



EDUCATION @ MESA ARTS CENTER



MESA ARTS CENTER PRESENTS

SUGAR SKULL!

A DIA DE LOS MUERTOS MUSICAL ADVENTURE

Ikeda Theater | October 30 - 31 | 10 AM & 11:50 AM | Grades: K-7

2019/2020 EDUCATOR RESOURCE GUIDE



EDUCATION @ MESA ARTS CENTER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome to the Educator	3
Teacher and Chaperone Information	3
Curriculum Connections	4
Classroom Activities & Questions	5
Bus Loading Procedures	11
Contact Information.....	12



ABOUT THE SUGAR SKULL...

Young Vita thinks her family has gone loco planning a celebration for deceased loved ones. Why throw a party for the dead? But when a candy skeleton on her abuelita’s cemetery ofrenda suddenly springs to life, Vita finds herself on a magical, musical journey to unravel the true meaning of Día de los Muertos. Meet Sugar Skull, a charismatic candy skeleton who dreams of riding the exclusive train to Who-Knows-Where. Along with her skeletal new friend, Vita dances with ancient ancestors, sings with a sorrowful sorceress, escapes the trickster Chaneques, and even meets the famous Catrina Calavera. But can this clever youth help him get on the train before it’s too late?

ABOUT MEXICO BEYOND MARIACHI...

Mexico Beyond Mariachi is an ensemble of professional teaching artists, musicians, actors, and dancers whose love of the traditions, festivals and richness of life in Mexico shines bright in every performance. The group is made up of performers from different cultural backgrounds as well as first and second generation Mexicans. Their philosophy is rooted in the belief that art and culture form an integral part of the development of an individuals’ outlook on life. This experience and philosophy is very apparent in their production of *Sugar Skull! A Dia de los Muertos Musical Adventure*.



EDUCATION @ MESA ARTS CENTER

WELCOME!

Dear Educator,

Thank you for selecting a **Performing Live for Students!** field trip with the Mesa Arts Center. We have a dynamic season planned and we look forward to connecting you to our many artists and performances. With Performing Live, students are able to experience live theatre and make educational connections well beyond the classroom.

We also recognize and appreciate the energy and time spent on your part in coordinating field trips. In this guide we have provided information to help make this the best experience possible.

In addition, the Mesa Arts Center has many open and inviting spaces that make good places to hold a brown bag lunch. No prior arrangements need to be made.

Please contact our offices at engagement@mesaartscenter.com or 480-644-6564 should you have any additional questions.

Enjoy the show!

TEACHER AND CHAPERONE INFORMATION

Chaperones

- ◆ Assign each chaperone a designated group of students and provide him/her with a written list of the students in that group.
- ◆ Ask chaperones to stay with their assigned group throughout the field trip. Adult chaperones are responsible for the students' conduct and behavior throughout their visit to the Center.
- ◆ Please review theater etiquette rules and responsibilities with all chaperones.
- ◆ Have the phone numbers of every chaperone in your group to quickly access each other in case of emergency.

Theater Etiquette

- ◆ No Food or Drink inside the theatre (besides bottled water).
- ◆ Students must be accompanied by chaperones at all times.
- ◆ Cameras and recording devices may not be used during the performance.
- ◆ Please silence cell phones and resist the urge to text message.
- ◆ Listening and following the House Managers and Ushers will help the seating and dismissal process.
- ◆ Feel free to laugh, clap and enjoy the show but also to be respectful of those around you.



EDUCATION @ MESA ARTS CENTER

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Sugar Skull! A Día de los Muertos Musical Adventure

Arizona Academic Standards in the Arts

These standards can be achieved through discussion questions or activities included in the study guide.

Theatre

TH.RE.7.1-7a – Respond to or evaluate artistic choices made in a guided theatrical experience.

Visual Arts

VA.CR.2.K-7a – Explore, Create, or develop artwork using a variety of artistic processes, materials, and approaches according to grade level expectations.



Arizona English Language Arts Standards

These standards can be achieved by participating in the study guide.

Reading

Grades K-7.RL.2 – Summarize the key supporting details and ideas. In Grades 4 -7 students focus on determining the theme and supporting with details.

Grades K-6.RL.9 – Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Grades K-7.RI.1 – Read carefully to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it.

Grades K-7.RI.2 – Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development. In Grades K - 4, the focus is on identifying the main idea and supporting details.

Writing

Grades K-5.W.3 – Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

Language

Grades 1-7.L.4 – Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

Speaking and Listening

Grades K-7.SL.1 – Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Grades K-7.SL.2 – Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.



EDUCATION @ MESA ARTS CENTER

PRE-PERFORMANCE CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Included in this resource guide are a variety of activities created to correspond with the Arizona English Language Arts and Performing Arts Standards to enhance the students' growth, reading skills, and overall comprehension.

Questions to Ponder....

Question 1 – What do you know about the Day of the Dead, or Día de los Muertos? What does it make you think of? Do you have family or know anyone who celebrates Día de los Muertos? (Grades K-7.SL.1)

Question 2 – Día de los Muertos is a day of happiness because it is about remembering loved ones. Do you have any special traditions in your family to remember loved ones who have passed on? (Grades K-7.SL.1)

Activities to Explore....

Some of the vocabulary used in Sugar Skull may be unfamiliar to students. Take a look at the vocabulary on pages 7 and 8 with your students. To help them retain the vocabulary, you can have them create sentences, act out the vocabulary words, or draw visuals to go with them.

Standards Implemented: Grades 1-7.L.4

Approximate time: 15-20 min

Materials Needed: Pages 7 and 8, optionally paper/pencils/drawing materials

If you would like to give students a brief overview of Día de los Muertos prior to the show, the Smithsonian Latino Center has an interactive online portal for students. Students can read about facts, history, and traditions, as well as create their own virtual ofrenda. You can try it out here: <http://latino.si.edu/DayoftheDead/>

Standards Implemented: Grades K-7.RI.1 & RI.2

Approximate time: 15-20 min

Materials Needed: A computer with internet access

If you have a week's length of time or more prior to the performance, students can participate in numerous learning and artistic activities to more deeply understand Día de los Muertos. The Menello Museum has an excellent pdf lesson plan set you can access here: <https://web.archive.org/web/20151106015833/http://www.mennellomuseum.com/pdf/Dia%20de%20los%20Muertos%20lesson%20plan.pdf>

Standards implemented and materials needed are detailed in the lesson plan document
Approximate time: 45-60 min daily for up to 6 days



EDUCATION @ MESA ARTS CENTER

POST-PERFORMANCE CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Questions to Discuss

- Question 1 – After seeing the show, what is something new you learned about Día de los Muertos? What were you surprised to find out? (Grades K-7.SL.1, SL.2)
- Question 2 – How does Vita change from the beginning to the end of the show? What does she learn is the true meaning of Día de los Muertos? (Grades K-7.SL.1, SL.2)
- Question 3 – Music was an important part of the performance. Which song did you like best? The performers used wind, string, and percussion instruments. Did they use any instruments you were not familiar with? (Grades K-7.SL.1; TH.RE.7.1-7a)

Activities for the Classroom

Being able to retell a story or summarize a subject is an important skill. To retell the show or summarize important elements of Día de los Muertos, students can participate in a cooperative sentence strip activity. See page 9 for details on this activity.

Standards Implemented: Grades K-7.RL.2

Approximate time: 30-45 minutes

Materials needed: See page 9 for details

Now that students have an idea of what might happen on Día de los Muertos, they can write a creative story starring their very own calaca. See page 10 for details on how students can create their own calacas as well as write a story telling all about what their calacas does at night.

Standards Implemented: Grades K-7.W.3; VA.CR.2.K-7a

Approximate time: 45 minutes + depending on level art creation chosen

Materials needed: See page 10 for details

A common misconception about Día de los Muertos is that it is the “Mexican version” of Halloween. After seeing *Sugar Skull*, students should have more information about what Día de los Muertos is really about. Create a Venn Diagram or Double Bubble Thinking Map with students to compare and contrast Día de los Muertos and Halloween to clarify what these celebrations are about.




Standards Implemented: Grades K-6.RL.9

Approximate time: 20-30 minutes

Materials: Chart paper, markers

Word	Definition	Picture
<p>Ofrenda</p>	<p>(Spanish for offering) It is a collection of objects placed on a ritual altar during the annual and traditionally Mexican Dia de Muertos celebration.</p>	
<p>Pan de Muerto</p>	<p>(Spanish for bread of the dead) Also called pan de los Muertos or dead bread in the US, it is a type of sweet roll traditionally baked in Mexico during the weeks leading up to the Dia de Muertos which is celebrated on Nov. 1 and 2.</p>	
<p>Abuelita</p>	<p>This is the diminutive form of abuela, similar to what “granny” is to grandmother. You use the diminutive to add “affection” and “tenderness”. When you say abuelita you mean “dearest grandma” in a very personal way.</p>	

DAY OF THE DEAD VOCABULARY

Word	Definition	Picture
<p>Calaca</p>	<p>A colloquial Mexican Spanish name for skeleton, this is a figure of a skull or skeleton (usually human) commonly used for decoration during the Mexican Day of the Dead festival although they are made all year round.</p>	
<p>La Muerte</p>	<p>This means death in Spanish. Oftentimes La Muerte is personified, and can be interpreted as either a man or a woman.</p>	
<p>Cempazuchitl</p>	<p>This is the <i>Nahuatl</i> word for the yellow marigold, the traditional flower for Day of the Dead. It is thought to attract spirits home.</p>	
<p>Nahuatl</p>	<p>This refers to the people and language indigenous to southern Mexico and Central America, including the Aztecs. Varieties of this language are still spoken today by an estimated 1.5 million Nahua peoples.</p>	



COOPERATIVE SENTENCE STRIP PARAGRAPH

Introduction & Objective: Here students will work in small groups to create sentences, then work as a whole class to create a paragraph from those sentences. This serves as both a review of content material and practice in both oral and written language fluency.

Materials:

- Large chart or butcher paper & magnets/tape **OR** Pocket Chart
- Large sentence strips
- Notebook paper
- Markers

Procedure:

1. Preparation: Create a topic sentence that encompasses the show or Dia de los Muertos as a topic. This could be something like “In the musical Sugar Skull, Vita learns all about the holiday Dia de los Muertos.” Or, “Día de los Muertos is a celebration that honors those who have passed away.” Write the topic sentence on large butcher or chart paper. Or, if you are using a pocket chart, write it on a sentence strip and place it at the top of the pocket chart.
2. Read the topic sentence with students.
3. Explain to students that they are going to work in small groups to create a sentence that would be relevant for a paragraph with the topic sentence you’ve provided. In order to get students excited and engaged, a game-like quality is added to the assignment. After discussing options among their group, the group will write their rough draft sentence on a piece of notebook paper. When they have done this, they raise their hands for the teacher to check their sentence. If there are any errors, factual or grammatical, the teacher guides them to these mistakes without correcting it for them. Students must fix the sentence and then raise their hands to have it checked again. If it is correct, students get the final copy sentence strip paper and re-write their sentence on it. The key here is that no two groups can write the same sentence about the same supporting fact. The goal is to finish as quickly as possible before someone else uses the same idea. When the students have finished their final copy sentence, they put it on the large paper underneath the topic sentence using magnets so that they can be easily moved during the editing process, or place it in the pocket chart.
4. Once all groups have finished their sentences, the class reads through all the sentences together. Guided by the teacher, the class discusses the best order to put the sentences in—is there a sentence that should clearly go directly after the topic sentence? Are there facts that should be grouped together? As the class makes these decisions, the teacher moves the sentences around, visually modeling how to edit a paragraph.
5. When the paragraph is completely edited, the class reads it out loud together.



EDUCATION @ MESA ARTS CENTER

WHAT MY CALACA DID AT NIGHT

Introduction & Objective: Students will learn about calacas in the context of Día de los Muertos and create their own stories, in the process learning about multi-paragraph paper writing.

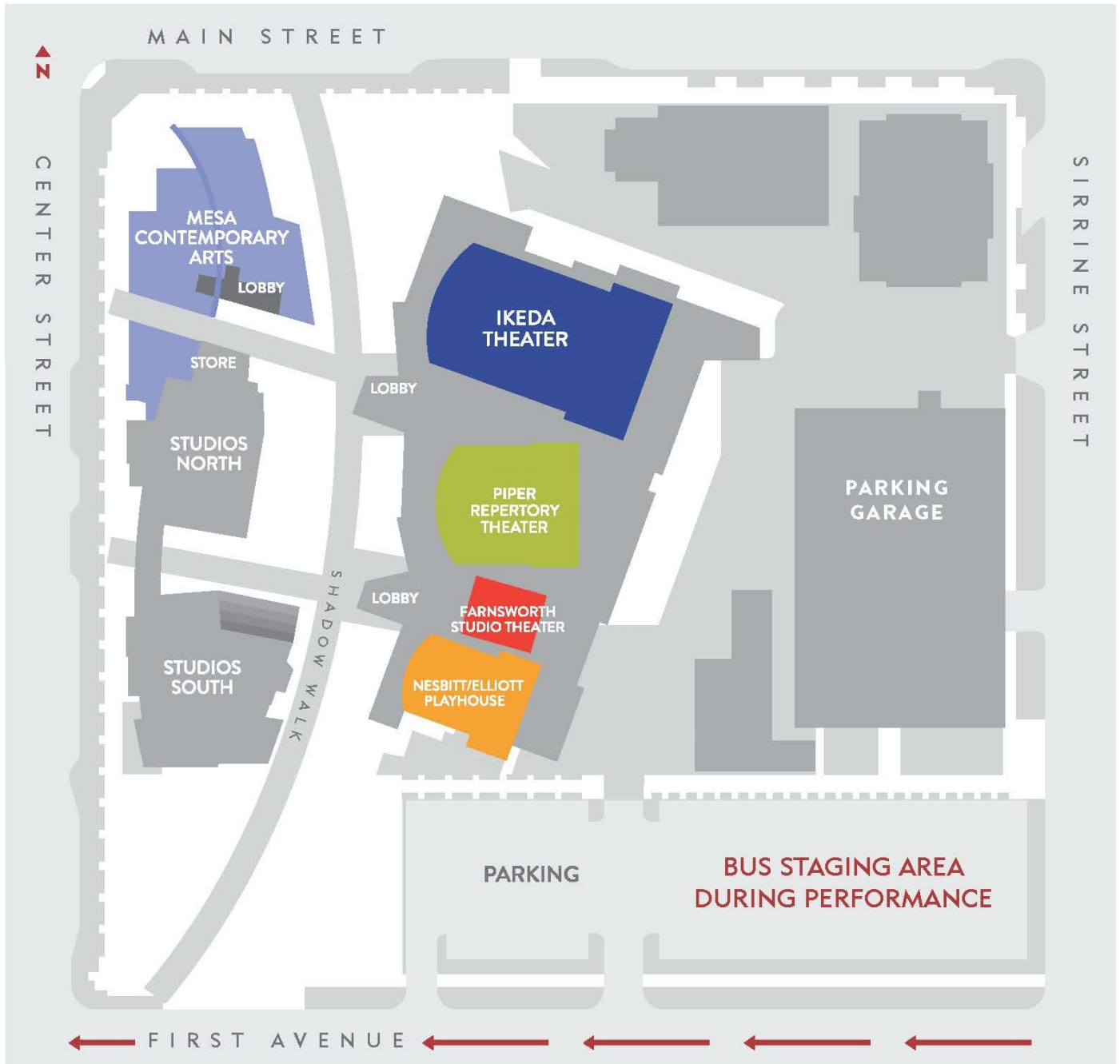
Materials:

- Paper and pencils
- Individually-made calaveras (See this lesson for templates and ideas: <https://laii.unm.edu/info/k-12-educators/assets/documents/dia-de-los-muertos/calaveras.pdf>) OR images of typical Día de los Muertos objects (i.e. calacas, calaveras, ofrendas, catrinas, etc.)

Procedure:

1. Ideally, students should create their own calaca prior to writing their story. Provide as many different types of art materials as are have available-construction paper, crepe paper, tissue paper, sequins, glitter, yarn, fabric, ribbon, etc. Allow students to be as creative as they want in decorating their skeleton. If you are pressed for time, students can look at pictures of calacas or Jose Posada's calaveras to help them imagine their own calaca.
2. Once the students are ready to begin writing, explain to them that they're going to write a story about what their calaca did the night of Día de los Muertos. This will require students to have some background information on the celebration and an understanding of what people do when they observe Día de los Muertos. Encourage students to recall events from the musical Sugar Skull, as well as from any other information they may have learned in class or from their own experience. From here you can use whatever writing process you're teaching your students. One approach would involve starting with brainstorming and creating the web, then moving on to rough drafting, editing, revising, and creating a final copy.
3. It may be beneficial to give students the first few sentences from the book to start their story. Adapted for Día de los Muertos, you could use the following sentences: "One fall day, I made a calaca very long and loose (you could substitute other adjectives). The next day when I saw him (or her), he was not the same at all. His hat had slipped, his arms drooped down, he really looked a fright-it made me start to wonder: what do calacas do at night?"
4. Once the stories and skeletons are completed, you can display them in the room both to provide a sense of 'publishing' and decoration for the fall.

Adapted from a lesson at the Latin American & Iberian Institute: <https://laii.unm.edu/info/k-12-educators/assets/documents/dia-de-los-muertos/what-my-calavera-did.pdf>



STEPS TO UNLOAD

- 1 Enter the drop off area by coming in westbound on 1st Avenue.
- 2 Pull up to the curb marked with cones and wait until notified to unload passengers.
- 3 Await parking direction from MAC security

STEPS TO PICK UP

- 1 Passengers will exit the theater and meet buses in the bus parking lot area.
- 2 Wait for clearance to depart.



EDUCATION @ MESA ARTS CENTER



SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE!

We'd love to hear your students' response to our shows.
We especially appreciate pictures and letters!

THANK YOU!

Questions? Please contact Engagement at:

P 480-644-6540 | F 480-644-6503
engagement@mesaartscenter.com