

Analysis of Unit:

Overall the unit went really well. The students seemed to learn a great deal about Day of the Dead, Sugar Skulls, and the printmaking medium, as well as they seemed to really enjoy creating their own symbols and sugar skull designs. There were however some flaws in the unit that resulted in modifications for future teaching. For instance, there were some concepts throughout this unit that students didn't really seem to grasp. For instance, the students had a difficult time creating sugar skull designs appropriate for the printmaking medium. The majority of the students had never worked with the printmaking before and so they didn't really know how they should be creating designs, which resulted in a lot of complicated designs that would be almost impossible for students of their age to cut out. In addition, there seemed to be some topics that went right over the students' heads. They certainly understood the concepts of symbols and their purposes' as well as they seemed to learn a lot about Day of the Day. Color theory, on the other hand, was a little more complicated for these 6th graders than I had expected.

Reflection and Modifications:

This unit went very well for both my students and myself. I felt that I was able to teach about symbols, Day of the Dead, sugar skulls, and all about the printmaking medium. However, there were some flaws in the lesson and as the instructor, it's my job to modify and improve the unit for future instruction.

When I noticed that most of my students were creating designs that were too complicated for cutting, I added in a mini lesson into the unit where students simply practiced cutting. I handed out small pieces of paper to each student and had them create a design with their initials. I cut the normal 6x6" linoleum blocks into quarters and had the students transfer their designs onto the little blocks. Then I did a carving demonstration and let the students practice and explore the techniques they had just learned. From this practice lesson, the students were able to get a better idea of the difficulties of the carving process and thus plan their sugar skull designs accordingly. I think many of the students learned that their sugar skull designs needed to be much simpler than their original plans. In addition, I also noticed that most of my students had a really hard time grasping the concept of color theory and couldn't remember the different schemes that I had taught them. For this reason I had to change my expectations a bit and simplify the color schemes to focus mostly on analogous color schemes, including warm and cool colors, which most of the students knew already.

Overall, this was a very successful lesson. This lesson made the students think about important aspects of their own lives, learn about a different culture's traditions, think creatively, and learn a complicated art form. Printmaking is not an easy medium and I'm proud that my 6th grade students were able to successfully learn the process.