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https://www.mexconnect.com/articles/1081-amate-art-of-mexico-
where-the-secular-meets-the-sacred
https://www.art-is-fun.com/how-to-make-sugar-skulls
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www.gutenberg.org/
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Welcome New subscriber!
Grades 5-8
2020 Summer Reading
Creativity Crates
Iberian Peninsula, peninsula in southwestern Europe, occupied by Spain and Portugal. Its name derives from its ancient inhabitants whom the Greeks called Iberians, probably for the Ebro (Iberus), the peninsula’s second longest river (after the Tagus). The Pyrenees mountain range forms an effective land barrier in the northeast, separating the Iberian Peninsula from the rest of Europe, and in the south at Gibraltar the peninsula is separated from North Africa by the narrow Strait of Gibraltar. The Atlantic Ocean washes the northern, western, and southwestern coasts, and the Mediterranean Sea washes the southern and eastern shores. Cape Roca, in Portugal, is the most westerly point of continental Europe.

Latin America is generally understood to consist of the entire continent of South America in addition to Mexico, Central America, and the islands of the Caribbean whose inhabitants speak a Romance language. The peoples of this large area shared the experience of conquest and colonization by the Spaniards and Portuguese from the late 15th through the 18th century as well as movements of independence from Spain and Portugal in the early 19th century.

Amate Bark Painting
Amate (pronounced “ah-MAH-tay”) is a type of paper produced from the fibers of the bark of fig trees. Beginning in pre-Hispanic times, different indigenous groups used the amate to communicate with others. For example, the Aztecs used the amate paper to register data, or as a gift for soldiers. In today’s Mexico, the Otomí people of Central Mexico produce this paper in a way similar to its historical origins. However, now Nahua artisans paint intricate birds, colorful plants, and whimsical animals on the amate so that it can be used for decoration.

Day of the Dead, Spanish Día de los Muertos, holiday in Mexico, also observed to a lesser extent in other areas of Latin America and in the United States, honours dead loved ones and making peace with the eventuality of death by treating it familiarly, without fear and dread. The holiday is derived from the rituals of the pre-Hispanic peoples of Mexico. Led by the goddess Mictecacihuatl, known as “Lady of the Dead,” the celebration lasted a month. After the Spanish arrived in Mexico and began converting the native peoples to Roman Catholicism, the holiday was moved to coincide with All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day (November 1 and 2, respectively).

The Sugar Skull Tradition
Sugar art was brought to the New World by Italian missionaries in the 17th century. The first Church mention of sugar art was from Palermo at Easter time when little sugar lambs and angels were made to adorn the side altars in the Catholic Church.

Mexico, abundant in sugar production and too poor to buy fancy imported European church decorations, learned quickly from the friars how to make sugar art for their religious festivals. Clay molded sugar figures of angels, sheep and sugar skulls go back to the Colonial Period 18th century. Sugar skulls represented a departed soul, had the name written on the forehead and was placed on the home ofrenda or gravestone to honor the return of a particular spirit. Sugar skull art reflects the folk art style of big happy smiles, colorful icing and sparkly tin and glittery adornments. Sugar skulls are labor intensive and made in very small batches in the homes of sugar skull makers. These wonderful artisans are disappearing as fabricated and imported candy skulls take their place.

Find out More at:
https://www.britannica.com/
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