

Literary Calaveras

Learn what they are and how to
write them.



**DIA DE LOS
MUERTOS**



UC ANR Latinos & Friends Affinity Group
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Literary Calaveras

Calaveras Literarias, or Literary Skulls, are compositions of verse and rhymes, originally from Mexico. These are typically circulated in the days leading up to the Day of the Dead.



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They are fun, irreverent expressions that usually satirize a well-known person or event by playfully parodying the inevitable death of those involved.



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Though they have been around since the colonial era, they were popularized in newspapers in the nineteenth century. Inspired by long and ostentatious epitaphs of nobles, Mexican literary artists used this format to criticize governing officials.



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Death is mentioned as "the grim reaper," "the lady in black," "the catrina," "La Pelona," "La Muerte," "La Calaca," and "La Huesuda," among many nicknames.



Literary Calaveras

1. Pick someone—or something—to eulogize. They should not actually be dead. You can write about a politician or famous person or your best friend or an object on your desk. Here's an example by Hallmark Writer Dan T.



El Mariachi

In las plazas grandes and cozy small bars

Mariachis are famous for playing guitars.

The most hateful critic finds himself compliant

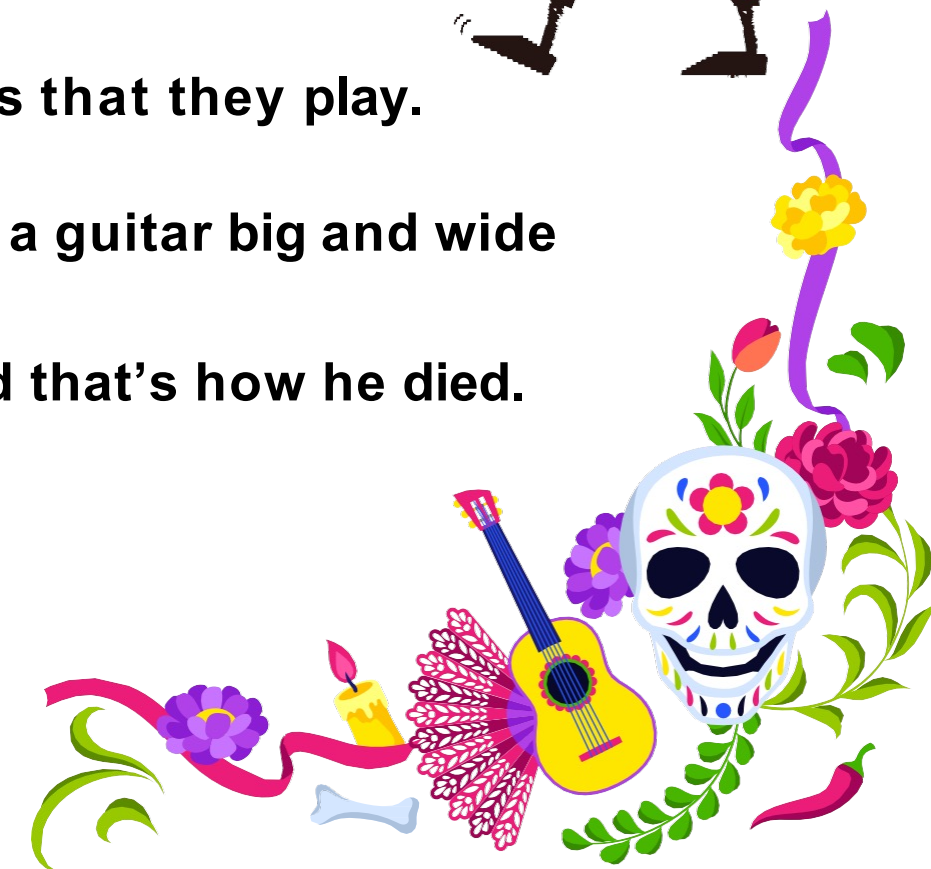
When hearing guitars which are really quite giant.

“Bigger is better!” the musicians say

So mas y mas grow the guitars that they play.

And that's where they found Juan, a guitar big and wide

Fell on him, and crushed him, and that's how he died.



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3. Decide how they meet La Muerte.

How will Death come? Will it be the result of their hobby or occupation? Their personality? Or will they perish as the result of a really bad pun, as in this example by Hallmark Writer Bill B.?

Cervezas

*Down at the cantina,
they're shedding big tears
in mourning because
someone killed a few beers.*



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Other examples



Professor Victor met La Pelona

The University is in mourning,
Professor Victor died in the morning
La Pelona came with a warning
But she was taken by his charming way
That La Muerte grab him right away.



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Other examples



The dead of non-nutritious people

MyPlate provide us with good nutrition
Eating fruits and vegetables is good intuition
Whole grains with fiber and lean protein are a better
addition.
Meanwhile, dairy puts our bones in strong condition.
Eating healthy is not superstition
Excessive sugar and fat are malnutrition
We must make an effort for our diets to transition.
If not, death will be near you for demolition.

Arianna Nava - Nutrition Educator, Kings County



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Other examples



La Flaca no respeta

*La flaca no respeta postura,
de presidentes o ciudadanos.
Los lleva a la sepultura
... como botana de gusanos.*



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[online rhyming dictionary](https://rhymebrain.com/en)

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