

Lesson/Activity Title:

DIA DE LOS MUERTOS (DAY OF THE DEAD) BIOGRAPHIES



Time: approximately 15-20 minutes for the focus; approximately 15 minutes for the teach/model; 45-60 minutes for independent practice; and 15-20 minutes for closure

Instructional Goals:

- Students will use **PebbleGo Biographies** database to research famous people of the past and present.
- Students will identify contributions of famous people throughout history
- Students will learn about Dia de Los Muertos and its traditions
- Students will create a Day of the Dead skull that represents a famous person

Integrated Content Standards

- National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) (<https://www.socialstudies.org/standards>)
- Common Core English Language Arts/Literacy Standards (www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/)
- NCTE/IRA Standards for English Language Arts (www.ncte.org/standards/ncte-ira)
- International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Standards for Students (<https://www.iste.org/standards/for-students>)
- Next Generation Science Standards (www.nextgenscience.org/)

Materials/Resources:

- **PebbleGo Biographies** online database
- Biography Research handout
- Dia de Los Muertos Sugar Skull handout
- Various art supplies such as markers, crayons, scissors, ribbon, glitter, glue

Procedures/Lesson Activities:

Focus

1. Bring the class together and write the words “Dia de Los Muertos” and then “Day of the Dead” underneath them. Have students read and say the name of the holiday with you in both Spanish and English.
2. Introduce students to the holiday and show them a video of people celebrating Dia de Los Muertos such as the one in the Pebble Go Day of the Dead article. Show students images of people celebrating the holiday in both Mexico and the United States.
3. Ask students to tell you what they noticed about the video and/or images you showed them. Record their responses. Ask probing questions such as:
 - › Why do you think people of Mexican descent celebrate Dia de Los Muertos?
 - › How is the holiday celebrated?
 - › How is this the same as a holiday you celebrate with your own family? How is it different?

4. Navigate to the **PebbleGo Social Studies** article Day of the Dead with your class. Compare your recorded student responses with the facts from the article.
5. Tell students that one way people from Mexico celebrate the holiday is by decorating a skull to represent a person who has died. Show images of these skulls and point out the bright colors and designs used to decorate them. Discuss how the images on the skull might represent something from the person's life.

Teach/Model

6. Demonstrate accessing the **PebbleGo** online database and navigate to the Biographies module. Remind students they have the option of reading the articles in Spanish or English.
7. Select one of the subcategories of biographies such as Hispanic Americans. Choose a person such as Frida Kahlo.
8. Draw your students' attention to the read-aloud option to the left of the text. Demonstrate clicking on the speaker icon.
9. Distribute the Biography Research handout and review the directions with students.
10. Tell students they will select their own famous person to research and represent with a Day of the Dead skull.

Guided Practice

11. Demonstrate navigating through your selected biography and model completing the first portion of the Biography Research handout. For example, if you chose Frida Kahlo, fill in the basic information section. Continue to model reading the article and take research notes in the appropriate sections until students have grasped the concept.
12. Explain to students that it is important to give credit to the source of your research. Point out where to find the source information by clicking on the "cite" button. Model filling out the bibliography portion of the research handout.
13. Circulate the Dia de Los Muertos Sugar Skull handout and review the instructions with your class. Model summarizing the research from the Biography Research handout and brainstorm ways to decorate the sugar skull to represent the famous person researched. For example, because Frida Kahlo was an artist, you might draw a paintbrush on your skull. Or you might draw a bed on your skull to represent the time after her accident when she was forced to paint in bed.

Independent Practice

14. Ask students to select a famous person from the **PebbleGo Biographies** online database to research. If you prefer, assign a specific person from the database to the members of your class.
15. Have students complete the Biography Research handout using information found in the **PebbleGo** online database.
16. Provide students with various art supplies to decorate their Dia de Los Muertos skull. Encourage students to add details to their skull such as hair, facial features, and anything that represents information they learned about their person during the research process.

Closure

17. Bring the class together and allow students to share their biography skulls with the class. Request that students explain how their decorations for the skull represent facts and information about their famous person's life.
18. Display the skulls in your classroom or in the hallway to celebrate Dia de Los Muertos.



Extend/Enrich

- Host a Dia de Los Muertos celebration in your classroom. Decorate your classroom and bring in authentic Mexican cuisine for your students to sample. Keep in mind any allergies as you choose food. Invite members of the community to come and speak to students about Mexican culture and traditions.

Name: _____



Biography Research

Use the **PebbleGo** Biographies online database to choose one famous person to research. Complete the handout with information you learn from the article.

Basic Information:

Name of Person:

Location of Birth:

Year They Were Born:

Important Life Events:

Interesting Facts:

Bibliography: _____

Name: _____

Dia de Los Muertos Biography Skull

Decorate the Day of the Dead skull to represent your famous person.



This skull represents the life of: _____