

World Language Curriculum Corner October

¡Hola! ¡Es octubre! Es otoño, pero este clima es muy loco. Se siente más de verano. ¿No?

We are now in the middle of Hispanic Heritage Month, celebrated from September 15 - October 15 each year. Students are learning about Spanish-speaking people who have made a difference in art, music, literature, science, television, movies, and politics. They have learned about where Spanish is spoken around the world and that many words in English are derived from Spanish.

In class, your 6th or 7th grader is learning to differentiate between what defines a legend versus a fable, and he/she will read and discuss several stories throughout the marking period. Believe it or not, your child will be able to identify character traits and put the details of a story in order with their own ending...all in Spanish! In the context of the story, students will learn vocabulary and expressions having to do with weather, body parts, and animal names and habitats.

Eighth grade students are learning about expressions and vocabulary to describe family members, including physical traits, ages, likes/dislikes, and relationships. The eighth grade curriculum emphasizes the importance of having students communicate with one another in the target language as much as possible. To continue this practice at home, try looking at a family photograph together and ask about the relationships and physical descriptions of the people you see. You'll be amazed at how well your child can describe the photograph with only a few weeks of language instruction!

During this month, there are multiple celebrations, one of which is Mexican Independence Day, celebrated on September 16th, not on Cinco de Mayo. Mexican Independence Day commemorates a victory over the large French army by a small group in Puebla, Mexico. And, of course, there is Halloween, which we celebrate before El Día de los Muertos on November 1st and 2nd. Over the course of two days, many cultures remember family members and friends who have passed away by making altars and memorials of sentimental items. Families visit the cemetery to celebrate the memory of their loved ones. Halloween and El Día de los Muertos share some things in common like spirits (espíritus), skulls (calaveras), and skeletons (calacas/esqueletos). The color orange (anaranjado) is present in the marigold flowers used to decorate the memorials, just as we have orange pumpkins (calabazas) and leaves (hojas). Two animated films that build cultural connections of these holidays are *Book of Life (2014)* and *Coco (2017)*. Make some popcorn and gather around for a family showing to learn more about these traditions!