



Día De los Muertos

Day of the Dead – November 1 & 2

Activity: *Papel Picado* (All Ages)

The tradition of *papel picado* (cut or perforated paper) in Mexico can be traced back to pre-Colombian times when papermaking thrived throughout Mesoamerica. The bark of the amate tree, a type of fig, was used to make a richly colored brown or beige paper. Cut-paper figures used in ceremonies were created to represent any number of human and animal spirits. As *Día de los Muertos* celebrates life and death, *papel picado* also represents birth and rebirth and feature images of skulls, crosses, and tombstones. These paper banners are not meant to be preserved, but are also allowed to break down and return to nature at the end of the celebration

National Visual Arts Standards Addressed:

- VA: Cr1.1.Ka - Engage in exploration and imaginative play with materials.
- VA: Cn11.1.1a - Understand that people from different places and times have made art for a variety of reasons.
- VA: Cn11.1.3a- Recognize that responses to art change depending on knowledge of the time and place in which it was made.
- VA: Cr3. 1.1a- Use art vocabulary to describe choices while creating art.
- VA: Cr2.2.5a – Demonstrate quality craftsmanship through care for and use of materials, tools and equipment.

Materials:

- 11" x 14" sheets of tissue paper
- Scissors
- String or yarn
- Glue

Directions:

1. Introduce or review the concepts of positive and negative space repetition and pattern and check for understanding.
2. Choose a sheet of tissue paper and fold it accordion style from the bottom up (about 3 or 4 folds). Leave one inch at the top to attach a string.
3. Using scissors cut out a series of repeating shapes from the folded edges of the tissue.
4. Unfold to reveal the pattern. Flatten on a table.
5. Lay the end of a long piece of yarn or string horizontally across the top of the paper. Fold the edge of the paper over the string and use a very small amount of glue to attach.