



## Lesson Plan

### Culture Search: Literary Skulls

- Review the definition of *culture* with your students. Remind students that culture is the traditions, beliefs, values, and way of life of a group of people passed down from adults to children. When we understand and learn about other cultures, we become more aware of how people live all around the world.
- Show students the country of Mexico on a map.
  - **Ask:** Where is Mexico in relation to the United States and our state?  
*Mexico's northern border runs along the southern border of the United States.*  
*Similar to the United States, Mexico is part of the North American continent.*
- Show students the [Mexico's Day of the Dead Celebrations](#) video.
  - **Ask:** Why do you think people hold celebrations to honor the loved ones who they have lost?
- Explain to students that a stanza is a verse of poetry. Like a song, a poem has rhythm and may tell a story or highlight emotions felt by the poet. A poet is a person who writes poems. A poem may be written and/or spoken aloud to share with others. Poems may be different lengths and contain any number of lines. The number of lines that a poem has and the style in which a poem is written define the type of poem. Some poems have rhyming lines while others do not. If a poem contains rhyming lines, the poet decides which rhyming pattern to use.
- Inform students that a quatrain is a poem with four lines. Show students the [How to Compose a Quatrain](#) video.
- Instruct students to write a lighthearted rhyming poem in the style of the calaveras literarias, or "literary skulls," in honor of a friend, family member, or other loved one. Have students select a rhyming pattern of their choice and write a quatrain, or four lines, to complete their poem.
- When they have finished writing, have them record their poems on a voice memo application using a tablet or other technology resource available in your classroom. Consider playing a selection of recorded poems each day over the course of a week. Invite school administrators and other staff to participate in the poem presentations.
- **Advanced Learners:** Have students write an additional quatrain to expand their poem. Instruct students to use the same rhyming pattern they used in their first quatrain for the second. If time is limited, you may choose to have students write a rhyming couplet (two lines of verse) rather than an additional quatrain.

#### Approx. Time



- 30 minutes

#### Learning Target



- I can explore Mexican culture and write a poem.

#### Big Questions



- Why do you think people hold celebrations to honor the loved ones who they have lost?

#### Materials



- [Mexico's Day of the Dead Celebrations video](#)
- [How to Compose a Quatrain video](#)