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Day of the Dead

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UNDERSTANDING BY DESIGN

Unit Cover Page

Unit Title: Day of the Dead

Grade Level: 6

Subject/Topic Area(s): Language Arts

Designed By: Jeanine Capitani

Time Frame: 15 days (ending on November 1 or 2)

School District:

School:

School Address and Phone:

Brief Summary of Unit (Including curricular context and unit goals):

This is a 15-day language arts unit dedicated to understanding the Mexican holiday, *El Día de los Muertos*, celebrated on November 1 and 2. The students will learn the significance of the Day of the Dead and how it is celebrated as well as learning important vocabulary. The students will do a writing project including an interview of a deceased relative or family friend, a cumulative paragraph explaining the importance of Day of the Dead, and a reflective paragraph. The students will also complete different art projects related to Day of the Dead. At the end, the students will have their own Day of the Dead celebration in class in honor of their relatives and family friends.

Day of the Dead (*Día de los Muertos*)

Stage 1 – Desired Results		
<p>Established Goals (e.g., standards)</p> <p>TEKS: 110.18. English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 6 (b) Knowledge and skills. (14) Writing/Writing Process. Students use elements of the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing) to compose text (17) Writing/Expository and Procedural Texts. Students write expository and procedural or work-related texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes. (21) Oral and Written Conventions/Spelling (25) Research/Organizing and Presenting Ideas.</p> <p>TEKS: 117.32. Art, Grade 6. (c) Knowledge and skills: (2) Creative expression/performance.</p> <p>TEKS: 113.18. Social Studies, Grade 6 (b) Knowledge and skills: (15) (18) (19) Culture.</p> <p>TEKS:126.12. Technology Applications (Computer Literacy), Grades 6-8. (c) Knowledge and skills. (10) Communication</p>	<p>Transfer</p> <p><i>Students will independently use their learning to...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a memory book and altar of a deceased relative or family friend in honor of the Day of the Dead. 	
	<p>Meaning</p>	
	<p>Understandings <i>Students will understand that...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All cultures are unique in how they remember their dead. • What we celebrate is dependent on environmental, societal, and cultural norms. 	<p>Essential Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a celebration? What do you celebrate with your family? • What do you (your family) do when a loved one passes away? How do you feel? • Why is it important to remember the dead? • Can death be celebrated?
	<p>Acquisition</p>	
	<p>Knowledge <i>Students will know...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spanish vocabulary words relating to <i>El Día de los Muertos: calaveras, pan de muerto, calaveras de azúcar, calacas, las tumbas, cempasúchil, angelitos, leyendas, altar, papel picado, ofrenda, alfeniues, Jose Guadalupe Posada</i> • What the Day of the Dead is. • Important dates and their significance: November 1 (All Saints’ Day), November 2 (All Souls’ Day) 	<p>Skills <i>Students will be able to...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain why the Day of the Dead is celebrated. • Understand the significance of an altar and how to create one of their own. •

Stage 2 – Evidence		
CODE (M or T)	Evaluative Criteria (for rubric)	
<p style="text-align: center;">T</p> <p style="text-align: center;">M&T</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A&M</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effort • Aesthetics • Organization • Includes required information • Written in paragraph form using good writing conventions 	<p>Performance Task(s) <i>Students will demonstrate meaning -making and transfer by...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will write their own memorial book of a deceased relative or family friend in honor of the Day of the Dead. • Students will put together an altar dedicated to their relative. <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/> <p>Other Evidence (e.g., formative)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bell ringers • Exit slips • Quiz
Stage 3 – Learning Plan		
<p style="text-align: center;">CODE (A, M, T)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Pre-Assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>How will you check students' prior knowledge, skill levels, and potential misconceptions?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Journal Assignment: Looking back in history, what have people throughout time done when someone dies? What traditions do different cultures have when someone passes away? • Slide show: looking at death in other cultures. Discuss as a class. 	
<p style="text-align: center;">A</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A</p> <p style="text-align: center;">T</p> <p style="text-align: center;">M</p> <p style="text-align: center;">M&T</p> <p style="text-align: center;">M</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A</p> <p style="text-align: center;">M</p>	<p>Learning Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin with EQ #1: What is a celebration? What do you celebrate with your family? • Then ask: What do you do when a loved one passes away? • Read and discuss the Day of the Dead information packet. • At home, students will ask their parents and grandparents questions about a deceased family member or family friend. • Students will use the information gathered about deceased person to write a memory book to honor that person for Day of the Dead. Students will need to write in complete paragraphs, incorporating the 6-traits of writing and using appropriate grammar and spelling. • Students will write an informational paragraph explaining what the Day of the Dead is and its importance. This will be put at the beginning of their memory book. • Students will put together their own altar dedicated to their relative. • Students will take a quiz demonstrating knowledge of Spanish vocabulary words and their meanings. • Optional Field trip to the San Antonio missions to view altars for Day of the Dead the last week of October. Students will fill out informational sheet to describe the altars. • Students will complete a reflective paragraph assessing the project. 	<p>Progress Monitoring (e.g., formative data)</p> <p>-Completion grade</p> <p>-Writing Rubric</p> <p>-Writing Rubric</p> <p>-Altar Rubric</p> <p>-Quiz grade</p> <p>-Writing Rubric</p>

<p>A</p> <p>M</p>	<p>They will answer specific questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will complete art projects: make your own marigold flower, Day of the Dead <i>calavera</i> mask, and cut-out skeletons. • We will have our own Day of the Dead celebration on November 2 (or closest school day) and students will share their memory books and altars. <p>(The Day of the Dead information I use comes from a packet distributed by the Witte Museum in San Antonio as well as from information in books and off the internet. The following site has an educator packet for Day of the Dead that includes information and activity worksheets: http://www.azcentral.com/ent/dead/articles/dead-education.html)</p>	
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Day 1 (It will work best to begin the second or third week of October, or on whichever day will allow you to end on November 2 or the closest date.)

-Independent Journal Assignment: Looking back in history, what have people throughout time done when someone dies? What traditions do different cultures have when someone passes away?

Slide show: looking at death in other cultures. Discuss as a class.

Possible pictures to include in the slide show: Different Cultures' Perspectives about Death

-Sicilian girl mummy- <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2009/01/090126-sicily-mummy.html>

-Czech bone church- http://www.outsideprague.com/kutna_hora/bone_church.html

-Celebration of death- <http://www.squidoo.com/CelebrateLife>

-Mummies around the world- <http://www.suite101.com/content/mummies-from-around-the-world-a87629>

-Egyptian mummies and tombs, Chinese tombs, Roman catacombs

Day 2

- Bell Ringer: Ask EQ #1: What is a celebration? What do you celebrate with your family?

-Ask EQ #2: What do you (your family) do when a loved one passes away? How do you feel?

-Discuss as a class how our culture views death and loss.

-Explain that we are going to be studying the Mexican holiday *El Día de los Muertos*. Pass out the student packet and read the background information.

Day 3

(*Teacher should put together their own altar of a deceased relative to show the students- have it in the back of the room for the students to see. Should include: marigold flowers, white candles, glass of water, festive multicolored cloth for the base, *papel picado*.)

-Read the letter home about the interview and the altar.

-Pass out the memory book questionnaire. Explain that each student needs to interview his or her parents and/or grandparents about a deceased family member or family friend. Read over the interview questions with them. Explain that they will need to come up with 5 more questions to ask.

-Let students view the teachers' altar.

-Homework: Come up with 5 new questions to ask in your interview. The interview is due next week (on Day 8) along with a picture of the deceased person. The altar will be due on Day 11.

Day 4

- Bell Ringer: as a class, orally share the questions students came up with for homework.
- Read and highlight in the Day of the Dead packet: background information, *pan de muerto*, *calaveras de azucar*, and information on how death is mocked in Mexico.
- Exit Slip: How do you feel about *El Día de los Muertos*? Write down 3 things you've learned so far.
- Homework: Work on interview questionnaire and altar.

Day 5

- Art project: Students will make their own life-size *calavera* mask.
(Materials needed: feathers, sequins, glitter, markers, paint, glue)
- Art project: Students will decorate their own skeleton puppet.
(Material needed: markers, colored pencils, brads, string)
- Homework: Work on interview questionnaire and altar.

Day 6

- Read and highlight in the Day of the Dad packet: information on how the graveyard is prepared, the importance of the marigold flower, and the significance of November 1 (All Saints' Day) and November 2 (All Souls' Day).
- Exit Slip: Protocol 3-2-1
 - Write down 3 Spanish vocabulary words and their definition in English.
 - Write down 2 things you like about Day of the Dead.
 - What is 1 question you have?
- Homework: Work on interview questionnaire and altar.

Day 7

- Art project: Students will make their own marigold flower out of paper maché.
- Art project: Students can continue decorating their skeleton puppet.
- Homework: Interview questionnaire due tomorrow along with a picture of the person.

Day 8

- Bell Ringer: The person I did my interview on is. Something I learned about them is.
- Read and highlight in the Day of the Dead packet: information on what families do between November 1 and 2.
- Homework: Remember that the altar is due in 3 days. If needed, students need to make corrections and/or add information to their interview.

Day 9

- Students will type their questionnaire information. They will need to put it in complete sentences and paragraphs.
- Homework: The altar is due in 2 days.

Day 10

- Students will type their questionnaire information. They will need to put it in complete sentences and paragraphs.
- When the students finish, they can choose from different art projects: coloring worksheets, name skeleton, make your own *papel picado*, or make another marigold flower.
- Homework: Altar is due tomorrow.

Day 11

- Students need to finish typing and edit their work with the teacher.
- Students will set up their altars in a designated location in the classroom, hallway, or library.
- When they finish they can be working on their art projects.

Day 12

- Students will write an informational paragraph explaining what the Day of the Dead is and its importance using their notes.
- When they finish, students will peer edit each other's work.

Day 13

- Students will take vocabulary quiz.
- Students will make corrections to their informational paragraph and finish their memory book.
- When they finish they can be working on their art projects.

Day 14 (This should be on November 1 or 2)

- We will celebrate the Day of the Dead with our own celebration in class.
(Materials needed: *pan de muerto*, *calaveras de azúcar*, students can bring in small portions of their person's favorite food.)

Day 15

- Students will write a reflective paragraph about this project.
- Students will share their paragraph with the class.

Day 16 (Optional)

- Optional field trip down to the San Antonio Missions to view the altars.

Letter home to parents explaining the interview and altar projects:

Ms. Capitani's Language Arts

Date

Dear Parents,

We are currently studying *Day of the Dead* in Language Arts. As a part of this unit, we will be completing **2 projects to be done AT HOME.**

The first project the students will be doing is a report about a loved one or family friend who has passed away. The students will need to interview a relative (parents, grandparents, aunts/uncles) and find the answers to all of the questions on the interview form. **The interview form is due on _____.**

The second project the students will be doing is creating an altar, an important aspect of the celebration of *Day of the Dead*. The altar is a display of items/artifacts made to honor the memory of someone who has died. I am asking all the students to create an altar to honor the family member or friend they wrote about. Students should make an altar that is about the size of our desk top, 22" x 16" (or smaller) and the altar must be portable. We will display them in the library, and they cannot be too large. **Altars should be brought to school _____.** **We will keep them on display for approximately one week.**

If you have any questions about the projects, please feel free to call or e-mail me. On the back you will find guidelines for the altar project. Thank you for your support.

Parents, please sign here and return tomorrow:

I have read and understand the two projects my student will be completing.

Requirements for the Day of the Dead altar:

The altar the students are creating need to include the following items:

- A picture(s) of the person.
- A label with the person's name and years they lived.
- The student's name and their relation to the person they are remembering.
- Personal items of the person (this can include anything the person liked to do, eat, play, etc.). These can be pictures or reproductions.
- The final project should be self-contained and easily moved.
- Be creative!

Letter home to parents explaining the Day of the Dead party:

Ms. Capitani's Language Arts

Date

Day of the Dead Party

Parents and Students,

As part of our unit on *Day of the Dead* we will have a party on November 1 to celebrate the people we remembered. We will have traditional foods associated with this celebration as well as other snack items.

In this Mexican-Aztec tradition, the celebration is held on November 1 and 2, and family members and friends come together to share stories about their ancestors. Part of this celebration is preparing and eating foods that the deceased person enjoyed. If your student would like to, they may bring a small portion of a special food to share with the class.

I ask that each student bring **\$3.00** to help cover the cost of the traditional foods that are being brought in. Please send the money by **Thursday, November 1**. Thank you so much for your support. We look forward to a wonderful celebration.

Parents and family members are welcome to join us in this festive occasion. Please email me to let me know if you will be joining us. If you have any questions, please e-mail or call me.

-Jeanine Capitani

Memories of a Grandparent/Family Friend

This is due back in class on _____.

Interview questions that students ask their families:

1) What is the first, middle, and last name of the person you want to remember?

2) When and where was he/she born?

3) Where did he/she live as a child?

4) Where did he/she live as a grown up?

5) Did he/she go to high school? Did he/she go to college? When? Where?

6) Was he/she in the armed forces? Did he/she go off to any wars?

7) Whom did he/she marry? When?

8) Did he/she have any children? (Write their names)

9) Did he/she work? Where? What did he/she do?

10) Did he/she do anything special? Earn any special awards or medals?

11) What were his/her favorite foods?

12) Do you know any interesting stories about him/her? Any funny memories?

13) When and where did he/she die? How did they die?

Student Questions about this person:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

Questions for the Student:

14) Do you remember this person? If so, what is a favorite memory?

15) How do you feel about this person?

Name _____

Date _____

***The Day of the Dead* Summary Paragraph**

Directions:

You need to use the information you highlighted in your packet to write a paragraph or two describing what the Day of the Dead is. You need to begin with an introduction explaining what you are writing about, and include good details. Remember to use your own words and to express how you feel about this tradition. At the end you need to explain who you chose to remember for *El Día de los Muertos* and why you chose that person.

When you finish, you need to edit it with a partner in the room. Once it is complete as you can make it, you will need to put it at the beginning of your memory book.

Name _____

Date _____

The Day of the Dead Reflective Paragraph

We did a lot during our *Day of the Dead* project, and I would like you to take a moment to reflect back on what we did. I would like your opinion on what you liked, what you wished could have been different, and something you wish we had done.

We did many things:

- altar
- interview at home
- writing project
- colored skeletons
- masks
- marigold flowers
- we read the informational packet

Your first paragraph should give your overall opinion on the project itself. Then I would like you to discuss each of the things we did. Did you like them or not; would you change them? A paragraph has 4-6 sentences, so if you reach that and still have more to say, you need to begin a NEW paragraph. At the end, you need a closing sentence, where you re-state your opinion on the whole project.

Ms. Capitani's Language Class

Day of the Dead: Altar Grading Rubric

Student Name _____

Final Grade _____

Category	4	3	2
Following directions	Students followed all directions and included all of the required information.	Students followed most of the directions and included most of the required information.	Students did not follow all of the directions and are missing most of the required information.
Craftsmanship	Project is well-made (does not fall apart). Effort is demonstrated by exceptional attention to detail.	Project is well-made (does not fall apart). Effort is shown.	Project is falling apart, due to apparent lack of effort.
Aesthetics	The altar is exceptionally attractive in terms of design, layout, and neatness.	The altar is acceptably attractive though it may be a bit messy.	The altar is distractingly messy or very poorly designed. It is not attractive.
Information	Many aspects of the subjects' personality and experiences are evident.	Some aspects of the subjects' personality and experiences are evident.	Few aspects of the subjects' personality and experience are evident.

Comments: _____

Bell Ringers and Exit Slips for the individual days:

Bell Ringer: Day 2

Student Name _____

Date _____

What is a celebration?

What do you celebrate with your family?

Bell Ringer: Day 4

Student Name _____

Date _____

Pull out the questions you came up with last night. Review them and make any changes or corrections to them. In a few minutes, we will share them with the class. You will be able to make changes if you would like to. Use the space provided to write down other questions you may want to include.

Bell Ringer: Day 8

Student Name _____

Date _____

The person I did my interview on is:

Something I learned about them that I found interesting is:

Exit Slip: Day 4

Student Name _____

Date _____

How do you feel about *El Día de los Muertos*?

Write down 3 things you've learned so far.

Exit Slip: Day 6

Student Name _____
Protocol 3-2-1

Date _____

Write down 3 Spanish vocabulary words and their definition in English.

Write down 2 things you like about Day of the Dead.

What is 1 question you have?
