



## INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY

### USING THIS GUIDE IN THE CLASSROOM:

There are numerous ways to introduce this unit and provide an initial foundation of knowledge on which to build throughout the lessons. Below is one option that is an adaptation of a KWL chart which, while slightly different, still serves the purpose of activating prior knowledge and engaging students in a new topic.

### PREPARATION:

Search the internet for images related to Día de los Muertos. Print off various images that are the most thought provoking and interesting. You only need one copy of each image. Glue each image to a large piece of paper—construction paper glued together vertically or long strips of butcher paper. You will divide your class into small groups and provide each group with a copy of an image.

### PROCESS:

1. Explain to students that they are going to be working in small groups. Each group will rotate around the room to each table. One person will need to be the secretary at each table—they can take turns doing this job. At each table there will be an image. As a group, they will look at the image and discuss the questions “What do you see?” “What do you think is happening?” “How does this picture make you feel?” Then, the secretary will record their answers to the question. You could also put a pad of sticky notes at each table and have students record their own thoughts and stick them on the paper when they’re done, instead of having a secretary. Be sure to explain to students that they will have a set amount of time at each picture—usually about 5 minutes, but to be determined by the teacher. Explain that you will give students a signal at the end of each 5 minutes and students will rotate to the next image at the next table, until they have rotated through all of the images.
2. Place one image glued onto paper at each table group with one marker (and sticky notes if you are using them). Begin the activity, rotating students through each image at 5-minute increments.
3. Hang up or post all of the images with comments. Discuss each image, giving students time to share and respond to what they posted. Keep these posted throughout the unit, allowing students to revisit them, or discuss them as they learn more about the unit and possibly the images.



## RECOMMENDED CLASS READINGS:

Once you have introduced students to the topic, there are various ways to proceed. Many of the lesson plans and activities included here require some knowledge of Día de los Muertos. One way to provide this is to read children's literature books about Día de los Muertos each day. Create a large chart that lists the different information and vocabulary learned with each book. After reading two to three books, students should have the knowledge they need to proceed with any of the activities. More books or articles can be incorporated into the beginning of each lesson. Below are some recommended titles. The articles included at the end of the list can be found at the back of this guide.

- *The Spirit of Tío Fernando / El espíritu de tío Fernando: A Day of the Dead Story / Una historia del Día de los Muertos* by Janice Levy
- *A Gift for Abuelita / Un regalo para Abuelita: Celebrating the Day of the Dead / En celebración del Día de los Muertos* by Nancy Luenn
- *Pablo Remembers: The Fiesta of the Day of the Dead* by George Ancona
- *Days of the Dead* by Kathryn Lasky
- *Day of the Dead: A Mexican-American Celebration* by Diane Hoyt-Goldsmith
- *Beto and the Bone Dance* by Gina Freschet
- “The Day of the Dead Ofrenda: A Heartfelt Work of Art” from Inside-Mexico (Article)
- “Misconceptions” by May Herz from Inside-Mexico (Article)
- “Day of the Dead: Celebration, History & Origins” by May Herz from Inside-Mexico (Article)
- “The Day of the Dead Offering” by Oscar Guzmán from Inside-Mexico (Article)