

LESSON PLAN

TITLE: PAPER CLAY CLAN TOTEM

Using Laguna Paper Clay to create a collaborative classroom "Clan" Totem Pole, without firing in a kiln.

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Grade Level: 3 & 4 (Adaptable K-12)

Background Information: The traditional use of Totem Poles is an ancient one held by many cultures around the world. Totems serve as a visual statement and record to commemorate and share the cultural history of a people. Totems come in four types including *Crests, History, Legends, and Memorials*.
(Single lesson plan)

CA STATE EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS GRADE 3, 4

Grade Three

1.0 ARTISTIC PERCEPTION

Develop Perceptual Skills and Visual Arts Vocabulary

- 1.1 Perceive and describe rhythm and movement in works of art and in the environment.
- 1.2 Describe how artists use tints and shades in painting.

Analyze Art Elements and Principles of Design

- 1.5 Identify and describe elements of art in works of art, emphasizing line, color, shape/form, texture, space, and value.

2.0 CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Skills, Processes, Materials, and Tools

- 2.1 Explore ideas for art in a personal sketchbook.
- 2.2 Mix and apply tempera paints to create tints, shades, and neutral colors.

Communication and Expression Through Original Works of Art

- 2.4 Create a work of art based on the observation of objects and scenes in daily

life, emphasizing value changes.

2.5 Create an imaginative clay sculpture based on an organic form.

3.0 HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Role and Development of the Visual Arts

3.3 Distinguish and describe representational, abstract, and nonrepresentational works of art.

Diversity of the Visual Arts

3.4 Identify and describe objects of art from different parts of the world observed in visits to a museum or gallery (e.g., puppets, masks, containers).

3.5 Write about a work of art that reflects a student's own cultural background.

4.0 AESTHETIC VALUING

Derive Meaning

4.1 Compare and contrast selected works of art and describe them, using appropriate vocabulary of art.

5.0 CONNECTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, APPLICATIONS

Careers and Career-Related Skills

5.4 Describe how artists (e.g., architects, book illustrators, muralists, industrial designers) have affected people's lives.

Grade Four

Visual and Performing Arts: Visual Arts Content Standards.

1.0 ARTISTIC PERCEPTION

Processing, Analyzing, and Responding to Sensory Information Through the Language and Skills Unique to the Visual Arts

Students perceive and respond to works of art, objects in nature, events, and the environment. They also use the vocabulary of the visual arts to express their observations.

Develop Perceptual Skills and Visual Arts Vocabulary

1.1 Perceive and describe contrast and emphasis in works of art and in the environment.

1.2 Describe how negative shapes/forms and positive shapes/forms are used in a chosen work of art.

1.3 Identify pairs of complementary colors (e.g., yellow/violet; red/green; orange/blue) and discuss how artists use them to communicate an idea or mood.

1.4 Describe the concept of proportion (in face, figure) as used in works of art.

Analyze Art Elements and Principles of Design

1.5 Describe and analyze the elements of art (e.g., color, shape/form, line, texture, space, value), emphasizing form, as they are used in works of art and found in the environment.

2.0 CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Creating, Performing, and Participating in the Visual Arts

2.1 Use shading (value) to transform a two-dimensional shape into what appears to be a three-dimensional form (e.g., circle to sphere).

2.2 Use the conventions of facial and figure proportions in a figure study.

2.3 Use additive and subtractive processes in making simple sculptural forms.

Communication and Expression Through Original Works of Art

2.6 Use the interaction between positive and negative space expressively in a work of art.

2.7 Use contrast (light and dark) expressively in an original work of art.

2.8 Use complementary colors in an original composition to show contrast and emphasis.

3.0 HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Understanding the Historical Contributions and Cultural Dimensions of the Visual Arts

Students analyze the role and development of the visual arts in past and present cultures throughout the world, noting human diversity as it relates to the visual arts and artists.

Role and Development of the Visual Arts

3.1 Explain how artists use their work to share experiences or communicate ideas.

3.2 Recognize and use the vocabulary of art to describe art objects from various cultures and time periods.

Diversity of the Visual Arts

3.3 Identify and discuss how art is used in events and celebrations in various cultures, past and present, including the use in their own lives.

4.0 AESTHETIC VALUING

Derive Meaning

4.2 Identify and describe how a person's own cultural context influences individual responses to works of art.

4.3 Discuss how the subject and selection of media relate to the meaning or purpose of a work of art.

Make Informed Judgments

4.4 Identify and describe how various cultures define and value art differently.

4.5 Describe how the individual experiences of an artist may influence the development of specific works of art.

5.0 CONNECTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, APPLICATIONS

Visual Literacy

5.3 Construct diagrams, maps, graphs, timelines, and illustrations to communicate ideas or tell a story about a historical event.

Careers and Career-Related Skills

5.4 Read biographies and stories about artists and summarize the readings in short reports, telling how the artists mirrored or affected their time period or culture.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By making totems and attaching them to a totem pole made of paper clay, students will be able to...

- Demonstrate their understanding of a symbol
- Show how cultures throughout history have used art to communicate by identifying important symbols that tell the story of their family, culture, or individual lives
- Use Visual art to express/ convey ideas
- Communicate ideas related to family, history, legend, or memorial through construction of paper clay totem section using design and symbols.
- Illustrate that an individual art project can be combined with others to create a cohesive sculpture with a theme.
- Know what Totem poles are used for and what they represent
- Create a 3-D sculptural form using paper clay and other materials

VISUAL ARTS VOCABULARY

Elements: the most important things to learn about an object or subject

form, a type of object like a “human” or “building”

shape, the outline of something’s form

line, long narrow mark

structure, something built or erected

Principals: first or among the first in rank – the most important thing

design, a detailed plan of something that is often shown as a drawing

symbols, something that represents something else

construction, a built structure

OTHER RELATED VOCABULARY

totem, an object, animal, plant, or other natural phenomenon revered as a symbol of a clan or society, and often used in rituals among some peoples

ancestors, distant relations that are more than a grandparent

history, what has happened in the past

legend, an old story presented as history but unlikely to be true

folklore, traditional local stories passed down in a community or country, local legends

crest, a symbol of a family or office

identity, the name or character that identifies somebody or something

memorial, something that is intended to remind people of somebody who has died or an event in which people died, e.g. a statue, speech, or ceremony

family, a group of people who are closely related by birth, marriage, or adoption

clan, a group of families related through a common ancestor or marriage

tribe, a family, or group with common ancestry, customs, beliefs, and leadership

depictions, a picture, description, or other representation of something

MATERIALS

EM-349 Laguna Whiteware

Paper Clay

Butcher paper

rolling pins or dowels

forks

cardboard tubes

cardboard

scissors

tape

floor wax

1 gallon bucket for base

8' PVC pole

hand saw

sponge

paint mixing sticks

20 pounds sand

paints and brushes

2 gallon bucket

20# Quick Crete

MOTIVATION

Cultures from all around the world share an ancient tradition of recording and preserving stories, history, and events using symbols, designs, and depictions of animals on Totem poles. These art forms served as an unwritten language to represent ancestry and family, record the history of a particular clan or tribe, to convey stories of folklore and real experience and to memorialize persons and events. These unique art forms serve as an un-written library of information while providing an esthetic art value.

PROCEDURE

Introduction: Introduce students to the concept of symbols. A symbol is something visible such as an object, a picture, and a design or particular mark that stands for something that is invisible, like ideas, actions, or events. Give examples of symbols we use in everyday life.

A dollar \$ sign to represent money.
A red 8-sided sign stands for STOP

1. Ask students: What are some other symbols we see or use in everyday life?

Marketing Brands

Grocery Stores: "Vons," "Ralph's," "Seven Eleven"
Athletic Apparel: "Nike," "Adida," "Merrell"
Computers: "Dell," "IBM," "ACER"

Road Signs

"STOP" Sign - letters
Traffic Light - colored lights
Speed Limit Sign - numbers
Direction Sign - arrows

2. Show students pictures of various kinds of symbols



Icons: Phoenix (rebirth)



California State Flag



American Eagle

3. Have students read a handout about Pacific Northwest Native American tribes followed by viewing pictures/ samples of their Totem artwork.

4. Describe the 4 basic types of Totems and what they represent:

Crest: symbols, design or specific animal attributed to your family or ancestry. Example, a family crest may contain an image of a bear. Bears in the Pacific Northwest are excellent at catching salmon in the rivers. Therefore, a bear on a family crest can symbolize an ancestry of successful fishermen.

History: designs, symbols or animals that record the history of a tribe, clan or family. Give example, a new leader, a war, a celebration, etc.

Legend: Folklore stories or real experiences. Give example, ghost story, hunting, adventure, etc.

Memorial: to remember an event or person. Give example, birth, wedding, death, etc.

Students are then instructed that they will make a section of a totem using clay. They will be asked to create designs, symbols, and or depictions of animals to convey one of the 4 types of totems. Their individual section will be stacked on a pole to create a classroom "clan" totem that will represent each individual student in the class "clan".

DIRECTIONS

1. Cover cardboard tube with newspaper and secure with tape.
2. Role out a slab of clay that will wrap around the tube and score clay to attach.
3. Cut off excess clay at the top and bottom of tube allowing for uniform size.
4. Students can use tools to carve symbols or designs and or can add clay to build up on the surface to create dimension. Encourage the use of both techniques.
5. Add features such as ears, beaks, and wings etc. to represent animals and carve symbols or designs.
6. Allow finished projects to dry.
7. Students can finish the totem sections using paints, or can embellish with additions items glued on.

8. Each student will cut out a cardboard circle the same circumference as the totem section to act as a support and divider between the sections on the totem.
9. Each Totem section is then strung onto a tall PVC pipe that has been secured in a 2-gallon bucket with quick Crete.
10. Ask students to describe or explain the meaning behind the section they produced and contributed to the classroom “clan” totem.
11. The totem can be displayed for any length of time and when dismantled each student can take his or her section home.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

1. Have students share in open discussion the history and significance of a totem pole.
2. Create a finished section for a classroom totem pole that includes design, symbols or animal depiction.
3. Ask individuals to show their totem and tell about their individual meaning or symbolization of what they created.
4. Students can explain definitions of selected vocabulary i.e.: clan, depiction, symbol etc.
5. Teachers will observe students brainstorming and or conversing about techniques, animal choices or storyline in pairs or small groups.
6. Teachers ask questions (why) regarding a student’s choice of a certain animal, symbol, or design.
7. Observe fair sharing of tools and helping other classmates.

EXTENSIONS

(Go to: www.Lagunaclay.com/clay-in-class/ for active links to these extensions)

Use concept of art as a way to communicate certain ideas or messages using alternative mediums and projects such as memory quilts, constructing Totem poles online on a computer, or use of photo’s etc to create a collage to represent a particular idea, event, or story.

Younger students can further explore or be introduced to everyday symbols. Example: restroom placards depicting boy and girl, circle with an X through it means NO. Etc.

Older Students can be introduced to art or artists who create works that convey a particular idea, or political or social statement.

Example: [Pablo Picasso –War and Peace](#), [Kathë Kollwitz – German Expressionists](#) Etc.

Stories to read:

Read on line: THE FIRST TOTEM POLE, by Rosa Bell, Illustrated by Christian White

<http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/Haida/java/english/totem/index.html>

THE FIRST TOTEM POLE KWAKIUTL <http://www.firstpeople.us/FP-HTML-Legends/The-First-Totem-Pole-Kwakiutl.html>

CALIFORNIA ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS

Visual and Performing Arts in kindergarten through grade twelve, adopted by the California State Board of Education.

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/vamain.asp>

[Prekindergarten](#)

[Kindergarten](#)

[Grade One](#)

[Grade Two](#)

[Grade Three](#)

[Grade Four](#)

[Grade Five](#)

[Grade Six](#)

[Grade Seven](#)

[Grade Eight](#)

Grades Nine Through Twelve

[Proficient](#)

[Advanced](#)

[Glossary](#)

The “Totem” Lesson Plan is sponsored by:

Laguna Clay at LagunaClay.com, and

David Clay Tools at davidclaytools.com.

CR Laguna Clay, 2009

Icons: Phoenix (rebirth)



The Phœnix.

California State Flag



American Eagle



Classroom Management for Totem Pole Project

By David D. Gilbaugh

Some projects can benefit by giving special attention to classroom management. In the Totem Pole project here are some suggestions that have proven helpful.

Special Project Newsletter to Parents Pre-emptive letter to parents explaining the lesson and asking support by talking to their children about how special working with such materials is and how important it is when doing the projects to use the clay only as they are instructed. Keep this letter to the parents focused on what they should be doing as opposed to what they should not. Phrase it in a positive tone! The lesson instructions should address specific areas of concern that are not already covered in the classroom rules. Ask parents to show their enthusiasm about the lesson by emphasizing how important it is to be safe and do their best so that they can continue to do such interesting and fun activities.

Trial Run Do the project yourself before attempting to teach it to your students. No amount of research can substitute for doing it yourself at least once or twice. It helps your own confidence in the project and it will reveal problem spots and details that can make the difference in success or failure. This is a “**must**”.

Structure Maintain high levels of structure by modeling good organization skills. Show students how you keep your work area clean as you demonstrate and closely follow the steps that you have worked out when you did it yourself.

Prevention Prepare for possible problems with students before they occur. Knowing your individual students’ learning modalities and accommodating them will reduce possible confusion and anxiety that lead to discipline problems. Many discipline problems in the classroom can be averted by planning to meet the needs of your unique group of students and accommodating the special needs that the students in your class may have.

Clean up Working with clay presents special clean up problems. Define what clean means and demonstrate it clearly. Teach them the steps that are necessary to clean up safely and properly and give them adequate time to do what you ask. Getting your classroom clean before dismissing students allows you to take a visual inventory and hold students accountable. You can always dismiss students first who do the best job of cleaning. Give additional points for cleaning up just as you hold them accountable for doing neat written work. Have check-lists for clean up that are visible and posted on the walls so you can see what has been done correctly. This serves as a rubric for grading clean up and organizational skills.