

# Mexican Day of the Dead

Throughout this project you will learn about the Mexican festival Day of the Dead. You will learn:

- About the festival and Mexican culture
- About the significance of symbols
- To produce and refine ideas
- How to put together a composition
- How to mix and apply paint, show different tones, and blend colours

Final Piece:

A sugar mask made from cardboard



## Year 7 Half Term One Knowledge Organiser

### KEY EXPERIMENTS

Mark making  
Water colour  
Blending  
Colour mixing  
Cutting  
Pattern making



### Key Words and Definitions

**Day of the Dead** – a Mexican festival held on 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> November every year to celebrate the lives of loved ones who have died. Activities and traditions vary depending on the local community. It is believed that the spirits of the dead visit the living during the celebration: angelitos (children) on 1<sup>st</sup> November; adults on 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

**Calacas and calaveras** – skeletons and skulls.

**Altar** – people create altars by gathering together photographs and mementos of loved ones, flowers, candles, and food. This is a place to remember the dead.

**Papel Picado** – paper cut into decorative designs is laid on tables and hung up like bunting.

**Ofrenda** – offerings are left for the dead at altars and graves. Ofrendas include things that would be missed in the afterlife, such as Bread of the Dead, fruit, sweets, cigarettes, coffee, and alcohol.

**Sugar skulls** – are moulded from a mixture of water and sugar. They are decorated with patterns, and sometimes people's names, in bright colours.

**Marigold flowers** – the vibrant colours and scents of the flowers guide spirits to their altars. Marigolds, or flowers in general, also represent the fragility of life.

**Symbol** – a sign understood as representing an idea, object, or relationship.

**Tone/value** - highlight, mid-tones, and shadow. Tone is applied to create the illusion of 3D form and depth.

**Block colour** – colour in a single tone, with no variation.

**Gradient** – a smooth transition from one tone to another.

**Colour blend** - a smooth transition from one colour to another.

**Colour mix** – combining at least two colours to achieve a new colour.

### Try this!

<https://www.art-is-fun.com/drawing-lessons>

Watch the video and produce your own sugar skull design following the steps of the video.



### WAGOLL:

- Good scale
- Good use of space
- Mexican Day of the Dead symbols
- Full range of tonal value, from light to dark
- Colour mixing
- Colour blending
- Bright, joyful colours