Owen Zeller—Reflection

The 7th grade field trip to Pilsen was truly a cultural and educational experience. We started by taking a walking tour of the neighborhood, where we saw murals that local artists had created. We learned about how the murals were created, what the story was behind them and how we could connect those stories to ourselves. We saw a total of six murals on the trip, and each one had an important story, ranging from immigration to honoring deceased relatives. After the walking tour, we entered the National Museum of Mexican Art. Inside the museum, we created tile art inspired by George Rodrigues’ *Mictlantecuhtli Offering*. We used Model Magic to shape our tiles and then used paint to color them. Everybody’s tiles were different. Some were geometric, some were of faces, and some were inspired by the tiles in Rodrigues’ piece of art. After we finished our tiles, we walked through the Día de los Muertos exhibit. We saw the museum’s huge altar, honoring people lost to the COVID-19 pandemic, and other altars collected from different areas in Mexico. The murals varied—some were more simple, some were very extravagant; one was made entirely of metal. After taking a small tour of the exhibit, we went on another walk, this time to Taqueria Los Comales for lunch. Let me tell you, these were the best tacos I've ever had. The people who work there were so nice; we really enjoyed having lunch there. After that, we got back on the bus and visited various architectural sites for the history portion of the field trip.

I am really grateful we had the opportunity to go on this field trip. Beforehand, I had never thought about the meaning behind murals. Now it’s a question I think about often. This field trip affected my eyes because of how much we saw. We saw art in the neighborhood and in the museum, created by Latinx artists here in Chicago. We saw altars of loved ones who were taken away, but are still remembered. It affected my brain because I have opened up a creative door with the tile work we accomplished and how much I think about murals now. It has also affected my taste buds because I now have a gold standard for tacos. This trip really affected me entirely, because I now view the world a bit differently.