

## **Mexican Murals with Oaxacan Artist Fulgencio Lazo**

**Teachers:** Claudia Sandler (Spanish) and Scott Cachopo (Visual Arts)

**Project Summary:** Students are introduced to the work and lives of a sample of Mexican muralists, and discuss the themes and imagery in some of these murals. They then collaborate to create a mural of their own under the leadership of well-known Oaxacan painter Fulgencio Lazo. He guides them through the process of choosing a theme that is appropriate to the audience, selecting images and symbols for the mural, collaboration, color selection, and painting techniques. Students in Spanish classes also develop vocabulary and develop conversational skills in Spanish. At the end of the project, students produce written reflections.

**Time Frame:** The artist works with students for 5 to 6 eighty minute blocks. All students participate together in the introduction, then work with the artists in groups of 5 or 6.

**Resources and Materials Needed:** Reproductions of famous Mexican murals, sheets of plywood, primer, and paints.

### **Essential Academic Learning Requirements/Standards:**

This project addresses the following Arts Essential Academic Learning Requirements in the Arts:

#### **1. The student understands and applies Arts knowledge and skills.**

To meet this standard, the student:

- 1.1 Understands arts concepts and vocabulary
- 1.2 Develops arts skills and techniques
- 1.3 Understands and applies arts styles from various artists, cultures and times
- 1.4 Applies audience skills in a variety of arts settings and performances

#### **2. The student demonstrates thinking skills using artistic processes.**

To meet this standard, the student:

- 2.1 Applies a creative process in the arts:
  - **Conceptualizes** the context or purpose
  - **Gathers** information from diverse sources
  - **Develops** ideas and techniques
  - **Organizes** arts elements, forms, and/or principles into a creative work
  - **Reflects** for the purpose of elaboration and self evaluation
  - **Refines** work based on feedback
  - **Presents** work to others

### **3. The student communicates through The Arts.**

To meet this standard, the student:

- 3.1 Uses the arts to express and present ideas and feelings
- 3.2 Uses the arts to communicate for a specific purpose
- 3.3 Develops personal aesthetic criteria to communicate artistic choices

### **4. The student makes connections within and across The Arts, to other disciplines, life, cultures, and work.**

To meet this standard, the student:

- 4.4 Understands that the arts shape and reflect culture and history
- 4.5 Demonstrates knowledge of arts careers and the role of arts skills in the world of work

The National Standards for Foreign Language Learning are also addressed in the residencies in Spanish classes:

**Communication:** *Communicate in Languages Other Than English*

**Standard 1.1:** Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions

**Cultures** *Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures*

**Standard 2.2:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied

**Connections** *Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information*

**Standard 3.1:** Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language

**Comparisons** *Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture*

**Standard 4.2:** Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

**Communities** *Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home & Around the World*

**Standard 5.2:** Students show evidence of becoming life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

### **Lesson Plans:**

**Lesson 1:** Students complete a pre-project questionnaire. The artist presents an introductory slide show of Mexican muralists: Rivera, Siqueiros, and Tamayo. In art classes, the discussion is focused on styles of art and the contrast between a mural and a small painting. In Spanish classes, there is first an introduction of Spanish vocabulary relevant to viewing and creating murals. The discussion of the slides is partially in Spanish, depending on the abilities of the class.

**Lesson 2:** Students focus on deciding a theme for their mural. Each student writes down their ideas, and then discuss them as a group. The artist and teacher oversee the final decision, since many classes are involved in creating one mural. Students learn that they must create a mural

suitable for their audience, and think about issues like the different types of people who will view the mural and the location of the mural.

**Lesson 3:** Once the theme has been identified, students create sketches of images they think might be appropriate to the mural. The artist then selects sketches and puts them together, sometimes adjusting the artistic style so that the mural is a cohesive whole.

**Lesson 4:** The plywood is acquired (4' x 8' 1/2" sheets), and coated by the students with a hesso primer. After it has dried, students work with the artist to draw in charcoal the images that have been selected.

**Lesson 5:** The big figures and background are painted by the students. Color decisions are typically made by the artists with input by the students. The artists discuss the selection of colors with the students – in Spanish, if possible.

**Lesson 6:** The smaller figures and details are added to the mural under the guidance of the artist. When the mural is completed, it is coated and hung. Students complete post-project questionnaire.

**References:**

<http://www.diegorivera.com>

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<http://www.adanigallery.com/Tamayo/main.html>

<http://www.museumeducation.org/pdfs/LessonPlan-frescoes.pdf>

<http://www.getty.edu/artsednet/resources/Murals/>

<http://www.clt.net/lessons/spanish/level1/mural.html>