

JARABE



DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS

a Celebration Of Life

STUDY GUIDE



JARABE has captivated audiences across the United States through their magnetic performances that blend traditional and contemporary musical genres. Born in the American Southwest, the band draws inspiration from their Mexican roots as well as the Chicano rock, Tejano, and Brown-eyed Soul movements of the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. Well-known for their ability to connect with student audiences, their bilingual seasonal show **“DIA DE LOS MUERTOS: A Celebration Of Life”** features music and an altar that honors the global artists that have impacted the band’s personal lives.

This study guide will provide an overview of their educational outreach programs, a review of Día de los Muertos and the musical artists they honor, descriptions of the band’s instrumentation and the geographical regions they represent, as well as suggestions for student activities.



EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH PROGRAMS



ALL-SCHOOL CONCERT ASSEMBLIES

JARABE's 45 to 60-min interactive concert for K-12 schools is formatted to introduce students to the global artists they honor for Day of the Dead through music, dance, singalong, anecdote, Q&A, and eurythmic participation.

- Once students are seated, music will begin with musical selections reflecting various aspects of JARABE's global musical influences.
- Band members will describe each of the instruments and encourage student participation.
- A short Q&A will be included at the end of the presentation.

COLLABORATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

- JARABE offers programs that can be adapted to include beginning, intermediate, advanced, or community Ballet Folklorico groups with a focus on Son Jarocho and Norteño styles, especially apt for Cinco de Mayo and Hispanic Heritage Month.
- Musical collaborations with intermediate and advanced student ensembles that include workshops on performance technique and professional development as well as vocal and percussion masterclasses.
- A full collaborative concert program designed for university, community, or professional orchestras which features symphonic arrangements of genres that JARABE performs such as Huapango, Cumbia, Bolero, and Ranchera.



DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS IN MEXICO AND BEYOND

The origin of Day of the Dead is contested by academics to this day, but in general, it is accepted to have begun in Mexico and that it has a mixture of Indigenous and European spiritual elements. Many Indigenous communities in the Americas across hundreds of years practiced some form of ancestor remembrance ritual before Europeans arrived, some of which included altars with food offerings near burial grounds and/or homes as practiced throughout the year by the Mexica (Aztecs). The Spanish imposed Roman Catholic feast days, in this case, All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day (Nov 1st & 2nd), which over time were combined with these pre-existing Indigenous rituals to create something new.

While these traditions vary from region to region, some academics argue that the political and artistic landscape of Mexico during the 20th century helped to mold our current understanding of this complex and colorful celebration. Over the last 50 years, immigration from Mexico and popular media has introduced Día de los Muertos to new communities and is now celebrated in countries throughout the Americas, Europe, and Asia. As is the case with many traditions, Day of the Dead has changed over time and place, but retains its unifying function of communal remembrance. As such, in 2008, UNESCO recognized Día de los Muertos as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.



HONORED ARTISTS ON OUR ALTAR

ANTONIO AGUILAR (1919-2007)

Known as "El Charro de México" (Mexico's Horseman), Antonio Aguilar was born in the central Mexican state of Zacatecas. He began his singing and acting career during the Golden Age of Mexican Cinema, working in more than 160 films while recording more than 150 albums and selling more than 25 million records. He was the first Mexican performer to mix concerts with rodeos, helping to popularize the Mexican equestrian sport known as "Charrería". His second wife was the singer/actor Flor Silvestre with whom he established an artistic dynasty known as "La Dinastía Aguilar". In honor of his contributions to Mexican Folk music and culture, Jarabe Mexicano pays tribute to him with the song "EL AUSENTE".



BOB MARLEY (1945-1981)

Born on the island of Jamaica, Bob Marley was a pioneer of Reggae music who went on to become a global icon. Infusing his music with a deep sense of spirituality, he formed an ensemble in the 1960s called The Wailers that mixed different musical genres like the Blues, Soul, and British Rock with Ska and Rocksteady to become one of the best-selling performing artists of all time. With lyrics that became rallying calls around the world for freedom, love, and peace, his legacy continues to resonate with people far and wide. In honor of his contributions to social justice, Jarabe Mexicano pays tribute to him with the songs "NO WOMAN, NO CRY (NO LLORES MUJER)" and "GET UP, STAND UP (SEMILLAS)".



CARMEN RIVERO (UNKNOWN-2011)

Born in the northeastern Mexican state of Tamaulipas, Carmen Rivero was a classically-trained musician who was greatly influenced by Afro-Caribbean music. After traveling to Colombia in the 1960s, she set out to bring its folk music, Cumbia, to Mexico. Known for her lively performance style and charisma, she became the first woman in Mexican history to lead and direct a music ensemble. By introducing the timbales, the güiro, and the trumpets to the genre, she founded what later became known as 'Cumbia Tropical' and earned herself the title "Godmother of Mexican Cumbia". In honor of her contributions to Mexican popular music and culture, Jarabe Mexicano pays tribute to her with the song "CUMBIA DEL SOL".



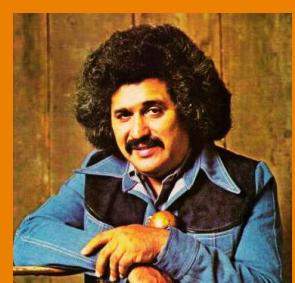
CELIA CRUZ (1925-2003)

Praised as "La Reina de la Salsa" (The Queen of Salsa), Celia Cruz was born on the Caribbean island of Cuba and went on to become one of the most influential artists of Latin music worldwide. For 15 years, she was the lead singer for the popular ensemble La Sonora Matancera. After the Cuban Revolution, she was exiled to Mexico and then moved to the United States where she stayed and lived for the rest of her life. Her unmistakable expression "Azúcar!" (Sugar!) as well as her extravagant costumes and masterful musicality elevated her to become a living legend among her peers. In honor of her contributions to Latin Pop music and culture, Jarabe Mexicano pays tribute to her with the song "LA VIDA ES UN CARNAVAL".



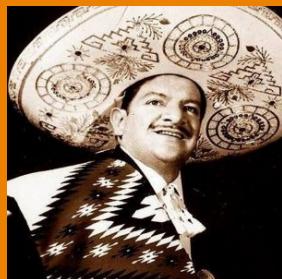
FREDDY FENDER (1937-2006)

Nicknamed "El Bebop Kid", Freddy Fender was born in southeast Texas and made his radio debut at the age of 10 singing classic Mexican folk songs. After serving with the U.S. Marines, he began his music career singing American ballads in Spanish. He gained popularity by mixing genres such as Country, Rockabilly, Swamp Pop, and Tejano. Later in his career, he found renewed success performing with the supergroups The Texas Tornados and Los Super Seven, winning 3 Grammys among other numerous awards along the way. In honor of his contributions to Tejano music and culture, Jarabe Mexicano pays tribute to him with the songs "HEY BABY, ¿QUÉ PASÓ?" and "WASTED DAYS & WASTED NIGHTS".



HONORED ARTISTS ON OUR ALTAR

JOSÉ ALFREDO JIMÉNEZ (1926-1973)



José Alfredo Jiménez was a renowned composer, singer, and actor born in the central Mexican state of Guanajuato. From his humble beginnings working as a waiter with no formal musical training, he began his career by writing his lyrics and whistling their melodies to those around him. His innumerable contributions to the Mariachi songbook earned him the monikers of "El Rey" (The King) and "El Hijo del Pueblo" (The Son of the People). His songs transcended borders, with hundreds of artists from across different genres recording his classics in Spanish and English. In honor of his contributions to Mexican Folk music and culture, Jarabe Mexicano pays tribute to him with the song "SERENATA HUASTECA".

JUAN GABRIEL (1950-2016)

Born in the southern Mexican state of Michoacan but raised in Ciudad Juárez/El Paso, Juan Gabriel's 45-year career as a prolific songwriter, singer, actor, and showman earned him the unrivaled title of "El Divo de Juárez." Writing his first song at the age of 13, he eventually registered more than 1,800 songs which have been recorded by more than 1,500 artists around the world. Known for his flamboyant style, powerful vocals, and exuberant performances, he broke social taboos, devoured stages, and conquered audiences far and wide. In honor of his contributions to Latin Pop music and culture, Jarabe Mexicano pays tribute to him with the songs "NO TENGO DINERO" and "I WASN'T BORN TO GIVE LOVE".



LOLA BELTRÁN (1932-1996)



Exalted as "Lola, la Grande" (Lola, the Great), Lola Beltrán is the most acclaimed female singer/actor of Ranchera music in Mexico's history. Born in the western Mexican state of Sinaloa, she was trained as a secretary and sang in talent competitions from a young age. She became a popular film star as well as a television presenter later in her career. Known for her resonant voice and powerful belting style, she was the first Mexican folk artist to sing at Mexico's premier opera house, El Palacio de Bellas Artes. There, thousands of her fans payed their respects after her passing. In honor of her contributions to Mexican Folk music and culture, Jarabe Mexicano pays tribute to her with the song "CUCURUCUCÚ PALOMA".

MARCIANO CANTERO (1960-2022)

Born in Argentina, Marciano Cantero was a singer-songwriter, bassist, and creator of the iconic Latin Rock band Los Enanitos Verdes (The Little Green Men). Influenced by the music of The Beatles and The Beach Boys, Los Enanitos Verdes creatively mixed Rock music with South American folk sounds and instruments, which contributed to the development of a distinct style that separated Latin Rock from its American and British counterparts. The band was highly successful in Mexico during the 1980's and 90's, where Cantero eventually resided for a number of years and became a Mexican citizen. In honor of his contributions to Latin Rock music, Jarabe Mexicano pays tribute to him with the song "LAMENTO BOLIVIANO".



PEDRO INFANTE (1917-1957)



Revered as "El Inmortal" (The Immortal) and "The Idol Of Mexico", Pedro Infante was born in the western Mexican state of Sinaloa. His illustrious career as an actor and singer spanned Mexico's Golden Age of Cinema during the 1940's and 50's. Receiving formal musical training from a young age, he learned to play strings, wind, and percussion instruments and was also an avid aviation aficionado. His rich and warm baritone voice allowed him to sing a variety of popular styles and his powerful film roles won him the admiration of audiences at home and abroad. In honor of his contributions to Mexican popular music and culture, Jarabe Mexicano pays tribute to him with the songs "CIEN AÑOS (FOREVER)" and "BÉSAME MORENITA".

HONORED ARTISTS ON OUR ALTAR

RITCHIE VALENS (1941-1959)

Born in southern California, Ritchie Valens was a Mexican American singer, guitarist, and songwriter who was heavily influenced by R&B and the Blues as well as Mariachi music and Flamenco. As a self-taught musician, Valens quickly became known for his improvisational skills and was dubbed “the Little Richard of San Fernando”. While his career was cut short due to his untimely passing, he was the first artist in history to combine Rock & Roll with Mexican Folk music and perform it in Spanish, making him a forefather of both the Chicano Rock and Latin Rock genres. In honor of his contributions to Rock & Roll, Jarabe Mexicano pays tribute to him with the songs “O DONNA-WE BELONG TOGETHER” and “LA BAMBA”.



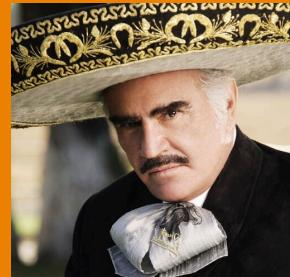
SELENA QUINTANILLA PÉREZ (1971-1995)



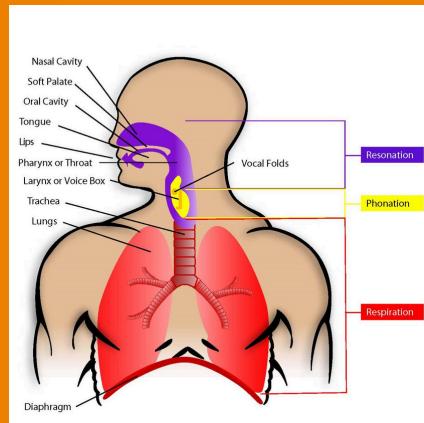
Venerated as “The Queen of Tex-Mex”, Selena was a Mexican American singer, dancer, fashion designer, songwriter, and actor born in southeast Texas. Starting her career at the age of 10 alongside her family band called Los Dinos, she gained mainstream popularity in the early 1990's by transcending musical genres and breaking barriers as a female artist in a male-dominated industry. Known for her soulful voice, captivating performances, influential style, and infectious charisma, Selena became a Pop icon and one of the best-selling bilingual Latin artists of all time. In honor of her contributions to Latin Pop music and culture, Jarabe Mexicano pays tribute to her with the songs “DREAMING OF YOU” and “SI UNA VEZ”.

VICENTE FERNÁNDEZ (1940-2021)

Consecrated as “La Voz de México” (The Voice of Mexico), Vicente Fernández was a singer and actor born in the western Mexican state of Jalisco. In his youth, he and his family moved to the border town of Tijuana where he became known as ‘the singing construction worker.’ Eventually, he moved to Mexico City and, after many challenging rejections, he was finally given the opportunity to break out and take the industry by storm. With his powerful and impassioned style, he starred in 30 films, recorded more than 100 albums, and became one of the most decorated Latin artists in music history. In honor of his contributions to Mexican Folk music and culture, Jarabe Mexicano pays tribute to him with the song “A MI MANERA”.



BAND INSTRUMENTATION



VOZ HUMANA (HUMAN VOICE)

Considered one of, if not, the earliest musical instrument, the human voice is both an aerophone (wind) and a chordophone (string) instrument. The wind elements include the trachea, the bronchi, the lungs, the diaphragm, the rib cage, and the intercostal muscles, which work in conjunction to move air in and out of the body. The string elements are the vocal folds (cords), where the actual sound is generated as the air passes through the glottis (the space between the folds). Depending on the amount of pressure exerted, this causes the folds to vibrate at different frequencies. Sound resonance and articulation are created by the facial cavities, the larynx, the soft palate, the tongue, the teeth, and the lips. The voice is also in charge of expressing the feelings of a song and conveying its story.



GUITARRA CLÁSICA MODERNA (MODERN CLASSICAL GUITAR)

Classified as a chordophone (meaning sound is produced by vibrating strings), this acoustic instrument is usually made from wood with nylon strings and descends from the lute and the baroque guitar. It was introduced by the Spanish to the Americas and has become a core instrument in various genres of music such as Mariachi, Jazz, Country, and Rock & Roll.



GUITARRÓN (BASS GUITAR)

Used as the bass in mariachi ensembles, this chordophone instrument was invented in Mexico to replace the harp for its portability. As such, instead of being strummed, the Guitarrón is traditionally played by plucking two strings at a time which are an octave apart. Working in conjunction with the vihuela and the guitar, it provides the fundamental backbone of mariachi music.



VIHUELA MEXICANA (RHYTHM GUITAR)

This chordophone instrument was invented by Mexican mariachi ensembles in the 17th century and is used as part of the rhythm section alongside the Guitarrón and the guitarra. Its high-pitched sound and the way it is strummed provides a percussive quality to the music. Like the Guitarrón, the Vihuela has a vaulted (convex) back that helps project its sound.

BAND INSTRUMENTATION



TAROLA (SNARE DRUM)

Also known as the “Caja” in Northern Mexico, this sensitive membranophone was developed in Europe throughout the 13th century and usually consists of two heads (membranes) made from Mylar plastic (which are held in place with tension rods and rims) and beaded rattles called ‘snares’ on the bottom membrane, which vibrate when the drum is played. Most modern Tarolas also have a lever called the ‘strainer’ that moves the snares toward, or away from, the head which changes the sound being produced.



MARACAS (SHAKERS)

The Maracas are idiophones originally made of dried gourds filled with pebbles, dried fruits, or similar objects. The most popular form of these instruments comes from the island of Cuba, although you can also find many Indigenous North American, South American, and African cultures that have something resembling them. These instruments were often used for healing rituals. Modern versions are also made of leather, wood, and/or plastic.



CENCERRO (COWBELL)

The cowbell is an idiophone made of thick metal that is now used as a percussion instrument. It originated in Europe to help protect livestock from predators. Eventually, they were brought to the Americas where they were modified and became an important element of Afro-Caribbean music. The cowbell is commonly played by striking it with a wooden stick.



CONTRATIEMPOS/PLATILLOS (HI-HAT & CRASH/RISE CYMBALS)

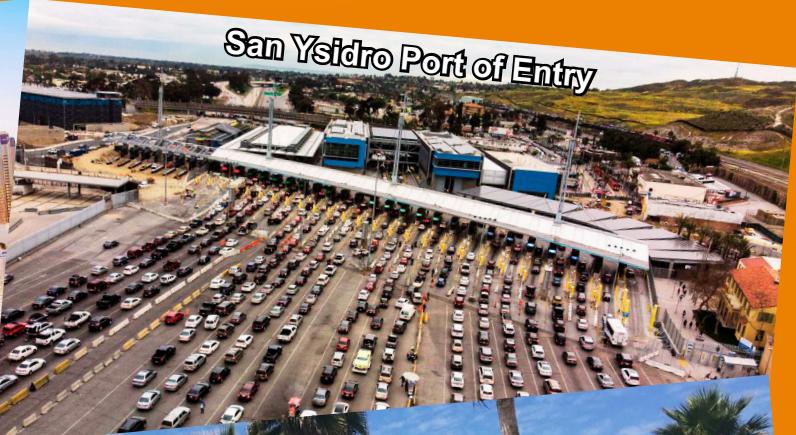
These metal percussion instruments are also idiophones and variations of them were used by many ancient civilizations. The hi-hat cymbals are a combination of two medium-sized cymbals and a pedal that moves the top cymbal down when it is pressed. The hi-hat can also be played by striking the top cymbal with wooden sticks. The crash and ride cymbals are mounted on stands and are also commonly played by striking them with wooden sticks.

GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONS

Downtown, San Diego



San Ysidro Port of Entry



Zona Río, Tijuana



Playas de Tijuana



SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, USA—TIJUANA, BAJA CALIFORNIA NORTE, MX

The Kumeyaay tribe has called this region home for the last 10,000 years. In the early 1500s, Portuguese explorers working for Spain arrived in this area and, in 1769, the first California mission was created in San Diego, making it known as the “birthplace of California.” In the early 1800s, a parcel of land named Rancho Tía Juana was established three miles south of San Diego’s bay, but the Mexican-American War (1846-48) placed the border just north of the ranch. Tijuana was formally founded on this parcel in 1889 and began to develop due to tourism from San Diego and beyond during the Prohibition Era of the 1920s.

This transborder region is now made up of more than 5.5 million people and is the largest binational metro area between the U.S. and Mexico. Each year, more than 68 million people cross the border between these cities, making it the busiest land-border crossing in the Western Hemisphere. And Tijuana is now the 2nd most-populated municipality in Mexico, only after the capital, Mexico City.

The population of the region includes many cultures and ethnic groups from all over the world due to migration/immigration. Tourism plays a large role in the economies on both sides of the border. San Diego is home to the largest naval fleet in the world and Tijuana has been hailed as the “cradle of Mexican Rock music.” Both sister cities are known for their vibrant arts scenes and renowned cuisine.

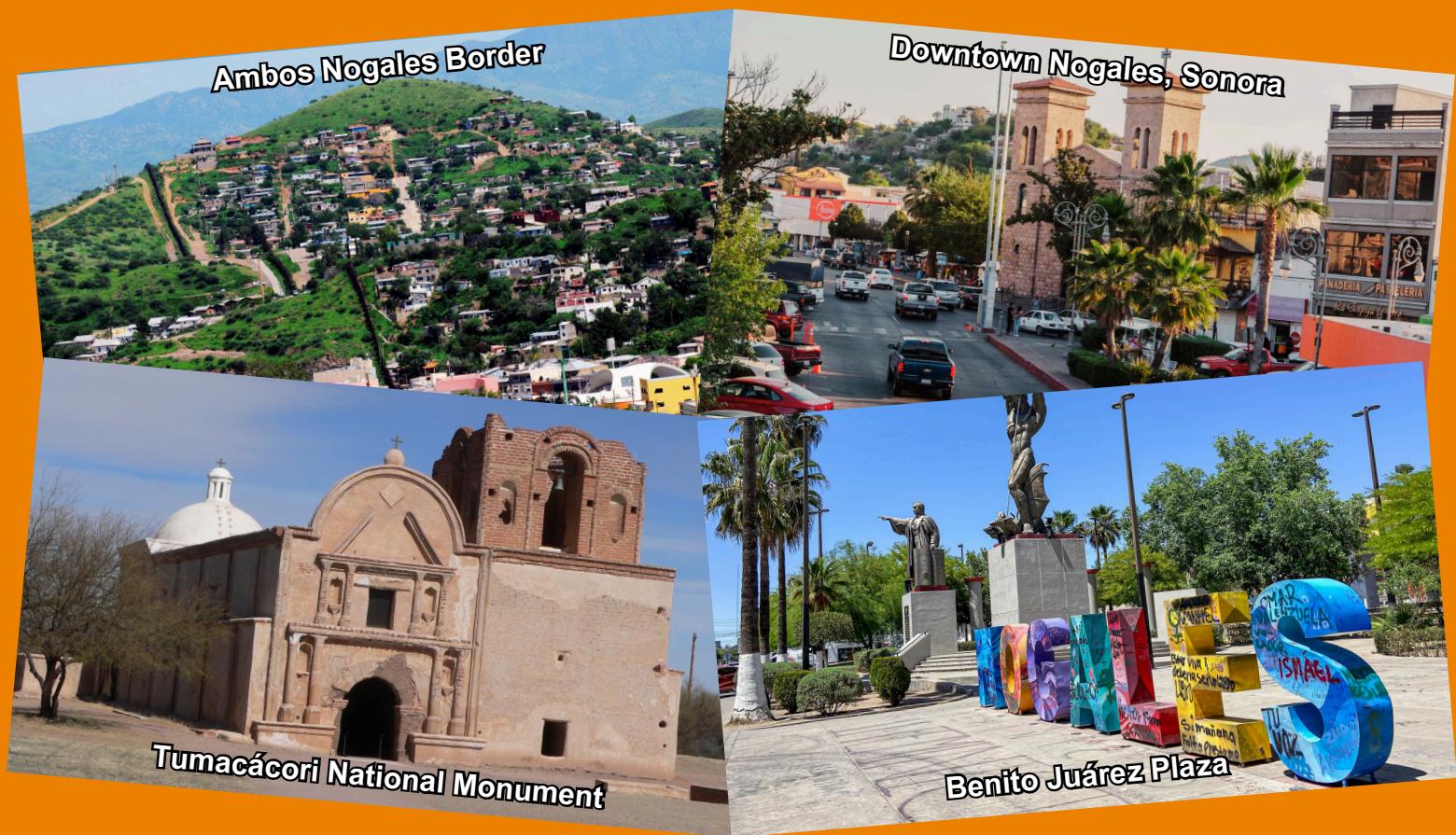
GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONS

NOGALES, ARIZONA, USA—NOGALES, SONORA, MX (AMBOS NOGALES)

Many Native tribes have inhabited this region for thousands of years including the Anasazi, and later the Hohokam, the Apache, and the Yaqui. Nogales (walnut) is the Spanish word used to describe the walnut groves that used to cover the region. In the late 1600s, Jesuit priests arrived and established the Mission Los Santos Ángeles de Guevavi. After the Mexican-American War (1846-48), the United States purchased part of the region from Mexico. And when the first railroad connecting the two countries was opened in Nogales in 1882, many more Anglo-Americans began to migrate and settle there. A border wall was first built by Mexico during the Mexican Revolution of 1910. Later, tensions between both countries erupted into a firefight now known as the Battle of Ambos Nogales (1918).

These sister cities now have a combined population of approximately 320,000 people, with the majority living in the much larger Nogales south of the border. Currently, 95 percent of the population of Nogales, Arizona is considered Hispanic and its economy centers largely around agriculture while Nogales, Sonora's economy depends mostly on manufacturing and trade with the United States.

The region offers many tourist attractions including the Tumacácori National Monument and the Tubac Presidio north of the border as well as the Benito Juárez Plaza and the Nogales Mall south of the border.



EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

This study guide references the various musical, historical, and cultural aspects you'll find in a JARABE performance as reflected in the Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools (pertinent details are listed below). For a full version of this resource, please visit the California Department of Education online at www.cde.ca.gov.

3.0 HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Understanding the Historical Contributions and Cultural Dimensions of Music

Students analyze the role of music in past and present cultures throughout the world, noting cultural diversity as it relates to music, musicians, and composers.

Role of Music

- 3.1: Analyze how the roles of musicians and composers have changed or remain the same throughout history.
- 3.3: Compare and contrast the social function of a variety of music forms in various cultures and time periods.

Diversity of Music

- 3.4: Perform music from a variety of cultures and historical periods.
- 3.5: Compare and contrast instruments from a variety of cultures and historical periods.
- 3.6: Compare and contrast musical styles within various popular genres in North and South America.
- 3.7: Analyze the stylist features of a given musical work that define its aesthetic traditions and its historical or cultural context.
- 3.8: Compare and contrast musical genres or styles that show the influences of two or more cultural traditions.

4.0 AESTHETIC VALUING

Responding to, Analyzing, and Making Judgements About Works of Music

Students critically assess and derive meaning from works of music and the performance of musicians in a cultural context according to the elements of music, aesthetic qualities, and human responses.

Analyze and Critically Assess

- 4.1: Compare and contrast how a composer's intentions result in a work of music and how the music is used.

Derive Meaning

- 4.2: Analyze and explain how and why people in a particular culture use and respond to specific musical works from their own culture.
- 4.3: Compare and contrast the musical means used to create images or evoke feelings and emotions in works of music from various cultures.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

CLASSROOM/SCHOOL ALTAR (ACTIVITY: ANY AGE GROUP)

- Collect photos, objects, and themes that can be displayed in a classroom or school altar.

WATCH DISNEY'S "COCO" (IN CLASS ACTIVITY: K-4TH GRADE)

- Discuss "Alebrijes" and their role in Día de los Muertos
- Have students color/draw/create their own alebrijes to display

PROJECT (SMALL GROUP/INDIVIDUAL: 5TH-12TH GRADE)

- Ask students to research popular artists, athletes, figures, etc. who have passed away and the contributions they made to their craft. Students can write reports as a small group or individuals and present in front of class.



JARABE



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