



ACROSTIC POETRY

INTRODUCTION & OBJECTIVE:

Students will learn about and discuss the practice of acrostic poetry within the context of studying Día de los Muertos.

RECOMMENDED GRADES:

Adaptable for all grade levels.

ESTIMATED TIME:

1-1.5 hours

VOCABULARY:

- Satire
- Muerte
- Death
- Poetry
- Rhyme
- Adjectives
- Synonyms
- Alliteration

MATERIALS:

- Pen
- Paper
- Individually-made calaveras (see lesson on calaveras in this thematic unit) OR images of typical Día de los Muertos objects (i.e. calaveras, sugar skulls, ofrendas, catrinas, etc.)

PROCEDURE:

1. Introduce students to the idea of an acrostic poem if they are not familiar with it. Acrostic poems can be adapted for the grade level of students. For younger students one word descriptions for each letter of the word “calavera” may be sufficient. For older students, you may want to require a sentence or multi-word description, a rhyming scheme, or even alliteration. You could also encourage students to incorporate some of the satire that is a part of the “calaveras literarias” (Día de los Muertos poetry



often found in newspapers in Mexico; see lesson included in this thematic unit). If acrostic poetry is a new concept, you may want to create one as a class, in order to model the activity for students. Be sure to connect the activity to literacy content appropriate for your grade level, highlighting the meaning and use of adjectives, synonyms, rhyme scheme, and alliteration.

2. Then have students write an acrostic poem. The subject of this poem can vary. If students have completed one of the activities where they create their own calavera, then they can write a poem describing the calavera they've created. If students are creating their own individual ofrenda (see lesson included in this thematic unit) or contributing to a class ofrenda, they can write about whatever or whomever they have chosen to honor or remember. This poem can also be used to describe any of the typical objects included in a Día de los Muertos celebration (i.e. calaveras, sugar skulls, ofrendas, catrinas, etc.)

STANDARDS & BENCHMARKS:

K-12 Common Core Standards Addressed:

Reading

Key Ideas and Details

- Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Craft and Structure

- Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

- Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

Writing

Production and Distribution of Writing

- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.