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November 2, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Stratford's FLES Students Study El Dia de Los Muertos

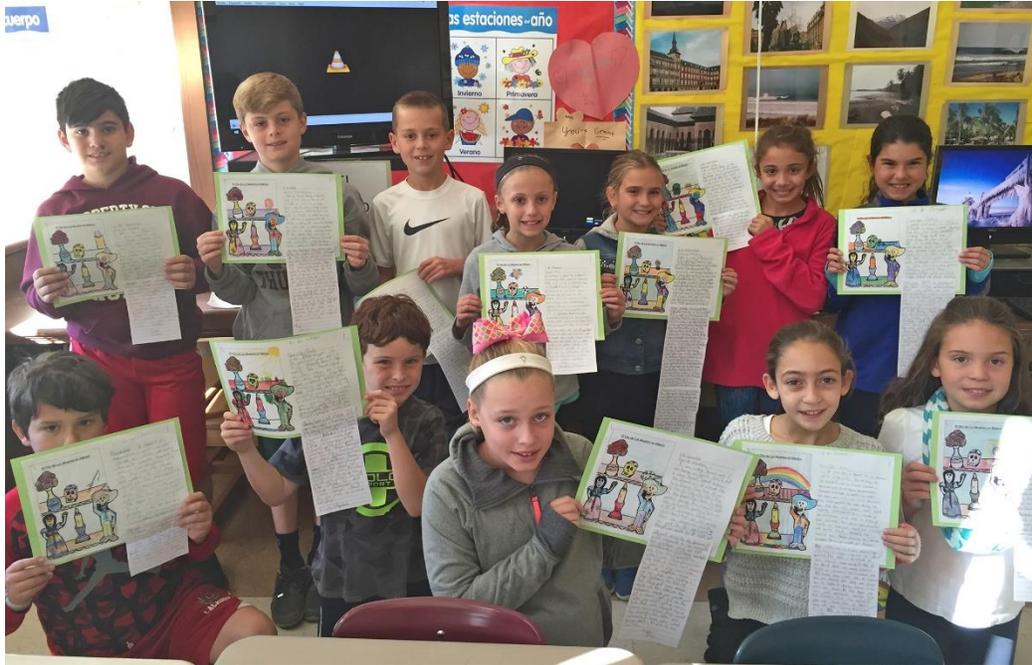
Recently, the fourth and fifth grade students at Stratford Avenue began studying Mexico's "Day of the Dead." The holiday was presented by providing students with the Who, Where, When, Why, and How of the holiday. They learned that this is not Mexico's version of Halloween, and developed their own ideas about why this misconception exists in the U.S.

The fourth grade students embarked on a writing project with the goal of educating readers about the holiday. They took the role of the "experts," writing to an audience with no previous knowledge and probable misunderstandings. The students wrote factual pieces describing the holiday in detail. The writings were done on "Calavera," (skulls used to celebrate Day of the Dead) stationary so as to add a visual component to their writing.

Fifth grade students worked on their project from a slightly different perspective. These students wrote postcards home from a Day of the Dead celebration in Mexico. They wrote as if they were experiencing the holiday first hand. The writings were fictional but included nonfiction information about the holiday. The students again wrote as if the person reading their postcard had no prior knowledge of Day of the Dead. The writing was accompanied by a picture of an altar (commonly used to celebrate the holiday), which students decorated to give a visual component to their writing.

Students in both grades completed their writings using both Spanish and English. At the conclusion of the project and during the actual days of the holiday, students viewed the film "The Book of Life," a realistic, fictional account of Day of the Dead in Mexico, which very much served to help bring the holiday to life. The children did a wonderful job with their projects.

"It's great watching the kids learn so much about a holiday that is misunderstood by so many," shared Mr. Kupferman, Stratford's FLES (Foreign Language in Elementary School) teacher. "They really did a great job!"



Caption for Fisher Fogel Day of Dead 16 (1).JPG:

Stratford's fifth grade students displayed the postcards they created about Mexico's "Day of the Dead."



Caption for Lavelle Day of Dead 16 (1).JPG:

Mrs. Lavelle's fourth graders at Stratford shared the "Calavera" skulls they created for Mexico's "Day of the Dead."