

ANASAZI POTTERY

By Charlotte Hawkins



Grade 3-4
Core Concept/Art integration

Objective: Students will...Describe and compare indigenous peoples of the Southwest. Understand the importance of preserving cultural history including archeological sites. Identify how indigenous peoples preserve cultural heritage today. Explore points of view about life in Utah from indigenous peoples using primary sources like pre-Columbian pottery.

3 - 4 Grade

Core Curriculum Social Studies

Standard 2

Explain how selected indigenous cultures of the Americas have changed over time.

Objective 2 a

Describe and compare indigenous peoples of the Southwest.

Standard 2 Grade 4

Students will understand how Utah's history has been shaped by many diverse people, events, and ideas.

Objective 1

Describe the historical and current impact of various cultural groups on Utah.

Art Form Contextualizing

Standard 4

The student will interpret and apply visual arts in relation to cultures, history, and all learning.

Objective 1 b

Compare the arts of different cultures to explore their similarities and diversities.

b. Create works of art that connect to the early art and cultures of the state using similar designs or motifs.

Materials:

Water based ceramic clay
(either self-hardening or kiln fired),
clay tools (popsicle sticks work),
spray bottle or sponge for wetting clay,
pictograph worksheets,
photographs of Native American pottery
book "When Clay Sings" by Byrd Baylor or "If Rocks Could Talk" by Jane Bush.

Time: Three 40-minute periods

Warm up/ Introduction:

Create a clay coil pot.

Decorate the pottery with petroglyph symbols.

Write a story about their pottery.

Lesson:

Day One: Show students pictures of Native American pottery. Ask students what it was and what it could be used for. Ask for ways that we can learn about it and the earliest people in our state. Write student responses on the board. Tell students that they will be learning about Native Americans who inhabit Utah. Some of these tribes could include the Navajo, Hopi, Ute, Fremont and Anasazi. Students are then asked to locate the region indigenous peoples lived in Utah on a map. Tell students that they will be learning about Native American pottery. Students are told that Native Americans decorated their pottery with pictures. These pictures told a story about what was going on in the tribe at that time. Call students to the reading circle and read Byrd Baylor's "When Clay Sings" to them, asking questions along the way or "If Rocks Could Talk" by Jane Bush.

Instruction: Ask students to describe their impressions of Native American life based on photographs of dwellings, petroglyphs, and pottery. How can pots tell us about their culture? By examining the pictures on the remains of these pots, we learn about the beliefs, customs, and everyday lives of these people.

Ask how we preserve the culture of Native American culture and history today? Ask why it is important to preserve petroglyphs, pottery and ancient dwellings?

Show students a photo of Maria Martinez, a Hopi woman, who learned how to make pottery from her grandmother, and passed on the knowledge to her son. She made a living selling beautiful black pottery. Many traditions continue today because those customs are passed down to the next generation. Ask students why those customs are important to learn about.

Ask why Native Americans didn't just write down their stories like we do today. Explain that Native Americans did not use the alphabet we use today. They used pictures to represent what they wanted to say. These pictures are called pictographs or petroglyphs.

Have students choose pictograph symbols and write a story about themselves.

Explore:

Day Two: Demonstrate how to make a coil pot first by making a small pinch pot. Then roll coils or "snakes". Attach the coils by stacking the coils onto the pinch pot, and then onto each other. The coils are then gently smoothed together from the inside or outside with fingers. Occasionally it is necessary to wet clay (supervise this so students don't over wet) with a spray bottle or sponge. Students create their pottery then decorate them with pictographs, petroglyphs or other Native American designs. If necessary, clay can be stored over several days in separate sealed quart/gallon sized plastic bags.

Day Three: Have students write a story or a description of their pot, explaining why they chose the pictographs and how the symbols represent themselves.

Review:

Ask students what they have learned about Native Americans of the Utah (including tribal names and regions that they inhabited). Students are then asked how examining their pottery can teach us about Native American culture. Ask students to share their clay pot stories with the class.