

Mexico: *Día de los Muertos* Paper Crafts

Time Needed

- 40-60 minutes depending on skill level

Skill/Grade Level

- The intention of this lesson is to be utilized for any grade level with modifications based on the needs of the audience.

Core Area

- Leadership & Citizenship
- Communication & Expressive Arts

Life Skills

- Giving
Responsible Citizens
- Working
Marketable Skills
- Being
Self-Responsibility
- Relating
Accepting Differences
Social Skills
- Caring
Sharing
Empathy
Concern for Others

Educational Standards

- National 4-H Mission Mandates

Core Curriculum

- Kentucky 4-H Leadership & International Programs

Objectives

Through the Kentucky 4-H International Program participants will:

- **Experience** different cultures through geography, history, symbols, language, government, economy, agriculture, customs, religion, arts, food, and fun facts.
- **Share** about their culture while exploring different cultures.
- **Process** connections between different cultures.
- **Generalize** interdependencies of different cultures.
- **Apply** knowledge to work cooperatively with others from different cultures.

Introduction to Content

According to the U.S. Department of Education International Strategy Report (2012-2016), in order for youth to succeed in the 21st century workplace, they must develop knowledge and understanding of other countries, cultures, languages and perspectives. The overall mission of 4-H is to provide opportunities for youth and adults to work together to create sustainable community change. This is accomplished within the use of three primary content areas, or mission mandates, - citizenship, healthy living, and science. The 4-H Citizenship Mandate places emphasis on young people being engaged and active members of their community, country, and world. Citizenship is the foundation needed to help youth gain a broader understanding of life.

Curriculum

4-Hers will increase their global competencies by:

- Identifying their role in the global society,
- Investigating the interdependences of cultures,
- Appreciating the accomplishments of other cultures,
- Cooperatively work with others from varying cultures.

Materials Needed

Papel picado

- Scissors
- Craft glue
- Paper clips (about 10)
- String (at least 6 foot for each set)
- Tissue paper in bright colors
- Included templates (Dariela, 2014)

Paper marigolds

- Three pieces of tissue paper
- String (not thick)
- Scissors
- Green pipe cleaners (optional)

Learn more at www.kentucky4h.org or contact your county extension office.



Mexico: *Día de los Muertos* Paper



Introduction

- What country is known from Day of the Day?
 - Mexico
- What does Day of the Dead celebrate?
 - It is a cultural tradition in Mexico to honor lost family members.
- What is an altar?
 - One may find an altar in a ceremony to honor people, places, events, or things.

Background Information

Day of the Dead (or *Día de los Muertos*) is an important part of Mexican culture. A two-day celebration of life and death, Day of the Dead is not a version of how we typically think of Halloween—it is a cultural tradition to honor lost family members. Death is perceived as a natural phase of life in Mexico, and those who have passed on are remembered in spirit and memory. It is believed that during *Día de los Muertos*, the spirits of the dead return to earth temporarily.

The altar, or *ofrenda*, is a central part of the celebration. In cemeteries and in homes, altars are created to welcome the spirits back to the land of the living. They often include food and beverages, photos, and candles. The food and beverages may have been the favorite of the returning spirit, or traditional foods such as *pan de muerto*, or bread of the dead, may be used. *Pan de muerto* is a typical sweet bread, or *pan dulce*, that is often decorated with Day of the Dead symbols. Marigolds are the main flowers used to decorate the altars and are often called “the flower of death,” or *flor de muerte*. Marigold petals are scattered from altars to the graves to guide the way for the spirits.

Another important tradition of *Día de los Muertos* is the use of skulls, or *calaveras*. Sugar skulls are often sold as candies. *Catrina* is the most traditional skull seen throughout the festivities, and many women paint their face as in her likeness. Many wear dresses and suits, and noisemakers are used in the streets at all hours of the day and night as people celebrate the night the spirits return to earth. *Papel picado*, or literally “pierced paper”, can be seen throughout Mexico year-round, but especially during the Day of the Dead celebrations. The artform uses tissue paper cut out into beautiful decorations that fly on banners in the wind above the streets. (Garrett & Soriano, 2019)

Instructions for Papel picado:

1. A step by step video can be found here: https://youtu.be/evqJw5U_EGQ
2. Copy templates for as many *papel picado* as you would like to make-templates attached.
3. Cut out the templates below leaving ½ inch around each side (not the folded side).
4. Cut tissue paper to twice the size of the template.
5. Place 4-5 tissue papers in a stack.
6. Fold the tissue paper stack in half.
7. Place chosen template on top, matching folded side with the folded side of the template.
8. Secure all papers together with paper clips.
9. Cut according to the lines. Fold and bend as necessary to make cuts.
10. Remove paper clips and open the *papel picado*.
11. When you have several completed, line them up with the wide top edge facing up.
12. Fold top edge over string and apply glue to secure. Repeat for all papers along the string.
13. Allow to dry.
14. Hang your banner!

Mexico: *Día de los Muertos* Paper



Instructions for Paper Marigolds:

1. A step by step video can be found here: <https://youtu.be/tSVRWth-3m4>
2. Lay all three pieces of tissue paper on top of each other so that the corners match.
3. Fold them in half to get a guideline to cut on, then cut down the middle on that line.
4. There should now be six pieces of tissue paper.
5. Stack those six pieces on top of each other so the edges line up.
6. Now fold the paper accordion style, starting from the bottom of one of the short sides of the paper. Each fold should be about the width of an inch.
7. Continue to fold the paper like this until you reach the end.
8. Now you will have a long, thick strip about an inch wide, which you will now fold in half lengthwise. This simply marks the center of the flower where you will tie your string and helps your flower to stay symmetrical.
9. Now you will want to tie the string fairly tightly around the paper, where you previously made a crease. Then cut off any excess string.
10. This is where you get to decide the size of your flower. The closer you cut towards the center, the smaller the flower will be and the farther from the center, the larger it will be. Decide what size flower you want, then cut the ends so they are rounded off or petal shaped. It's important that you trim each side the same amount.
11. Next, begin to pull apart the layers of tissue paper. Pull them from the outer end, towards the center, fluffing out the flower as you go. Do this on both sides.
12. Once you have separated all of the layers, it should look like a flower.
13. If you want the flower to have a stem, take 2 or 3 of the green pipe cleaners (depending on the size of your flower) and twist them together, leaving a little over two inches untwisted.
14. Take the untwisted ends of the pipe cleaner and tie them around the flower at the same point as the string, making sure to tuck all ends into the center of the flower so they aren't visible.
15. Lastly you will just want to fluff out the flower so that you can't see the string or pipe cleaners tied in the center.
16. You can use these to decorate gifts, wall art or make a bouquet of flowers. You can even use them as a service project to brighten someone's day!

Reflect and Apply

1. How does your family or your culture honor those who have passed away?
2. Considering your own culture, what are some uses of flowers in honoring those who have passed away, if there are any?
3. What are the differences in cultural uses of color in Mexico and the US?
4. What is the typical United States' cultural perspective toward death? How is it different from Mexico's?

Extended Learning

- Research more about Mexican culture and traditions.

Civic Engagement

- Make a paper marigold bouquet for someone mourning a loss.
- Research more about relationship between the US and Mexican government.

Communications

- Organize a pen pal program with the 4-H International Program.
- Give a demonstration on how to make *papel picado* and paper marigolds in the 4-H Communications Program.

Future Readiness

- Join the Kentucky 4-H International Program to expand your understanding of your role in the global marketplace.

Volunteering

- Ask your family to host an international delegate through Kentucky 4-H.

Junior Mentor/Teen

- Plan and conduct a workshop with members where you show them how to make *papel picado* and paper marigolds.

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Supporting Projects or Events

Kentucky 4-H International Program provides various experiences for youth and families to open their home to the world:

- International Summer Short Term Program (Inbound to USA)
- International Summer Short Term Program (Outbound from USA)
- Academic Year Program (Inbound to USA)
- Kentucky 4-H International Service Learning Program

Expand Your Experience

- Watch the 2018 movie *Coco* to see more about Day of the Dead come to life. (Garcia et al., 2018)
- Read books listed on this PBS website to learn more about Day of the Dead: <https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/day-of-the-dead-books-for-kids>. (PBS, 2020)

References

Dariela. (2014, November) Papel picado templates. *Mami Talks*.
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García, B. G., Gonzalez, A., Bratt, B., Anderson, D. K., Unkrich, L., Molina, A., Aldrich, M., ... Buena Vista Home Entertainment (Firm). (2018). *Coco*.

Garrett, K., & Soriano, T. (2019, October 29). Top 10 things to know about the Day of the Dead. Retrieved May 11, 2020, from <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/destinations/north-america/mexico/top-ten-day-of-dead-mexico/>

PBS. (2020, May 11). Day of the Dead Books for Kids. Retrieved May 11, 2020, from <https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/day-of-the-dead-books-for-kids>

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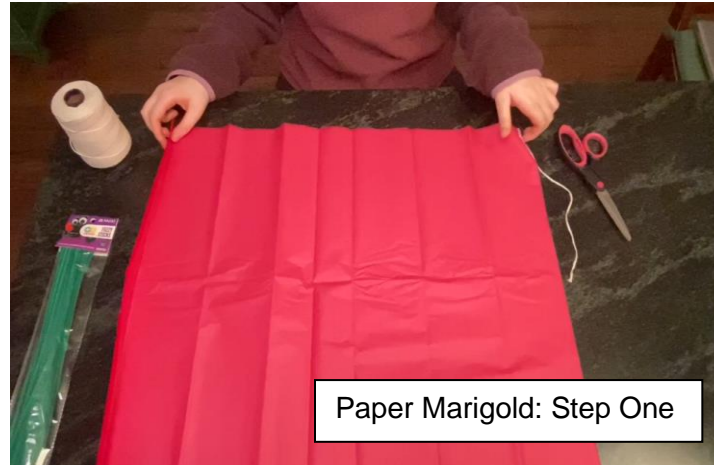


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Paper Marigold: Step One



Paper Marigold: Step Two

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Paper Marigold: Step Three



Paper Marigold: Step Four



Paper Marigold: Step Five



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Paper Marigold: Step Six



Paper Marigold: Step Seven



Paper Marigold: Step Eight

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Paper Marigold: Step Nine



Paper Marigold: Step Ten



Paper Marigold: Step Eleven



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Paper Marigold: Step Twelve



Paper Marigold: Step Thirteen



Paper Marigold: Step Fourteen



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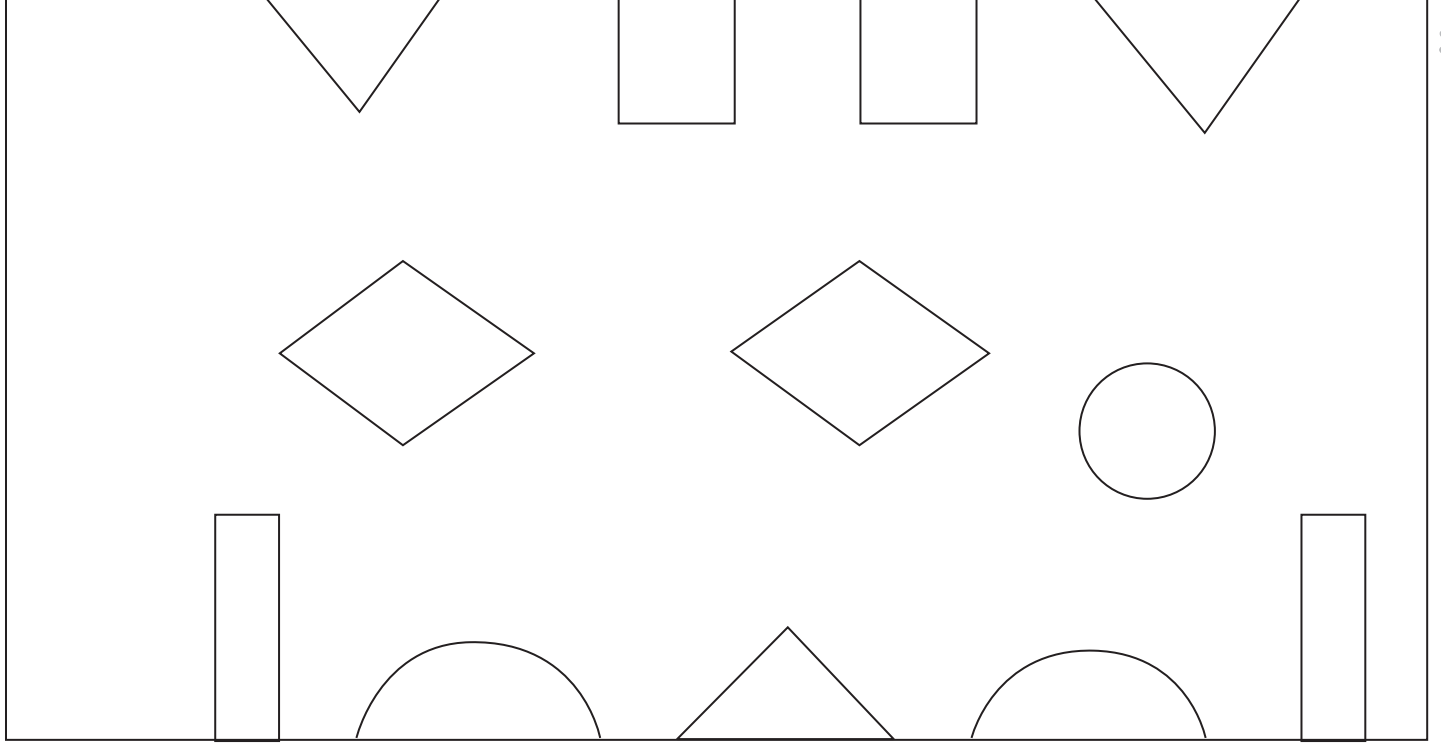


Paper Marigold: Step Fifteen



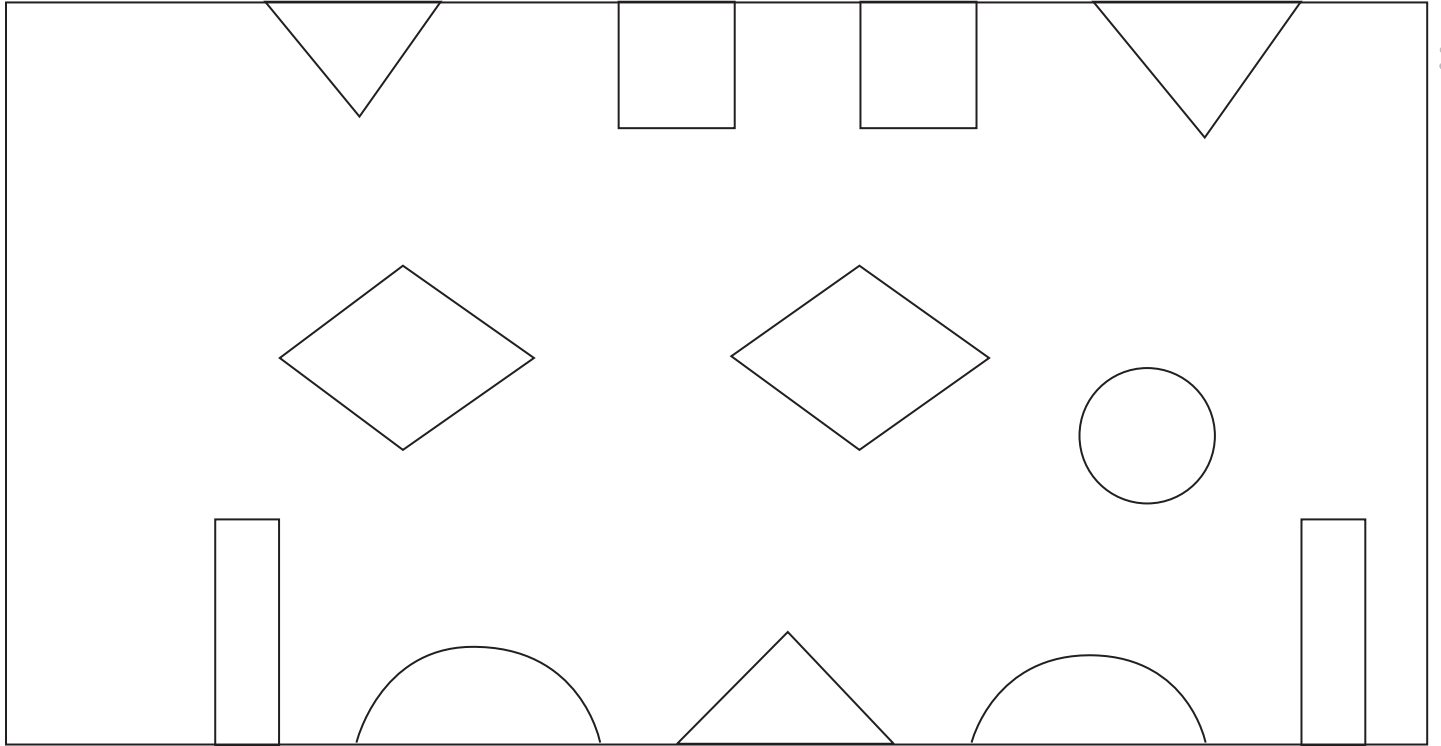
Paper Marigold: Step Sixteen

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MAMI talks

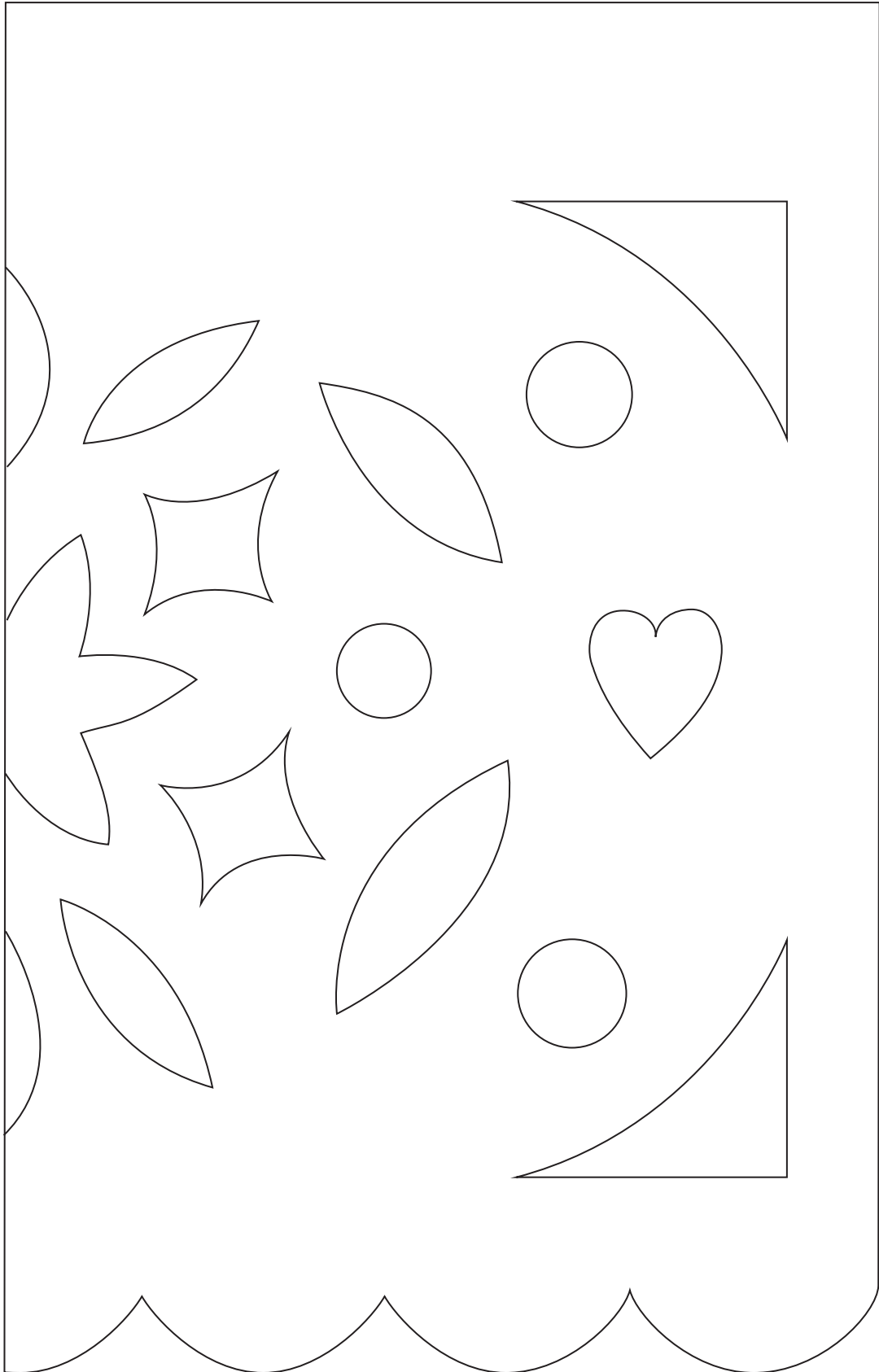
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MAMI talks

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MAMI *talks*



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MAMI *talks*

