Lesson Title: Making an Ofrenda
Age Level: All grade levels
Estimated Time: 60-90 minutes

OFRENDAS

STANDARDS AND BENCHMARKS
National Standards for Arts Education, Visual Arts Content Standards 1 - 6

MATERIALS
- Small poster board or other heavy paper for each student
- Shoe Boxes
- Glue
- Crayons, markers, colored pencils
- Paint
- Scissors
- Glitter
- Sequins
- Tissue paper
- Ribbon
- Photographs
- Magazines or other pictures for collages
- Butcher paper
- Table cloth
- Use NHCC video found at: http://diadelosmuertos.nationalhispaniccenter.org/dia-de-los-muertos/fun-and-learning.html

EXTENSIONS
Students research how other cultures deal with the topic of death. How do they commemorate, honor or celebrate those who have passed away? How do different cultures express their attitudes about death and dying? Students chose a country, culture or town and report their findings to the class.

GOAL
Discuss the materials used to create an ofrenda and understand their significance. Make an ofrenda, experimenting with different types of visual representations.

STUDENT LEARNING
Students understand the cultural significance of the ofrenda for Día de los Muertos by creating an ofrenda.

VOCABULARY
- Ofrenda
- Altar
- Papel picado
- Copal
- Sugar skulls
- Pan de Muerto
- Calaveras
- Death
- Cempasúchil (marigolds)
PROCEDURE:

1. Discuss with students what they know or have experienced about death. Provide open-ended questions such as: Have you ever had a family member, a neighbor, or a pet pass away? How were they honored? What do you do to remember them?

2. Explain that they are going to create an ofrenda to honor or remember a person, a group of people, an event, or a particular issue that is important to them.

3. Students can use poster-board or shoe boxes as a base for their ofrenda. Once they’ve decided on the theme and planned a design they can begin. If using a shoe box, students can paint the exterior and interior. Using the shoebox or poster board students create the central image that represents their theme. They can use photographs, pictures from magazines or other objects. Students can decorate with sequins, glitter, ribbon, tissue paper, handwritten messages, etc.

4. Prepare a large table or area to display the students’ ofrendas. Cover the area with butcher paper or a table cloth. Papel picado, sugar skulls, marigolds, candles, pan de muerto, water, salt, and a copal is often found on ofrendas and can be arranged along with the students’ work. Students may also want to bring in small objects that represent the person, event, or issue that their design honors to add to the ofrenda as well.

SUGGESTED FORMS OF ASSESSMENT

Have students write a reflective piece on who or what their ofrenda was made for, why they chose that person or theme, and what the individual parts of their design represent. These reflections can be displayed with the ofrenda.