

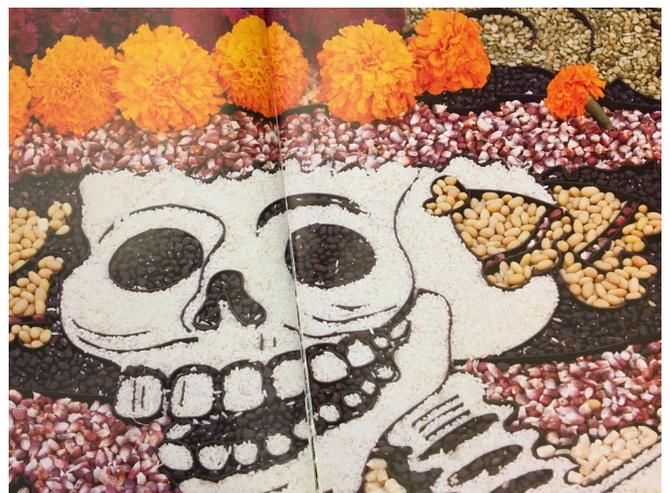
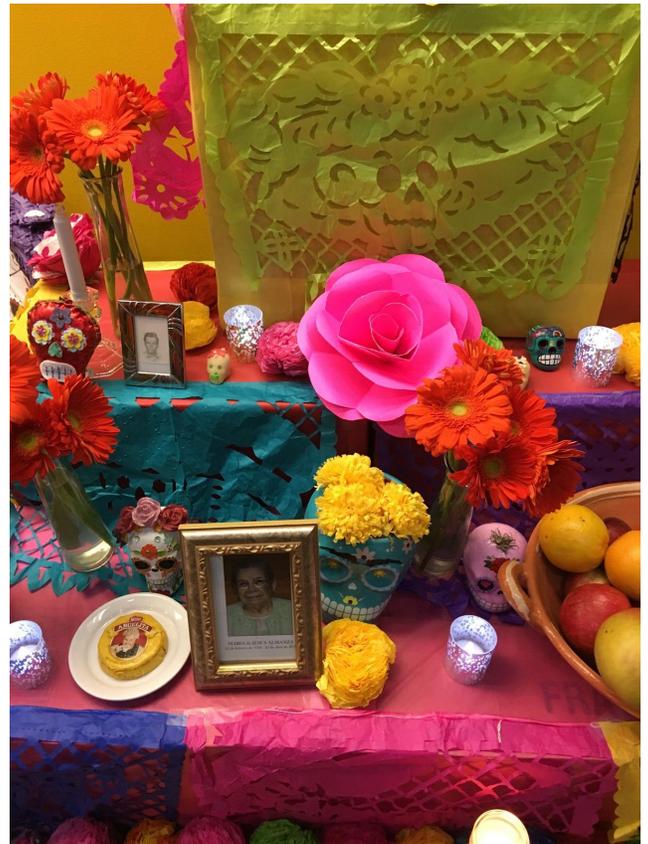
Día de los Muertos/ Day of the Dead

OCTUBRE/OCTOBER 2019

My hope is for these monthly shares to allow you a peek into the Spanish classroom, and to open up any dialogue you may want to share with me from your home!

¡Feliz Día de los Muertos!

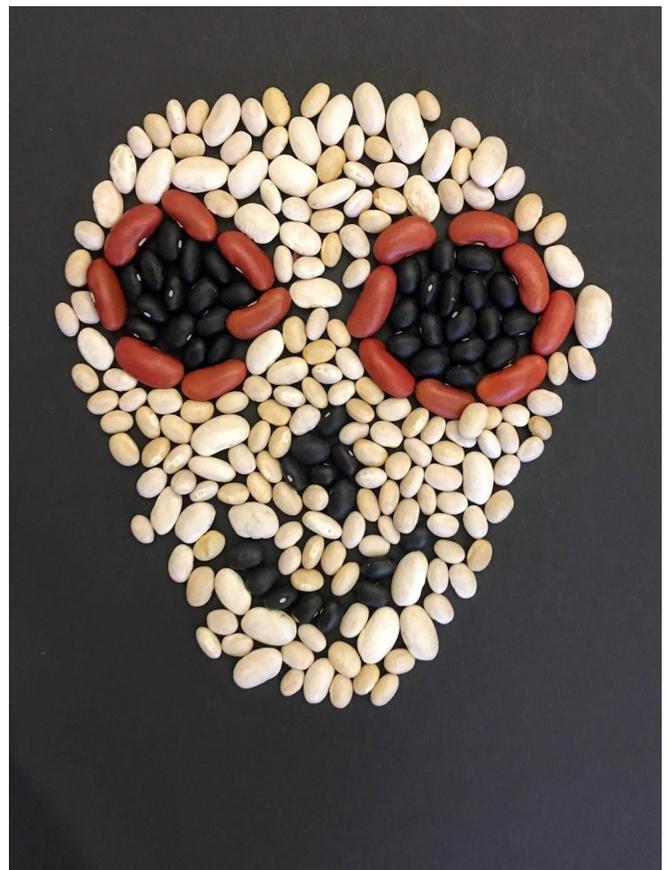
Spanish students have been learning about the traditions of Día de los Muertos. Día de los Muertos lasts multiple days, always including November 1st and 2nd. Celebrated in Mexico and the United States, it is a time for families to honor and celebrate the lives of deceased family members. If you visited Kahlo Restaurante Mexicano in downtown Northfield last week, you would have seen evidence of this holiday (see photo at the left!). An *ofrenda* (altar) is made honoring loved ones who have passed away. The family member's photograph is placed on the ofrenda among flowers, *calaveras* (skulls), *papel picado* (hand cut paper decorations), candles, fruits, and favorite foods of that family member. It is also tradition to prepare cemeteries with marigold flowers and paths of petals. While the image of the skull is prevalent in this holiday, it is not intended to scare but rather to demonstrate the friendship between life and death.



Arte de Frijoles

In larger cities of Mexican, plaza artwork is made from arranging dried foods such as corn, rice, beans, and lentils. It is yet another way the metaphor of human temporality is conveyed on Dia de los Muertos. I explained to the children how making a sand castle or sand art on the beach is much the same: the wind and rain come, and the artwork disassembles. Students engaged with this concept by making their own calaveras from three colors of dried beans on black paper. At the end of our Spanish class time, all students poured the beans back into the bowls! I did snap many photos, though!

[You can view the photo gallery of images here!](#)



Flor de los muertos... (Dempseñalita) (¿de los muertos?)
(Don-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah)



DIA

DE LOS

MUERTOS



Hoy vamos a hacer:



- el calendario
- ¿Cómo estás?
- Día de los Muertos
- El poema
- Canción



Con cariño,

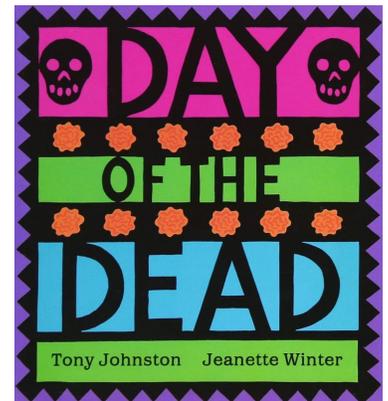
Señora Sanders

Calaveras

This year, 4th and 5th graders have made clay sugar skulls. The *calaveras* (skulls) are coming along! The first day of our enterprise we made the shape of the head, added eye sockets, nose holes, and teeth impressions. Through this project we will focus on the details of the Dia de los Muertos tradition such as floral patterns, colorful frills, and the designs of *papel picado* (cut paper decorations) which are seen *everywhere* in celebrations. Many people celebrating even paint their faces into calaveras! The last phase of our decorating will be the glitter which garnishes the eye sockets.

Taking Responsible Risks

Our Spanish language learners have been encountering the traditions of Día de los Muertos! Did you know that this year I am teaching full immersion Spanish classes? This means students are using *a lot* of brain power each time they enter the Spanish classroom. The habit of mind **Responsible Risks** is used *every day* in Spanish class. Especially for kindergarteners and new students, this can feel especially uncomfortable. You can affirm your child at home by acknowledging that is difficult for *everyone* to be outside the comfort of their native language, even adults! I use lots of Spanish songs to enhance fluency and to help even our youngest learners obtain levels of automaticity and mastery. While our program here at Prairie Creek is not language acquisition course, you will likely hear your child singing Spanish songs or using Spanish vocabulary outside the classroom!



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Continual Learning

We enter Spanish class by singing a song (*Buenos días, buenos días, Como estás? Como estás?*) and always start in a circle. We read the *mensaje* (message) for the day that outlines what we will do. Then we sing the days of the week song (*lunes, martes, miércoles, jueves, viernes, sábado, domingo*) and read the calendar (in Spanish!). We also look outside to identify descriptions of the weather. This week's greeting is a review of *¿Cómo estás?* which means "How are you?" and students respond *Estoy_____ (emocionado, feliz, enojado, aburrido)* which means "I am excited/happy/angry/mad/bored). Students practice greetings in a circle by standing up to ask each other and responding in Spanish.

Each month a new Spanish poem is introduced. This year our poems will be expanding our knowledge of the folk songs and traditional songs of Spanish-speaking cultures around the world. Children have already mastered the September poem, which is actually from a folk song, called). We will now be working in November on two verses from a Mexican song *La Piñata*, a song sung during birthdays and many holidays when a piñata is used for celebration!

Parent involvement – Email me!

This year as we "travel" around to different Spanish speaking countries, it is my hope to share authentic-as-possible cuisine with the children. This year I envision foods being a cultural experience for all grade levels. (Please note I have taken *very* careful notes of all dietary/medical restrictions!)

Please, please, please email me if you are interested in making a dish and let me know what corner of the world it is from. Additionally, if you and/or your family are from a Spanish-speaking country, I would love to coordinate a time for you to share your family and cultural traditions! These include dancing, arts, cuisine, and games!



¡Hasta la próxima!

Jennifer Sanders

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