

Dia de los Muertos

Some people think skeletons are scary. But for many Mexican families, they are joyful. Skeletons are a symbol of one of Mexico's favorite holidays – Dia de los Muertos.

Dia de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, is like a big family reunion. But it doesn't only include the living. Dead family members are part of the celebration too.

Families celebrate Dia de los Muertos on November 1st and 2nd. The holiday combines Aztec and Spanish traditions. It is a special time that honors relatives who have died.

Thinking about dead relatives might seem sad, but Dia de los Muertos is a happy occasion. In addition to celebrating good memories, families remind themselves that death is just a part of life. Acknowledging this fact takes some of the fear and mystery away from death.

Bones and skeletons symbolize this idea. Large and small skeletons can be found everywhere. The skeletons are posed doing all sorts of everyday things like playing piano, making tortillas, or reading a book. Sugar skulls are also a colorful and popular treat.

An important part of Dia de los Muertos is the ofrenda. People set up altars, called ofrendas, in their homes. These altars guide spirits back to the

family. They are filled with favorite foods of the dead person. They also contain pictures, candles, flowers, and items that represent the relative's interests.

Another part of Day of the Dead is the graveyard party! Families gather at the cemetery to clean the tombstones. They dance and sing and talk to their relatives. They might introduce new family members to ones who have already died. They have a big picnic and maybe even a parade.

Dia de los Muertos is a celebration of life, death, love, and family. It has a rich history in Mexico. It is being celebrated more often in the United States too. This special holiday unites families by reminding them of their connection to both past and future generations.



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. What is a symbol of Dia de los Muertos?
 - a. Tortillas
 - b. Books
 - c. Skeletons**
 - d. Tombstones

2. What do families put on their ofrendas?
 - a. Pictures
 - b. Candles
 - c. Food
 - d. All of the above**

3. Why do people dance on Dia de los Muertos?
 - a. To ward off death
 - b. Because it's a happy holiday**
 - c. To guide spirits to the family
 - d. Because their dead relatives were dancers

4. How does the holiday connect families to future generations?
 - a. By ensuring that they will be remembered by their relatives in the future**
 - b. By celebrating children
 - c. By cleaning the tombstones
 - d. By creating ofrendas for dead relatives

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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