

LESSONS

Native American Coil Pots Lesson

Grade Level: 2

Lesson adapted by Elisa Convers. Taken from <http://www.dickblick.com/multicultural/coilpots/>

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Objectives:

- ❖ Art History: Familiarization with Pueblo Indian arts and crafts, lifestyles, value systems of Native American Pueblos, Maria Martinez and her famous black pottery
- ❖ Design: Understanding the concepts of coil pottery construction.
- ❖ Skills: Ability to construct a coil pot.

GLEs:

I2A-2: Modeling with clay or a similar material: Roll coils: flatten material into a slab

I3B-2: Design wearable art (e.g., masks, jewelry, paper hats, decorating tee shirts, costumes, face painting)

IV2A-2: Explain the connection between American Indian culture and art

Vocabulary:

Pueblo, Maria Martinez, black pottery, slip, scoring

Motivation/Discussion:

I develop students' interest by asking whether they have ever made something out of clay, whether they know what a potter does and how he/she works. There are 20 Pueblo

villages left in the Southwest; there were at one time in history 200. Each of the 20 Pueblos is famous for art and/or crafts and each has a specialty. Maria Martinez lived in the Pueblo of San Ildefonso and she was famous for creating black pottery. I show Maria's website and read some details about her life and artwork. I mention that, like all Native Americans, Maria respected the earth and its resources. She only took enough DIRT for one pot at a time so that she did not waste it. I remind them to look around at lunch and be aware of what we waste! I encouraged them to share their thoughts in this regard

Learning Activities:

Procedure

1. Divide a clay chunk into 3 equal pieces and roll each new chunk into a coil. It takes a little practice, using a forward rolling motion with the hand held straight and using palms and gentle pressure. It works best to stand and use a forward rolling, and then lifting, hand motion. When the clay moves toward the edge of the table, lift and move it back, starting over. It does not work well to roll the hands back and forth over the coil. Roll each chunk into a coil, then roll coil up and place in bag.
2. Wet paper towel and drop into bag with coils, write name and section on the tag. Gather ends of bag and put on twist tie. Make sure the whole bag is closed tight.
3. I pass everyone a paper towel and round slab circle. (I put last name and class section on bottom of each.) I do a demonstration of scoring (painting slip is optional) around top edge of slab. I add coil, pressing gently, pinch off and smooth together ends when it is wrapped around slab and they meet and ask them to do it. They build three rows high, and then add some decorative finishes for the last two rows, such as S shapes made from coils, waves made over a finger, or rolling little balls, pinching them flat, and adding them in openings made by the wave designs. I am sure to stress that everything that is added **MUST** be scored and slipped. I also stress that the clay coil pot should not be picked up. I ask them to turn the paper towel as they work to build it, and the shape will not get lopsided.
4. They add two more coils in the same way. There are now three rows high on the slab.
5. The last two rows may be any design that we have talked about.
6. They smooth out any cracks by painting water or slip over them.
7. If work is in progress should be stored in plastic bags.
8. Projects must dry and be fired.

Painting Procedure (optional: depending on materials availability)

1. They paint acrylic gloss medium tinted with blue tempera on whole top and sides of coil pot. They do not paint the bottom. I make sure that students get into all the crevices with the bristle brushes and acrylic medium. I clean and dry the brushes thoroughly.
2. They gently fan pot till completely dry.
3. Students paint the sienna over the whole pot covering the acrylic with sienna. They do not paint the bottom.

- They wash off the sienna, leaving the brown color in the deeper parts to create an antiqued effect.

Materials:

Native American videos or CDs of drums
 White or red clay – individual chunks about 3”x3”x6”
 Small pans – for water, slip, paint, gloss, medium
 Trays to hold pans
 Bristle brushes
 One gallon sized plastic bags with ties inside and a tag stapled to open end
 Soapy water buckets/dry towels/sponges
 6”x6” paper towel pieces
 Individual circles rolled and cut by teacher approximately the size of a small coffee can
 Clay tools
 Red slip
 Sienna and blue tempera paints (optional)
 Acrylic gloss medium (optional)
 Paper fans or hair dryer

Conclusion of the lesson: We discuss the various techniques learned from this project and the difficulty/ease of the project. I allow each student to critique their own work and what they would do differently if they did it again.

Cleanup: During every session each table will be released to clean and put away their materials in turn of whoever is quiet and ready first at least five minutes before the period ends.

Time Management: Five to six 30 minute lessons

Assessment: (If desired. However, no grades are required at this level)

EVALUATION 10 POINTS	CRAFTSMANSHIP 10 POINTS	DESIGN 10 POINTS
3 POINTS: STUDENT DOES NOT SHOW AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPTS	3 POINTS: POT HAS MAJOR DAMAGE DUE TO INCORRECT TECHNIQUE	3 POINTS: DESIGN SHOWS LITTLE/NO CONSIDERATION NO OBJECT SHOWN
5 POINTS: LITTLE UNDERSTANDING OF CONCEPTS SHOWN.	5 POINTS: POT HAS MINOR DAMAGE (CRACKED OR HAD OTHER CRAFT ISSUES).	5 POINTS: DESIGN SHOWS SOME CONSIDERATION AND OBJECT/ ANIMAL IS SHOWN

10 POINTS: STUDENT SHOWS GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF CONCEPTS	10 POINTS: POT HAS NO DAMAGE	10 POINTS: DESIGN SHOWS CONSIDERATION AND SHOWS A CREATIVE USE OF NEGATIVE SPACE.
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Resources: *Scholastic Art Magazine* April/May 1992