

Cultures Intertwined: Halloween VS Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead)

written by Veronica Gonzalez-Smith

Growing up along the border, in El Paso, Texas—a small town separating the United States and México—we lived with the Mexican and American cultures intertwined. As kids, we traveled in and out of two worlds daily. The moment we left our *casitas* to go to school, we entered our American culture, holidays and traditions, but at home we had our own language, cultures and traditions. In the meantime, some of our Mexican culture was watered down or lost in translation. As mothers of two beautiful children, our hope is to keep some of the Mexican traditions alive, but it's taken some education on our part to consciously understand the differences. Halloween and Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) is a HUGE example of how our two worlds melted together. However, these two holidays are quite different.

Halloween is celebrated on October 31 and it's a day dedicated to dressing up, children and adults alike, and going out and receiving candy or attending some form of masquerade party. Churches have made an attempt to make it less ghoulish by having carnivals where children can take part in pumpkin carving, or face painting, all the while eating yummy food like corn on the cob, candied and caramel apples, and kettle corn. But the haunted house is always looming. The images used to portray Halloween are somewhat morbid in that it's usually characterized by ghouls, ghosts, witches, devils, and the like. But mothers try to make it less scary by having our children dress up as princesses or super heroes.

Día de los Muertos is a two day holiday celebrated on November 1 and 2. Día de los Muertos was originally designed to celebrate life by honoring the memory of the departed. On these days, families go to the cemetery and place beautiful flowers on the graves of their lost relatives; singing usually takes place and sometimes mariachis show up to serenade the dearly departed. It is believed that on these days the gates of heaven open up and children who have passed on come to Earth to visit on November 1, called Día de los Angelitos—the day of little angels. On November 2, the gates open up again and adults come down to visit, this day is called All Soul's Day.

Setting up an altar is part of the tradition and customs of Día de los Muertos. The altar will be created in a small corner of a room, probably the dining room. According to tradition, an altar can have candles, pictures of the deceased, flowers (usually marigolds), drinks and food. The belief is that any visiting souls may be hungry from their long journey and so the food and drink is for nourishment, in order to help them make their journey back. This is supposed to be a happy day, filled with eating, drinking and sitting around and telling stories of those being honored. This year we will honor my husband's father and grandparents as well as my grandparents who have since passed away. We hope to retell memories of them to our children and delight in the times we shared with them. Our hope is to keep the memory of them alive for both us and our children. We're not sure why the tradition was never passed onto us here in the United States, but since having found out the significance of this day, we have decided to take part in the holiday this year. We look forward to doing the following with our children:

- Creating a beautiful altar with lots of bright marigold flowers.
- Placing pictures of deceased loved ones on the altar.
- Making atole, champurrado, and persimmon margaritas to drink
- Making pumpkin empanadas with our children.
- Making mole, another family favorite.
- Placing candles on the altar.

Once all the preparations have been made, we can enjoy the evening by lighting the candles, and retelling stories of our deceased loved ones while we feast on mole, pan de muerto, drinks and pumpkin empanadas. My husband and I took the time today to go through all of our pictures of his father and all of our grandparents who have passed away. We talked about the feast and all the stories we can't wait to share with our children. We have decided to download songs they liked as well and have them playing while we retell stories to our children. I especially remember dancing in the kitchen with my grandmother, Jesusita. I remember her dancing with me to her favorite song, "Jesusita en Chihuahua;" we all remember this as one of her favorite songs. Although my sister and I live in two different states, she in Colorado and I in California, we have agreed to introduce this holiday and tradition to our respective husbands and children. No year like the present to begin anew. We are both thrilled to educate our children about traditions that are part of our culture. She will take part in Día de los Muertos with her two beautiful children and husband in Colorado and I with mine in California. We can't wait to share our mutual experiences, pictures and stories of the event.

Halloween has played a fun part in our families but now we are even more excited to introduce Día de los Muertos on November 2 with our families. It will be a beautiful way to honor our ancestors and share it with our children and spouses. The frightful visions we have of death shouldn't be so morbid, they can in fact be, pleasant and joyful.

Halloween vs. Día de los Muertos	
HALLOWEEN	DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS
Celebrated on October 31st.	Celebrated on November 1st and 2nd.
Origins: The old Irish, Gaelic Samhain (meaning summer's end), a time to store food supplies for the cold months ahead.	Origins: The Aztec festival dedicated to goddess Mictecacihuatl, Lady of the Dead.
Celebrates the end of summer and the coming of winter.	Celebrates the life and death of ancestors, friends, and family.
Harmful spirits warded off by frightening costumes and masks.	Encourages visits from spirits of those who have died and celebrates their memory.
Common symbol: The jack-o'-lantern.	Common symbol: The skull.
Images of evil, the occult, magic, and monsters.	Images of cheerfully decorated gravesites and home altars with flowers and traditional food.
Coincides with the Christian All Saint's Day on November 1st.	Coincides with the Catholic All Soul's Day on November 2nd.
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Name: _____

Period _____

Compare and Contrast Essay - Graphic Organizer

Introductory Paragraph

Hook/Attention Grabber: _____

Development-brief explanation of topic: _____

Thesis Statement: *The thesis statement is the sentence that states the main idea of a writing assignment and helps control the ideas within the paper.* _____

Body Paragraph #1 - First aspect that is similar for Subject 1 and Subject 2

Subject 1

Detail 1: _____

Detail 2: _____

Subject 2

Detail 1: _____

Detail 2: _____

Body Paragraph #2 - Second aspect that is different or Subject 1 and Subject 2

Subject 1

Detail 1: _____

Detail 2: _____

Subject 2

Detail 1: _____

Detail 2: _____

Body Paragraph #3 (Optional) - Third aspect that is similar or different or Subject 1 and Subject 2

Subject 1

Detail 1: _____

Detail 2: _____

Subject 2

Detail 1: _____

Detail 2: _____

Conclusion: should accomplish three major goals:

1. Restate the main idea of your essay, or your thesis statement.
2. Summarize the three sub-points of your essay.
3. Leave the reader with an interesting final impression.

Summary of main points: _____

Evaluate the similarities/differences: _____

Restate the point/thesis: _____

Ringling College of Art & Design Presents



An animated short film about a little girl who visits the land of the dead, where she learns the true meaning of the Mexican holiday, Day of the Dead (Día de los Muertos). Student Academy Award Gold Medal winner, 2013

Un corto de animación sobre una niña que visita la tierra de los muertos, donde aprende el verdadero significado de la fiesta mexicana, día de los muertos (Día de los Muertos). Student Academy Award ganador de la medalla de oro de 2013

**Day Of the Dead
is a Mexican Holiday
where celebrants remember
family and friends who have died.**

Día de los Muertos es una celebración mexicana, donde los celebrantes recordar su familia y amigos que han muerto

1.The Day of the Dead has its origins from pre-Hispanic civilizations from 2,500 to 3,000 years ago, long before the Spaniards conquered Mexico.

Español: El día de los muertos tiene su origen a partir de las civilizaciones prehispánicas de hace 2.500 a 3.000 años, mucho antes de que los españoles conquistaron México.

That celebration took place in the 9th month of the Aztec calendar (about August in today's calendar) and lasted the whole month.

Español: Esa celebración tuvo lugar en el noveno mes del calendario azteca (alrededor de agosto en el calendario de hoy) y duró todo el mes.

2. The Day of the Dead actually takes place on two days.

Español: El día de los muertos realmente tiene lugar en dos días.

The Day of the Dead is on November 2nd, the celebration starts from November 1st.

Español: El Día de los Muertos es el 2 de noviembre, la celebración comienza desde el 1 de noviembre.

3. In most regions of Mexico, November 1st is to honor children and infants

Español: En la mayoría de las regiones de México, 1 de noviembre es en honor a los niños y bebés

Deceased adults are honored on November 2nd.

Español: adultos fallecidos son honrados el 2 de noviembre.

4. Indigenous people from Mexico believe the soul is eternal and that it can travel back and forth from this world and the next.

Español: Las poblaciones indígenas de México creen que el alma es eterna y que puede viajar de ida y provocar en el mundo y el siguiente.

The celebration of the Day of the Dead is based on the belief that the souls of their loved ones will come back and visit them.

–Source: Discovery

Español: La celebración del Día de los Muertos se basa en la creencia de que las almas de sus seres queridos van a volver a visitarlos.

5. One of the most important traditions is the set up of an altar in memory of the deceased where the four elements of nature, water, wind, fire (candles) and earth (flowers) are represented.

Español: Una de las tradiciones más importantes es la puesta en marcha de un altar en memoria de los fallecidos, donde están representados los cuatro elementos de la naturaleza, el agua, el viento, el fuego (velas) y la tierra (flores).



6. The altar or offerings might include the favorite food of the loved one, fruit, bread or pumpkin.

– Source: *Discovery Fantastic Festivals of the World Mexico*

Español: El altar de la oferta podría incluir la comida favorita de la persona amada, fruta, pan o calabaza.



7. In the pre-Hispanic era, skulls were commonly kept as trophies and displayed during the rituals to symbolize death and rebirth. –Source: Wikipedia

Español: En la era prehispánica, cráneos fueron comúnmente mantenidos como trofeos y se muestran durante los rituales que simbolizaban la muerte y el renacimiento



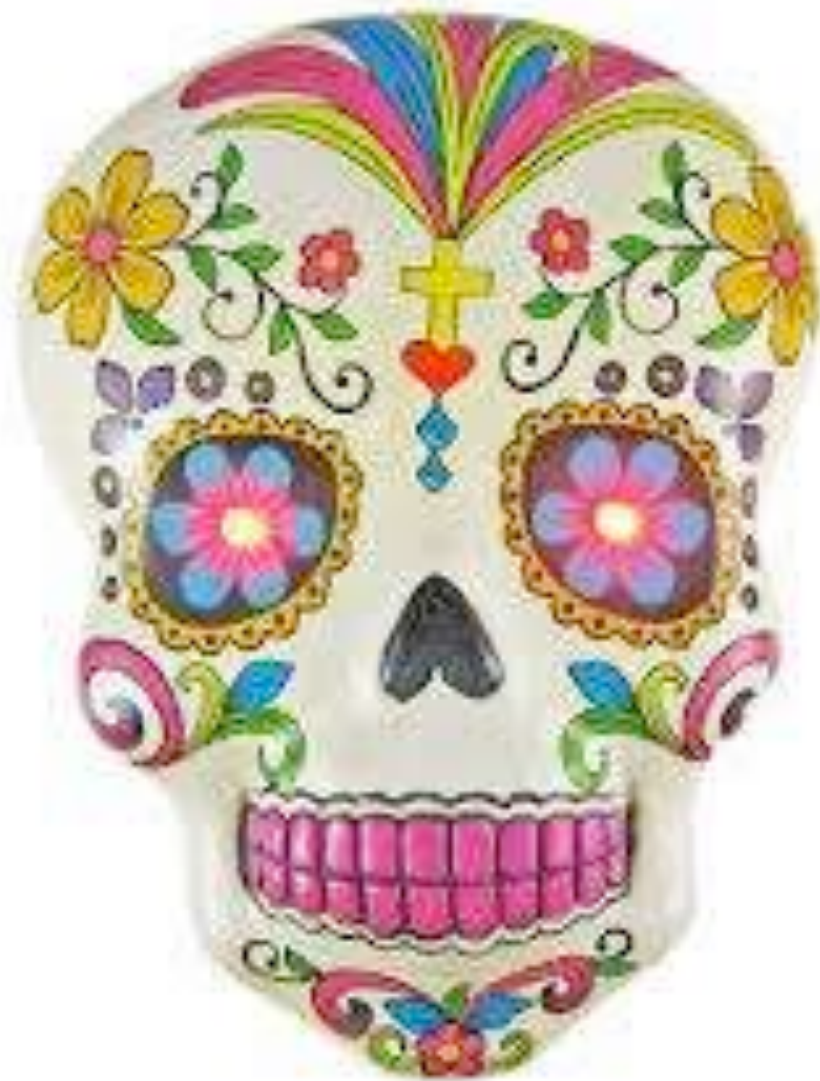
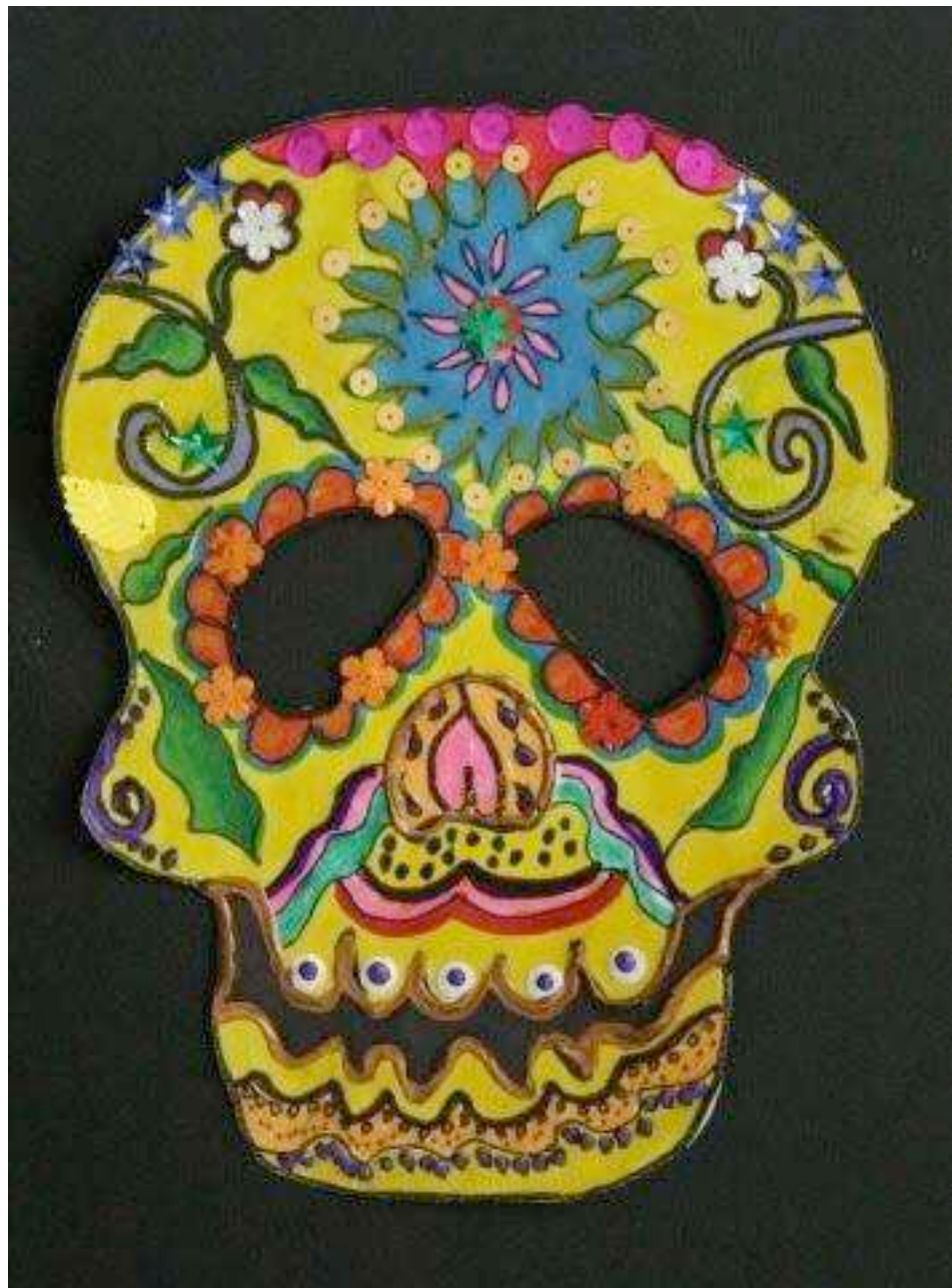
La gente
celebra con
el uso de
máscaras de
calavera
caprichosas.



People
celebrate
by wearing
whimsical
skull masks.











The following images are from a Spanish III class that celebrates the Mexican celebration “The Day of the Dead.” Mrs. Prazak and some of her students paint their faces in the traditional “Day of the Dead” masks. They also talk with elementary classes about the celebration.

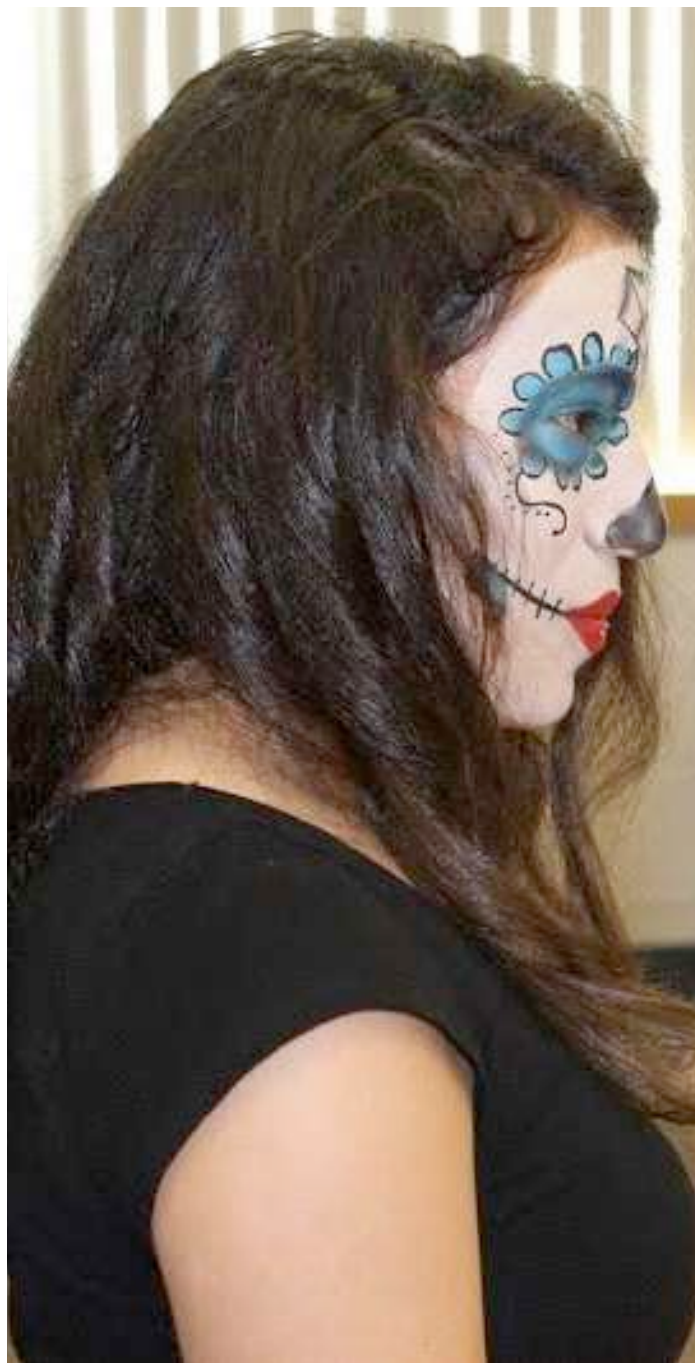
Español: Las siguientes imágenes son de una clase III española que celebra la fiesta mexicana "El día de los muertos." La Sra Prazak y algunos de sus alumnos se pintan la cara en el tradicional "Día de los muertos" máscaras. También hablan con las clases elementales acerca de la celebración.















We will be creating Paper Masks to represent the painted skulls and skull masks that many Mexicans use in celebration of the “Day of the Dead”

Español: Vamos a crear máscaras de papel para representar las calaveras pintadas y las máscaras de calavera que muchos mexicanos uso en celebración del "Día de Muertos"



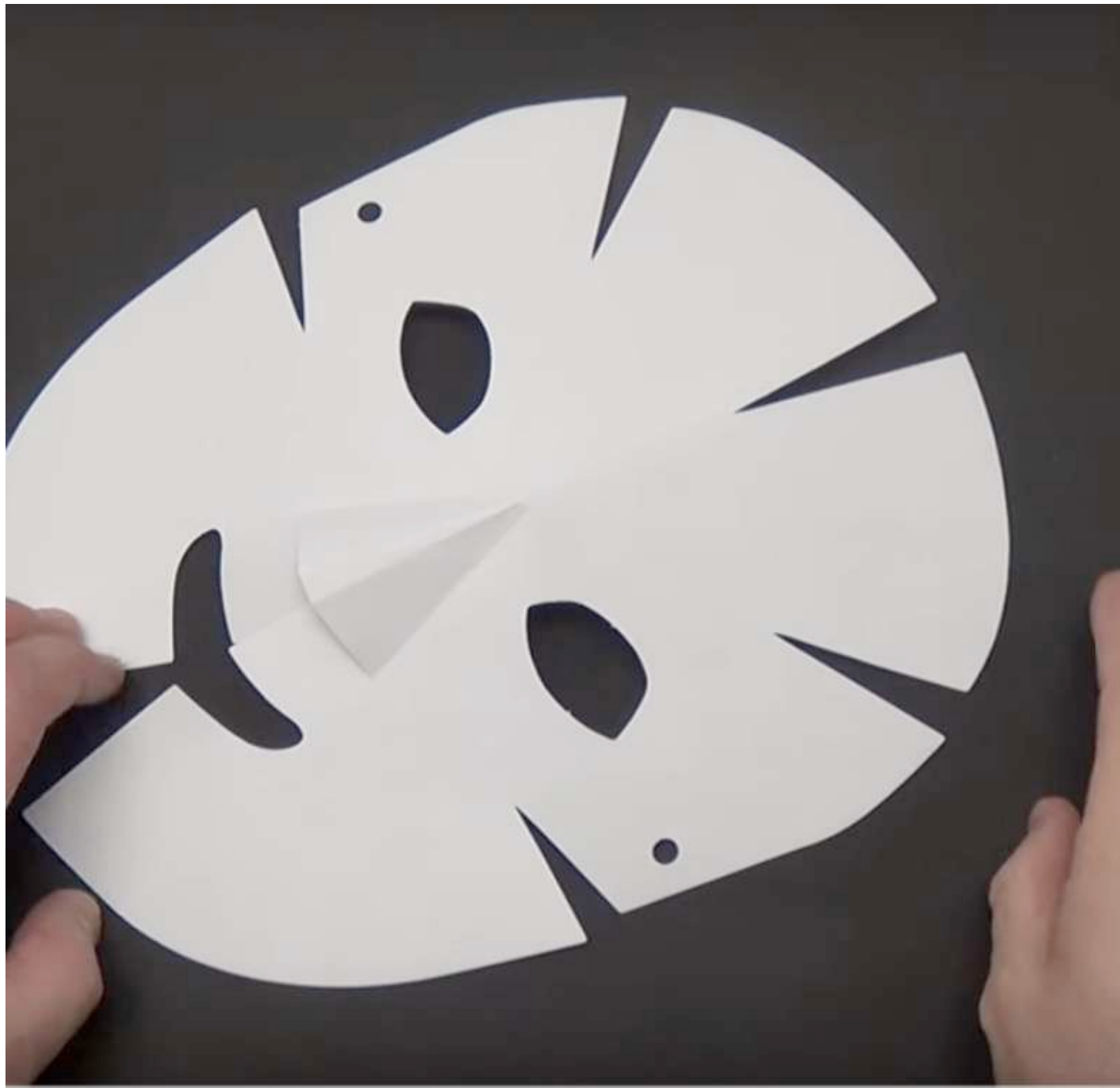
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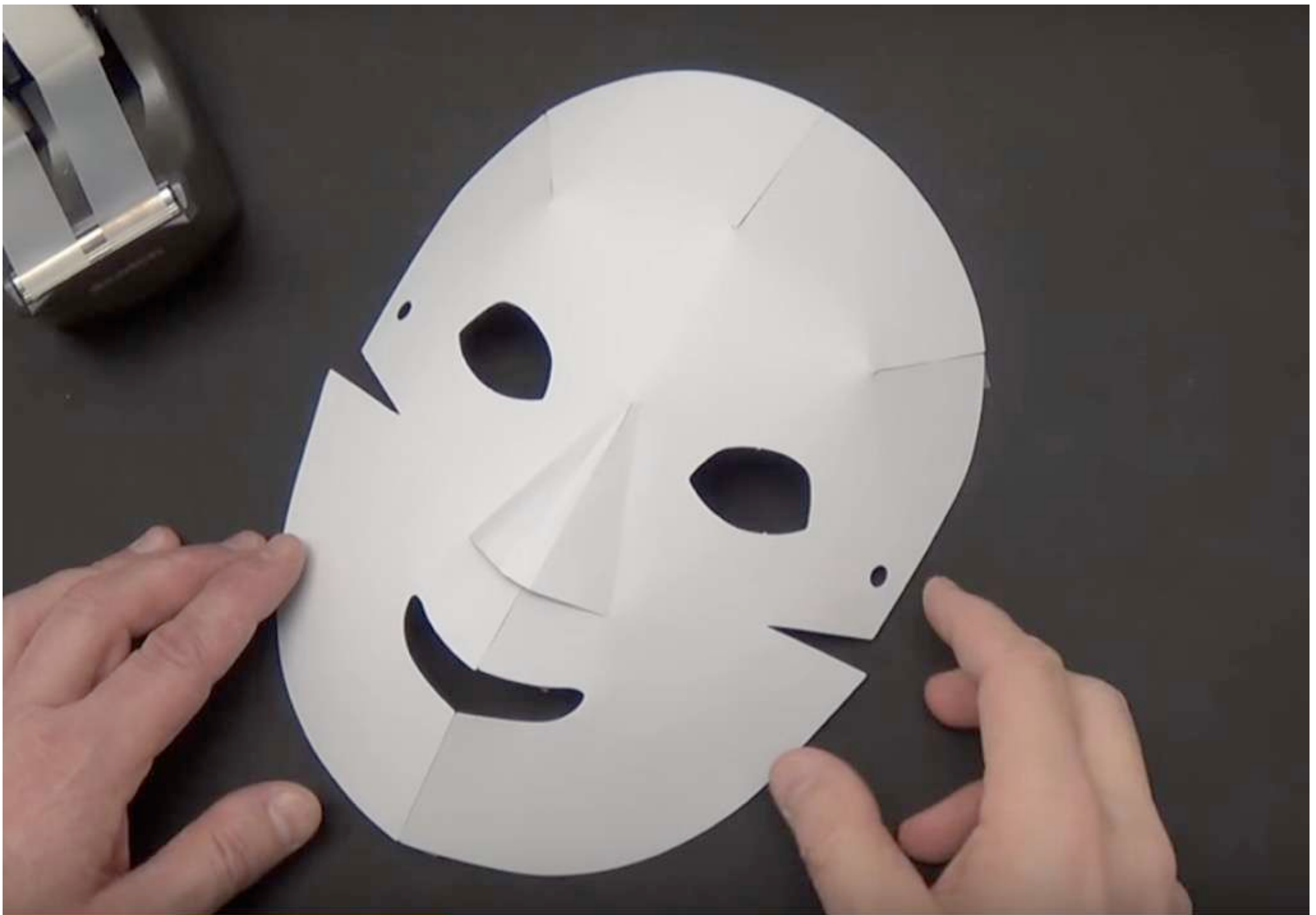


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Mask Rubric

Drawing

4-Drawing is expressive and detailed. Line, Shape, Pattern, Rhythm, and Emphasis Student has great control and is able to experiment a little.

3-Drawing is expressive and somewhat detailed. Little use has been made of value, form, and texture. Student has basics, but had not "branched" out.

2-Drawing has few details. It is primarily representational with very little use of value, form, and texture. Student needs to improve control.

1-The drawing lacks almost all detail OR it is unclear what the drawing is intended to be. Student needs to work on control.

Español: Dibujo

4-El dibujo es expresivo y detallado. Línea, forma, patrón, el ritmo y énfasis

El estudiante tiene un gran control y es capaz de experimentar un poco.

3-El dibujo es expresivo y un poco detallada. Poco se ha hecho uso de valor, forma y textura. El estudiante tiene fundamentos, pero no había "ramificada" hacia fuera.

2-dibujo tiene pocos detalles. Se trata principalmente de representación con muy poco uso del valor, forma y textura. El estudiante necesita para mejorar el control.

1-El dibujo carece de casi todo el detalle o no está claro lo que el dibujo está destinado a ser. El estudiante tiene que trabajar en el control.

Craftsmanship

4-The drawing shows that the creator took great care in their work. The drawing is neat, looks carefully planned, and thoughtfully executed.

3-The drawing shows that the creator took some care, however work would benefit from more care and planning.

2-The drawing does not appear to have been done with care. It appears that minimal planning was done. Craftsmanship needs a bit of work or may be incomplete.

1-The drawing shows no evidence of care or craftsmanship.

0-Missing and/or incomplete

Español: Artesanía

4-El dibujo muestra que el creador tuvo gran cuidado en su trabajo. El dibujo es limpio, se ve cuidadosamente planificada y ejecutada cuidadosamente.

3-El dibujo muestra que el creador tomó un poco de cuidado, sin embargo, el trabajo se beneficiaría de más cuidado y planificación.

2-El dibujo no parece haber sido hecho con cuidado. Parece ser que una mínima planificación se hizo. Artesanía necesita un poco de trabajo o puede ser incompleta.

1-El dibujo no muestra evidencia de la atención o la artesanía.

0-Falta y / o incompleta

Creativity and Design

4-The artwork demonstrates a challenging level of production and creativity as well as outstanding problem solving skills.

3-The artwork demonstrates a satisfactory level of production and creativity as well as logical problem solving skills.

2-The artwork demonstrates a basic level of attention to production, creativity, and problem solving skills.

1-The artwork demonstrates very little attention to production, creativity, and problem solving skills.

0-Missing and/or incomplete

Español: Creatividad y Diseño

4-La obra demuestra un nivel difícil de la producción y la creatividad, así como habilidades para resolver problemas pendientes.

3-La obra demuestra un nivel satisfactorio de la producción y la creatividad, así como habilidades para resolver problemas lógicos.

2-La obra demuestra un nivel básico de atención a la producción, la creatividad y las habilidades de resolución de problemas.

1-La obra demuestra muy poca atención a la producción, la creatividad y las habilidades de resolución de problemas.

0-Falta y / o incompleta

Practice Sketches and Prep-Work

4-Excellent completion of all practice sketches and prep-work

3-Basic completion of all practice sketches and prep-work

2-Missing some completion of all practice sketches and prep-work

1-Very little completion of all practice sketches and prep-work

0-Missing and/or incomplete

Español: Práctica bocetos y Prep-Trabajo

4-Excelente nivel de cumplimiento de todos los bocetos de práctica y preparación para el trabajo

la terminación

3-básico de todos los bocetos de práctica y preparación para el trabajo

2-faltan algunos finalización de todos los bocetos de práctica y preparación para el trabajo

1-Muy poco finalización de todos los bocetos de práctica y preparación para el trabajo

0-Falta y / o incompleta



Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) is a two-day holiday celebrated on November 1 and 2. Día de los Muertos was originally designed to celebrate life by honoring the memory of the departed. On these days, families often go to the cemetery and place beautiful flowers on the graves of their lost relatives; singing usually takes place and sometimes mariachis show up to serenade the dearly departed.

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Paper Mask

Art Standard: 1.0 ARTISTIC PERCEPTION

Processing, Analyzing, and Responding to Sensory Information through the Language and Skills Unique to the Visual Arts—Students perceive and respond to works of art, objects in nature, events, and the environment. They also use the vocabulary of the visual arts to express their observations.

Develop Perceptual Skills and Visual Arts Vocabulary

1.3 Analyze their works of art as to personal direction and style.

3.0 Historical and Cultural Context

Understanding the Historical Contributions and Cultural Dimensions of the Visual Arts—Students analyze the role and development of the visual arts in past and present cultures throughout the world, noting human diversity as it relates to the visual arts and artists.

Diversity of the Visual Arts

3.4 Research the methods art historians use to determine the time, place, context, value, and culture that produced a given work of art.

Criteria: Drawing is expressive and detailed using line, shape, pattern, rhythm, and emphasis.

Student has great control and is able to experiment a little.

The drawing shows that the creator took great care in their work. The drawing is neat, looks carefully planned, and thoughtfully executed.

The artwork demonstrates a challenging level of production and creativity as well as outstanding problem solving skills.

Excellent completion of all practice sketches and prep-work

Objective: Students will become aware of reasons masks are used for “The Day of the Dead”

Students will learn about the meaning of masks

Students will study the characteristics of mask

Students will utilize the elements and principles of art/design when creating their mask.

Materials: Pencil, Eraser, 9x12 Practice Paper, 9x12 White Paper, Markers, Scissors, and Tape

History: A mixture of Aztec and European symbolism infuse the meaning of Day of the Dead face painting designs. The tradition is a mixture of Catholic beliefs with the religions of indigenous Mexican people. The most common design is to paint the face to resemble a skull. For people not familiar with Latin American culture, this might seem strange and even scary. However, the skull has a uniquely positive meaning. It is very different from the skeletons and ghosts of Halloween. The multi-day holiday is an opportunity for families and friends to gather, pray for, honor, celebrate, and remember friends and family members who have died.



Step 1: Students will use 9x12 practice paper to plan out their mask and design using pencil, focusing on line, shape, color, rhythm/pattern, and emphasis

Step 2: Fold your paper in half horizontally.

Step 3: Use the mask pattern to draw the outline of the mask

Step 4: Draw your mask shape using the fold as the center point of your mask. Be sure to use the whole paper

Step 5: Students will get their plan and design approved by the teacher

Step 6: Students will fold the white paper in half and transfer their design onto 9x12 white paper.

Step 7: Students will use marker to color in their design with bold colors. There will be little to no white of the paper showing

Step 8: Students will cut-out their mask making sure to follow the cut-out guidelines to create the skull like shape

Step 9: Students will then fold and tape the mask on cuts to create the 3-d like quality of the mask

