Joslyn Art Museum

Comprehensive Study Lesson Plan

Created by Angela Fischer, Kristy Lee and Mary Lou Alfieri and Laura Huntimer.

Theme: Opening the Past with the Present

Focus: Arte Popular: Mexican Folk Art from the Collection of Pat and Judd Wagner

Special Exhibition on view at Joslyn Art Museum July 5 – November 29, 2009

Objectives:
• Gain a better understanding of Mexican Folk Art and how it can teach about Mexican culture and traditions, both past and present.
• Learn about the Day of the Dead and other Mexican Celebrations through the study of folk art.
• Discover the contribution of Jose Guadalupe Posada to the Day of the Dead and the significance of skulls and skeletons in Mexican Folk Art.

Instructional Strategies that Strongly Affect Student Achievement – Robert J. Marzano

01 Identifying similarities and differences
02 Summarizing and note taking
03 Reinforcing effort and providing recognition
04 Homework and practice
05 Nonlinguistic representations
06 Cooperative learning
07 Setting learning goals and providing feedback
08 Generating and testing hypotheses
09 Activating prior knowledge

Resources:
Check out the Teacher Support Materials online for additional resources.

Suggested Materials: tissue paper, wooden skewers, glue, scissors, rulers, Mexican Folk Art images, fine art images, paper plates, puff paint, glitter glue, construction paper, assortment of metallic decorations, markers, crayons, skull template, shiny origami paper (or aluminum foil), kool-aid and spices for painting, access to internet.

Vocabulary: alter ego, arte popular, calavera, Dia de los Muertos, economy, folk art, iconography, indigenous, Nahual (Nagual), ofrenda, papel picado, sticky notes (two colors) symbol, tourism.

Procedure:
• **Engage:** Ask students to talk about things they think of when they hear – Mexico. When they provide an example related to art (i.e. piñata), transition the conversation to Mexican Folk Art.

• **Art Talk 1:** Introduce students to Nahual (Nagual) which are fantasy creatures, an alter ego that you change into after midnight by showing them images from Arte Popular. One example from Santa Cruz de las Huertas, Tonola, Jalisco is a creature that collects things people have lost. After discussing the creatures, have students think about and share what their Nahual (Nagual) would be. This activity is a lead-in to the Language Arts activity.

• **Art Talk 2:** Who is Jose Guadalupe Posada? He is attributed with the revival of the Day of the Dead holiday. Talk about who Posada was and hand out images by him. Have students discuss their interpretations and reactions. This activity may be used as a lead-in to or paired with the Production 2 activity. Refer to Jose Guadalupe Posada document in Teacher Support Materials for additional information.

• **History:** What is the history of Mexican Folk Art? Discuss its beginnings and significance. Refer to the Bibliography and Webology in Teacher Support Materials for additional information.
• **Aesthetics:** Share images of two-dimensional artworks by recognized Mexican Folk Artists (i.e. Fabian Hernandez) and Mexican artists (i.e. Diego Rivera). Hand out two different colored sticky notes, and assign one color for similarities and one for differences. Students should write one thing and each and post next to the images. Discuss the discoveries. Talk about how sometimes Mexican Folk Art is created to sell to collectors or for everyday use. Answer the question, *does Mexican Folk Art belong in a museum?*

• **Production 1:** Papel Picado. Introduce students to the art of cutting paper. Review the lesson taught by artist, Linda Garcia at the September 2009 Thursdays for Teachers. Refer to Papel Picado resources list in [Teacher Support Materials](#) for additional information.

• **Production 2:** The Skull as a Happy Art Subject. Introduce students to (or review) the Day of the Dead celebration. Review the lesson taught by artist Bonnie Cosentino at the October 2009 Thursdays for Teachers. Refer to in [Teacher Support Materials](#) for additional information.

• **Other:** Research the various materials used in Mexican Folk Art (i.e. bugs for dye, gourds, clay, sticks, tin). Have students collect some of these materials and share their collection with the class. They could use these items in the Fine Arts activity.

• **Close:** Show students various images of artworks. The goal is to get students to identify Mexican Folk Art versus what would be considered fine art.

**Extensions:**

• **Cultural Connections 1:** Mexican Folk Art is sometimes a family business. Research and discuss this idea. Then have students talk about activities they do together as a family.

• **Cultural Connections 2:** Gather students around the image of *The Virgin of the Rosary*. After taking a visual inventory, have students discuss what they see. Talk about what the different symbols represent. Hand out various images of the Virgin Mary found in Mexican Folk Art. Compare and contrast the images.

• **Fine Arts:** Hand out images of *Miniature Tree of Life of the Sea* by Juan Hernandez. Explain that students will create a tree of life that shows their life story. Have students bring pieces from home to add to their sculpture or drawing. When adding color to their tree of life, encourage students to use different methods such as spices or kool-aid.

• **Language Arts:** Refer to Art Talk activity. Have students develop their alter ego through writing about their Nahual (Nagual). Talk about how their creature was created. What does it represent? What is the power/purpose of it? Create a narrative story featuring their Nahual (Nagual).

• **Math:** Tourism and economy. Mexican Folk Art pieces are created for the tourism trade. How important then is tourism to the Mexican economy? Research and describe tourism’s role. Think about Omaha’s economy, and how it depends on tourism (i.e. College World Series).

• **Science:** Color and dye from bugs. The cochineal beetle is used to create red dye. Research other items that are red from this dye. Then research other bugs or creatures that are used for their color or used to get dye.

**Selected References:** Go online to [Teacher Support Materials](#) and review the Bibliography, [Webology](#) and [Videos](#).