

# Cue Sheet

Guides for  
Teachers

## Sugar Skull!

### A Dia De Los Muertos Musical Adventure!

Tuesday, October 15, 2024  
10:15am & 12:15pm

#### Questions to ask students **BEFORE** the performance

- Have you seen a live play before?  
If so, what play or show did you see?
- What is your favorite holiday  
celebration and why?
- What does “Dia de los Muertos”  
translate to in English? Why do you  
think people celebrate it?

#### Questions to ask students **AFTER** the performance

- Did you enjoy the show? What  
part of the performance was your  
favorite?
- Who was your favorite character in  
the performance? Why?
- Was Vita able to help Sugar Skull ride  
the train to Who-Knows-Where? If so,  
how?
- How can you be like Vita and help  
others in your own life?



## About the Performance

Young Vita thinks her family has gone crazy planning a celebration for deceased loved ones. Why throw a party for the dead? But when a candy skeleton on her abuelita’s cemetery ofrenda suddenly springs to life, Vita finds herself on a magical, musical journey to unravel the true meaning of *Día de Muertos*. Meet Sugar Skull, a charismatic candy skeleton who dreams of riding the exclusive train to Who-Knows-Where. Along with her skeletal new friend, Vita dances with ancient ancestors, sings with a sorrowful sorceress, escapes the trickster Chaneques, and even meets the famous Catrina Calavera. But can this clever youth help him get on the train before it’s too late?

*Sugar Skull!* is a joyous, heartfelt adventure featuring a company of gifted musicians and dancers who show us the vibrant heart of Mexican culture and the rich traditions of Día de los Muertos.

[Watch a Video](#)

POPEJOY  
**SCHOOLT  
TIME  
SERIES**

**Proudly sponsored  
by Rich & Michelle Dowdican**

# Vocabulary

**abuelita** – (*ah-bweh-lee-tah*) a form of abuela literally meaning “little grandma”; similar to “grandma” or “granny”

**calaca** – (*kah-lah-kah*) skulls and skeletons shown in a variety of funny or day-to-day activities

**calaveritas de azúcar** – (*kah-lah-ver eh-tahs day ah-sue-car*) elaborately decorated sugar skulls; sugar represents the sweetness of life and the skull represents death

**compasúchitl** – (*cem-pah-sue-ch-il*) yellow or orange marigolds seen on graves and altars; their aroma and color are believed to attract spirits of deceased family members and lead them back home

**ofrenda** – (*oh-frehn-dah*) “offering,” another word for altar where food, candles, flowers, pictures, and mementos are left for the dead

**pan de muerto** – (*pahn deh mwehr-toh*) a type of sweet roll traditionally baked in Mexico during the days leading up to the Día de Muertos; the food most associated with Day of the Dead

**papel picado** – (*pah-pay-el pe-kah-do*) “punched paper,” paper banners decorated with elaborate designs usually made of tissue

**La Muerte** – (*lah mwerte*) means death in Spanish; sometimes La Muerte is personified and can be interpreted as either a man or a woman

**Nahuatl** – (*naa-waa-tl*) refers to the people and language indigenous to southern Mexico and Central America, including the Aztecs

# Theater Etiquette

- Stay with your chaperone at all times.
- Remove hats or caps when inside.
- Put away mobile phones and other electronic devices. Use of photographic, video recording, audio recording, phones, and gaming devices is prohibited during performances.
- Allow everyone to enjoy the performance by remaining quiet, except when a response is requested by performers. Some shows are interactive, while others are not.
- Stay seated and do not kick or hit the seat in front of you.
- Request to leave the hall with an adult chaperone if you need to use the restroom or cool down. If you are being disruptive, an adult chaperone may escort you out of the theater. You may view the show on screens in the lobby or lower lounge until you are ready to return with your chaperone.
- Clap after the end of a song during a musical or other music performance. During a ballet or dance performance, clap at the end of the number.
- Remain in your seats after the applause at the end of the show until our House Manager dismisses you.

## Click here!

For more information and ideas for your classroom, download the Study Guide provided for this performance, developed by producers Mexico Beyond Mariachi.

# Facts about Popejoy Hall

- Popejoy Hall officially opened on October 1, 1966.
- The hall can seat up to 1985 people.
- Most walls inside the hall are not parallel or perpendicular to the stage. Curves, angles, and soft or textured surfaces scatter the sound throughout the hall so that audiences can hear performances better.
- Popejoy Hall has an orchestra pit which raises and lowers. It is the largest elevator in the building.
- The ceiling over the stage is three times the height of the curtain opening. Sets can be lowered into place by pulleys and raised high enough to be stored completely out of sight when not in use.