

Overview and Purpose



As part of Día de Muertos, altars are created to honor the memories of loved ones who have passed. The altars are decorated with *ofrendas*: personal objects to encourage their spirits to return and join the celebration.

The purpose of this project is to engage students in an asynchronous, short-term, multimedia project in celebration of the Mexican *Day of the Dead* traditions through music and thoughtful expressions of joy and loss. Each student will create an individual *ofrenda* that includes multimedia elements such as a guitar recording, photos of a loved one who has passed, and video or photos of traditional decorations. These elements will be combined into a “musical altar” or short music video in offering and love of those passed. This project is extremely flexible. Implementation, scope and sequencing will change depending on the class.

This project may require video editing which you may offer to do for your students, you may ask them to accomplish on their own, or for which you can partner with an AV program in your school if you have one.

This project was led by Joe Williams and Salvador Garcia at Austin Classical Guitar in partnership with Mexic-Arte Museum.



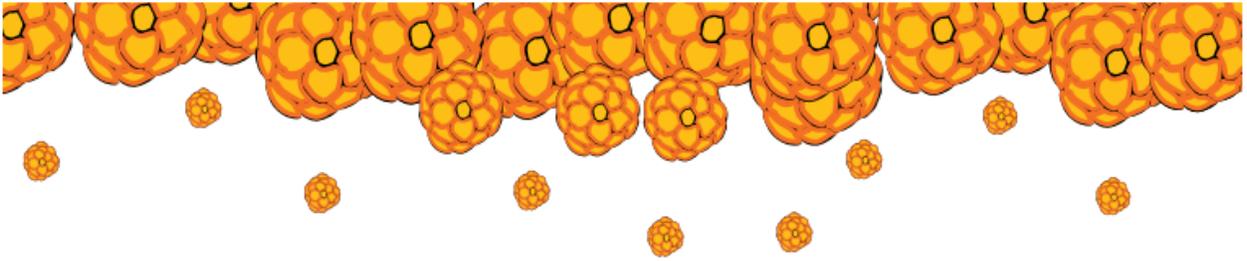
Objectives



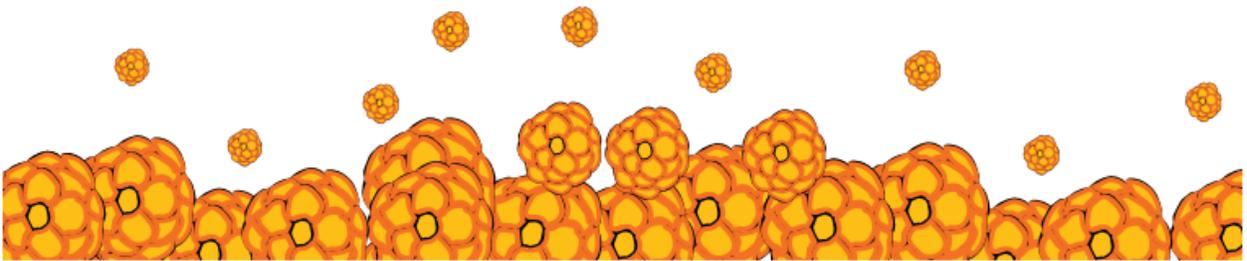
1. Students will use the Mexic-Arte *El Dia De Los Muertos Educational Activity Guide* (Separate pdf, available at GuitarCurriculum.com) to gather an understanding of the historical tradition and elements of the celebration.
2. Students will engage in thoughtful, respectful discussion around ancestry, tradition, heritage, loss, and love.
3. Students will choose a focus of their own musical ofrenda.
4. Students will research and gather traditional items included in an ofrenda as well as personal items or photos related to their chosen subject.
5. Students will choose and record a short musical selection appropriate to the subject of their altar. Music can be an existing piece, a new song learned for this occasion, or something improvised in the spirit of the project. There are no rules on style or instrumentation, but excerpts should be approximately 30-90 seconds. If a student does not have a guitar at home, they are welcome to sing, play an available instrument, or use a previously recorded piece.
6. Students will upload/submit all assignments according to your classroom infrastructure.
7. Students will celebrate their ofrendas together on or around Dia De Muertos ideally with family and friends.



Materials Needed



1. Mexic-Arte Museum El Dia De Los Muertos Educational Activity Guide
2. A device to record audio and take digital photos as well as a means to upload all assignments to their classroom teacher.
3. A guitar and the ability to tune their instrument, or other instrument/voice.



Teacher Info and Prep



Mexic-Arte Museum - El Dia De Los Muertos Educational Activity Guide

Before Assigning any of the following activities, the teacher should explore the Mexic-Arte Museum *El Dia De Los Muertos Educational Activity Guide* (separate pdf, available at GuitarCurriculum.com).

Include any readings or activities from this resource that you feel will serve your students' understanding of the context and tradition of El Dia De Los Muertos and the meaning behind the Ofrenda.

Students will explore pages 22-41 of the Activity Guide. The teacher is more than welcome to assign readings and activities beyond these pages. Feel free to include any of the non musical altar activities as well. Once students have read the assigned material, the teacher should facilitate a conversation around the traditions that go into creating a celebratory altar. Students will share their experiences of loved ones passed (as appropriate for the group) and decide who each student intends to celebrate and honor with this project.

Review and share these sample Sonic Ofrendas videos below for ideas and inspiration!

Individual Examples

<https://youtu.be/WiFy1ViVpLU>

<https://youtu.be/4Ps0Md1yZYE>

YouTube Playlist of youth and adult examples

https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PL7wuzEY0elyBuByMq2EjqosfyoOA2hs_Q

Review also the *Ofrendas Student Packet*, containing student instructions for choosing a subject, gathering materials, taking photographs, and recording the music itself.

