

Day of the Dead

Skills:

Can identify specific information in simpler material they encounter such as letters, brochures and short news articles describing events

Adults/Teens

Group



1 Watch the video and discuss the following questions in pairs.

1. Do you have any traditions in your culture for remembering loved ones? If so, what are they?
2. What do you know about how different cultures remember their ancestors?
3. Have you ever seen a Day of the Dead celebration?

2 Read a short article or text about the Day of the Dead traditions in Mexico.

The Day of the Dead is a famous Mexican holiday celebrated on November 1st and 2nd. It is not a sad day. It is a happy time to remember family and friends who have died. Families believe the spirits of the dead come back to visit during these days.

Families prepare for Día de los Muertos by setting up altars in their homes with gifts for all the loved ones who have passed away. The altars have photos, flowers, candles, and food offerings like "pan de muerto" (bread of the dead), and "calaveras," which are sugar skulls, on the altar. The marigold flower is an important symbol of the holiday.

In many towns and cities, people also go to the cemetery. Many families have picnics in the cemetery and tell stories about the people who have died. It is a time to remember and celebrate their lives. Celebrations also include parades with music and dancing. Many people wear costumes and masks. It is a festive and lively time. People paint their faces like skulls, often called "calacas," with colorful designs.

Día de los Muertos teaches us that death is a part of life. It helps people keep their loved ones in their hearts. It is a holiday full of life, love, and memories.

Glossary

marigold - a bright orange or yellow flower often seen in gardens.

cemetery - a place where people bury the dead.

procession - a group of people moving together in an organized way, often for a special event.

offerings - gifts that people give to show respect or thanks, usually in a ceremony.

altar - a table or flat surface used for religious ceremonies.

skull - the hard part of the head that protects the brain.

3 Mark the sentences about the text as True or False.

1. The Day of the Dead is a sad holiday in Mexico.
2. Families make altars with photos and food for their loved ones who have died.
3. People do not visit cemeteries during Día de los Muertos.
4. Marigold flowers are an important part of the Day of the Dead celebrations.
5. People wear costumes and paint their faces like colorful skulls.

4 Match these halves to create sentences about the Day of the Dead.

- 1. Families create altars to...
- 2. Food offerings on the altars include...
- 3. The Day of the Dead is celebrated on...
- 4. People often visit cemeteries to...

- a. November 1st and 2nd in Mexico.
- b. honor their loved ones who have passed away
- c. "pan de muerto" and sugar skulls called "calaveras."
- d. remember their loved ones with stories and food

5 Discuss the following questions in pairs.

- 1. How is the Day of the Dead different from other holidays that honor the dead?
- 2. Have you ever seen an altar before? Where and how was it?
- 3. How do you remember loved ones who have passed away?
- 4. If you wanted to create an altar for someone important to you, what objects would you include, and why?

6 Read these opinions. Which one do you agree with the most and why? Share your opinion in small groups.

I really like the Day of the Dead. It helps me remember my family who is gone. We make altars with flowers and food. I feel happy when I think about them. I put pictures of my grandmother on our altar, and it fills my heart with love.

Santiago



I don't like the Day of the Dead. I think it is sad to remember people who died, it hurts too much to celebrate. I can't imagine enjoying this day in a fun way.

Camila



Correct answers

1

Made in the “Discussion Questions” tool.

2

Made in the “Create a text” tool. The glossary was made in the “Word-Definition Matching” tool.

3

Made in the “True or False Statements” tool.

1. False - The Day of the Dead is a happy time, not a sad holiday.
2. True - Families make altars with photos and food for their loved ones who have died.
3. False - People do visit cemeteries during Día de los Muertos.
4. True - Marigold flowers are an important part of the Day of the Dead celebrations.
5. True - People wear costumes and paint their faces like colorful skulls.

4

Made in the “Matching Halves” tool.

1. b
2. c
3. a
4. d

5

Made in the “Discussion Questions” tool.

6

Made in the “Four Opinions” tool.