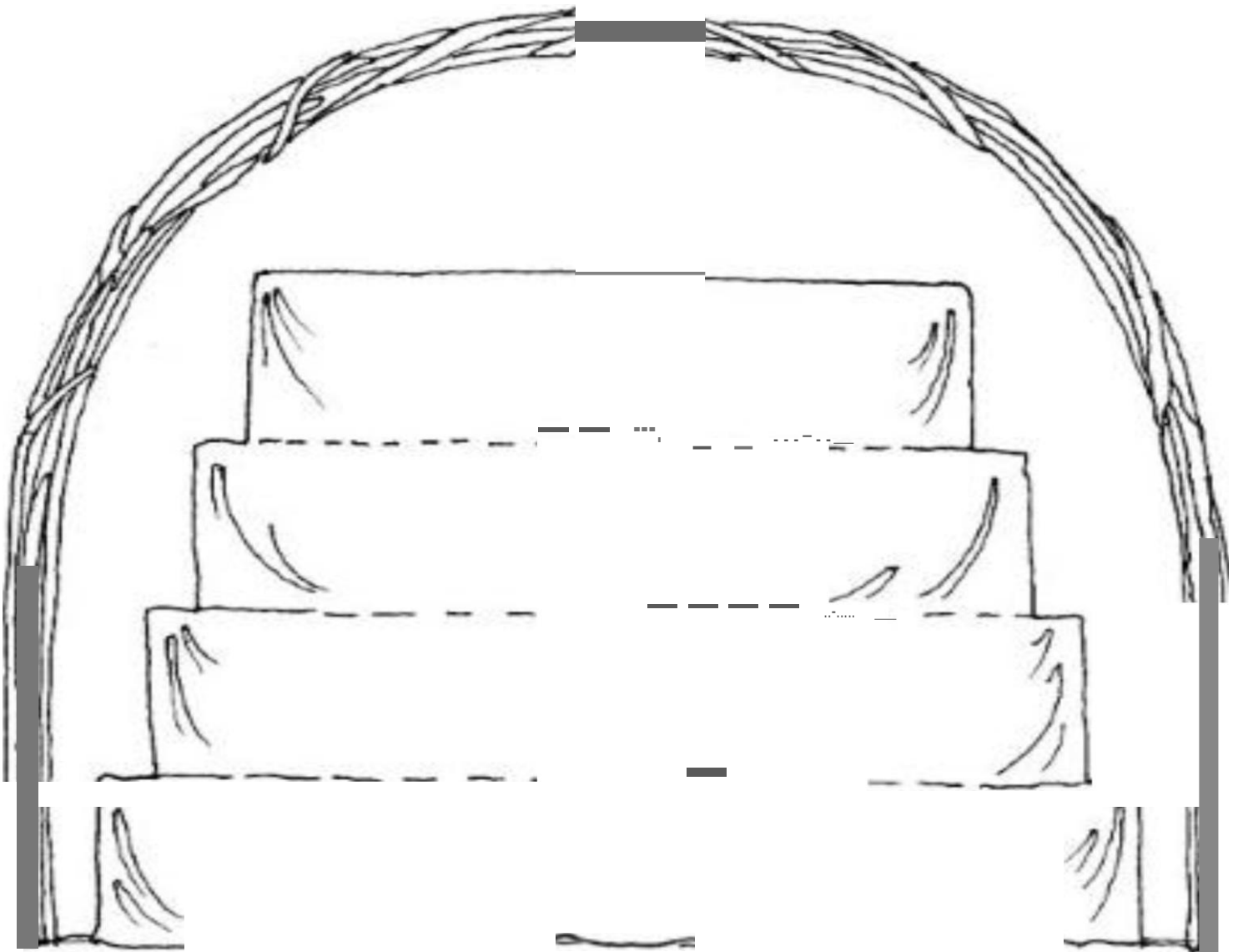
Popel picados- paper cut outs are made of tissue paper reminding



Children especially enjoy sugar skulls. They come in different flavors such as chocolate. Skulls are often given as gifts during the holiday

DRAW YOUR OWN OFRENDA

Pictured below is an *ofrenda*. Think about a special family member or friend. What do they like to eat, drink, play, make, etc.? Draw the items you think that special person would like on an *ofrenda* made for them. Then color in your *ofrenda* to make it bright and festive!



REFLECTION & CLOSURE

After completing the Pre -Visit activities, the museum tour, and then the Post - Visit activities, have the students do a writing activity focusing on the following questions:

- What did you learn about the souls of the dead in relation to the Day of the Dead celebration?
- What similarities and differences do you see between Mexican culture and Western concepts of death?
- How did it feel to discuss and create objects and poems about death?