



MASSILLON MUSEUM

LESSON TITLE:

Pottery, Baskets, and Arrowheads: The Native American Collection of the Massillon Museum

GRADE LEVEL:

6th

GROUPING OF STUDENTS:

Individual

MATERIALS:

Clay, acrylic/tempera paint, paintbrushes, hairspray/fixative

OBJECTIVES:

- To make students aware of the processes used by Native Americans to create their work.
 - To give students experience in creating ceramic pottery of their own.
 - To give students insight into cultures that existed before their own.
 - To discuss the artifacts and work being made with classmates.

OHIO LEARNING STANDARDS:

Sixth Grade

Social Studies

History Strand

Historical Thinking and Skills:

1. Multiple tier timelines can be used to show relationships among events and places.

Geography Strand

Spatial Thinking and Skills:

3. Geographic tools can be used to gather, process and report information about people, places and environments. Cartographers decide which information to include and how it is displayed.

4. Latitude and longitude can be used to identify absolute location.

Places and Regions

5. Regions can be determined, classified and compared using data related to various criteria including landform, climate, population, and cultural and economic characteristics.

Economics Strand

Economic Decision Making and Skills:

12. The choices made by individuals and governments have both present and future consequences. The evaluation of choices is relative and may differ across individuals and societies.

Scarcity:

13. The fundamental questions of economics include what to produce, how to produce and for whom to produce.

Fine Arts

Visual Arts

Creating (CR)

6.1CR: Reference multiple sources for visual expression.

6.2CR: Brainstorm and experiment independently with ideas.

6.3CR: Synthesize the elements of art and principles of design to plan works of art.

6.4CR: Recognize ethical uses of visual resources.

Performing (PE)

6.1PE: Compare and contrast various levels of artisanship.

6.2PE: Identify technical skills that impact artmaking.

6.3PE: Purposefully incorporate the elements of art and principles of design to construct works of art.

6.4PE: Select artwork for exhibition based on established criteria.

Responding (RE)

6.1RE: Select relevant vocabulary to define and describe works of art.

6.2RE: Identify self-assessment criteria to inform goals within the artmaking process.

6.3RE: Describe how elements of art and principles of design are used in art criticism.

6.4RE: Compare and contrast visual forms of expression found throughout local regions and in different cultures of the world.

Connecting (CO)

6.1CO: Identify how art reflects changing cultures over time.

6.2CO: Identify the importance of lifelong involvement and advocacy in visual arts.

6.3CO: Link observations, life experiences, and imagination for personal and creative expression.

6.4CO: Define a variety of aesthetic stances.

PREPARATION:

An explanation and brief history of the Native American cultures that existed in this region would help students in understanding and appreciating this project. These might include: the mound-building cultures of the Adena, Hopewell, and Mississippian societies as well as the modern Woodland tribes of the 17th, 18th, and early 19th centuries. Information on these cultures can be obtained from the Massillon Museum, Massillon Public Library, Ohio History Connection, or Kent State University.

The teacher should have the students observe and discuss the examples of Native American pottery. Discussion should focus on the use of patterns, images, and colors in the decoration of these examples. Exploring why certain images and effigies were used in only a few colors is important to this discussion.

Students' designs can mimic traditional Native American motifs or can be original and represent images that are important in their life. Acrylic or tempera paints can be used to apply the designs. Another approach might be to mix natural pigments with water and vegetable oil to

create paints more like Native Americans used. Some natural pigments include: iron oxide, raspberries, blackberries, and chalk. Native American potters did not develop the use of glazes; they painted their pottery with pigments made from natural ingredients.

Coil construction was the most commonly used building method of the early peoples of the Western hemisphere. Teachers could attempt to use “dug clay” to simulate the process used by the Native Americans. However, it is strongly suggested that manufactured clay be used, to ensure the success of the students’ experience. Dug clay does not always have a consistency of ingredients necessary to its use in construction, nor can the proper firing of the clay be guaranteed.

PROJECT:

Each student builds a small to medium-sized clay pot, using the coil construction method. The focus of this project should be the decorating of the students’ pottery. The students should first create the decorative designs they want to use on paper. The bisque pottery will absorb the paint when it is applied and a design cannot be changed once it has been applied to the pot.

POST ACTIVITY:

A follow-up to this project is to ask students to write an artist statement explaining the processes they used to complete the project, why they chose the designs they used, and how their project relates to Native American cultures. Then visit the American Indian Gallery at the Massillon Museum to learn more about Native Americans in our region!