Native Americans in New England Curricular Project

Title: Native New England Ceramic Traditions Yesterday and Today

Grade Level: 9-12

Subject Area Focus:

Fine Arts, Cultural Arts, and North East Woodland Native Culture

Estimated Number of Days to Complete: One to six weeks

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Additional Creators

School Sherman Indian High School

District Federal Bureau of Indian Education/ Department of the Interior

State California

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*This lesson plan will be submitted for inclusion into an on-line database of curricular projects for the NEH program Native Americans in New England.
Curricular Project Summary: (Please write a brief overview summary of the curricular project in 150 words or less.)

This lesson would be considered a unit. The goal is to have students look deeply at art of the Northeast Woodland Native culture both past and present and to see what meaning they can gain from the exploration to their lives. This skill can be adapted to any other culture, historical time period for any type of artwork, traditional, or contemporary. The average amount of time a viewer looks at a work of art is six seconds. An exercise such as this helps people to slow down and “see”. This technique can be very enlightening and done as a group students can see that everyone will have their own interpretations of things, but if an understanding can be brought about in regards to tribally specific meanings people can just begin to understand a different viewpoint from the dominate culture.

(Either it’s my old government computer and or the set-up of the template I could not type this section within the box)
Desired Results/Objectives

1. Essential Questions/Historical Questions:
   National Visual Arts 8 - Responding: How can the viewer “read” a work of art as text?
   How does knowing and using visual art vocabularies help us understand and interpret works of art?
   National Visual Arts 9 - Responding: How does on determine criteria to evaluate a work of art?
   How is personal preference different from an evaluation?
   National Visual Arts 11 - Connecting: How does art help us understand the lives of people of different times, places, and cultures?

2. Objectives: By the end of this project, what will students know, understand and be able to do?
   Students will know...
   The visual characteristics of traditional Northeast Woodland ceramics. They will understand that there are meanings associated in the form and the designs. The student will know the differences between historic ceramics and today’s contemporized intentions, methods, and purposes for creating Woodland (Wampanoag) informed vessels and forms.

   Students will understand...
   A method for critiquing art forms using four approaches: 1: denotative description of facts, 2: denotative description using The formalist properties of art and design, 3 connotative method of personal interpretation of meaning and relationship to history and historical concepts, 4: connotative analysis of personal relevance to self.

   Students will understand that American Indian culture(s) have always been dynamic and changing. [NMAI 360° Framework for Essential Understandings about American Indians]
Students will be able to...

Write a description and/or orally describe an example of an early Northeast Woodland ceramic piece.

Use the elements and principles of art to describe either in written or oral form an early Northeast Woodland ceramic piece.

Interpret meaning thorough an investigation and study of historical information of a work of Northeast Woodland art

Express personal feelings regarding a work of culturally informed or otherwise Northeast Woodland art.

Use all the above skills to have a deeper discussion and understanding of any work of art from any culture or time in history.

Make connections between Northeast Woodland art of the past and art of the present and draw conclusions about its changing nature and evolution.

Curriculum Standards (National, State, Local):

- National Art Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- VA: Re8.1.1.la- Interpret an artwork or collection of works, supported by relevant and sufficient evidence found in the work and its various contexts. (Proficient)
- National Art Anchor Standard 9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.
- VA: Re9.1.Illa- Construct evaluations of a work of art or collection of works based on differing sets of criteria. (Advanced)
- National Art Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.
• VA: Cn11.1.IIa- Compare uses of art in a variety of societal, cultural, and historical contexts and make connections to uses of art in contemporary and local contexts. (Accomplished)

3. Transfer Goal:

- Respond by analyzing and interpreting the artistic communications of others.
- Effectively communicate with varied audiences and for varied purposes while displaying appropriate cultural understanding.
- Respond to the artistic expressions of others through global understanding, critical stance, personal connection, and interpretation.

Assessment/Evidence

Performance Task or Assessment used to gauge student learning: (Please describe)

Engage and contribute to a conversation discussing a historic ceramic work of art from the Woodland culture using the Four Part Model, Next, Do the same with a contemporary piece of ceramics from the Woodland area.

Pre-Assessment:

Recall verbally any tribes one knows that live (d) in the Northeast Woodlands.

Make a list of tribes from the Northeast Woodland area using a map. National Geographic Society map of North American Indians, 1972 or other maps which show the location of Eastern Woodland peoples.
General review of the Euro-centric art elements and principals of art used nationwide in elementary, middle school, and high school art programs. This may vary greatly depending on the quality of art education programs the students may have been exposed to if exposed to if at all because of historic cuts to arts programs.

Summative Assessment:

Write a Four Part Art Critique that aligns to an actual “art”ifact either in printed, projected or real form (best practice).

Other Assessment Evidence:

Discussion engagement, dedication to the task etc.

Learning Plan

Lesson Summaries:

Lesson 1: Set the scene, find visuals, and locate examples that illustrate the landscape, traditional homes, clothing, and foods etc. belonging to the Eastern Woodland / Atlantic Seaboard native groups. Use posters, book images, videos and realia that are culturally appropriate. Avoid stereotyped and inaccurate materials. Students write the name of at least one tribe they learned about at the conclusion of the lesson. One whole period may just be the viewing of a video such as Land of the Eagle vol.1 “The Great Encounter” A Time Life video of the PBS Nature series which focuses on the animals, plants and overall ecosystem of Native cultures of the North Eastern Woodland region. This is important because the connection to land is key in understanding the impact of the environment on Native art and culture.

Lesson 2: Set the scene; find materials and resources that specifically focus on the pottery/ceramic traditions of the Northeast Woodlands regions. Items can be made or obtained within typical ceramic classrooms such as gourd scrappers, sticks, shells, a water smoothed stone or river rock to fit in the palm of one’s hand, a cord wrapped paddle, and a bit of earthenware clay to demo on. You’re not making a pot at this point; however this would be a studio
extension activity that could be done after completing this lesson.

Learning Activity Details:

LESSON 1 – Background Knowledge

Lesson 1 Details

Lesson Opening: Ask students if they can name a tribe from the Northeast Woodlands. Write the names on the board creating a list. If the class cannot do this which may depend on the region where the students live and their background knowledge. Then provide a map and have the students copy down the names of 5-10 tribes on their art card. I have a large map laminated and posted in my classroom made by the National Geographic Society. Then using book images, posters and or videos spend one class period exploring this region. Ask questions to gauge understanding throughout the lesson. Discuss how the land influenced the people in Pre-Contact times. How people subsisted, built their homes and the materials that they had access to create their clothing etc.

www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mosma/places.htm (Established Indian tribal Communities in 1620)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wampanoag (map of Wampanoag tribes)

Lesson Closing: For the ticket out have the students write the name of an Eastern Woodland tribe on a piece of paper provided. Collect one from each student as they go out the door.

Day two extension of lesson 1 could consist of the video Land of the Eagle “The Great Encounter” (60min)

LESSON 2 – Historical Eastern Woodland Ceramics

Lesson 2 Details

Lesson Opening: Start class with a couple of review questions about what they learned the day before such as characteristics of the landscape and impact on material culture.
During the Lesson: Pass out some examples of Eastern Woodland Ceramic forms and processes in handout form. Some possible resources can be obtained from [http://www.nativetech.org/pottery/pottery.htm](http://www.nativetech.org/pottery/pottery.htm). Another resource is *The First peoples of the Northeast* by Esther K. Braun and her son David P. Braun pages 63-65, 80.

Show examples of tools that the people used during Early, Middle and Late Woodland times. Let students handle and possibly experiment with a small piece of clay. Ask students if they are able to replicate any of the marks they see on the handouts in the actual clay. Allow time to experiment and about five minutes to clean up and put their handouts in their art cubbies for later use.

Lesson Closing: Pass out a vocabulary fill in worksheet that they do for homework in the library or computer lab. Depending on the maturity of the group one would have to decide if this should really be a scheduled day in the computer lab for a third day of this lesson plan.

**LESSON 3 Teaching With Objects Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian Lesson**

Instructional Tips/Strategies/Suggestions: Practice concept by using the Susquehannock (attributed) jar CE 1645-1665 NMAI Catalog number: 22/446. Print color copies of the pottery piece along with the attached Description/Inference pages. One is blank and one is filled in as a sample. The sample page lists the National Arts Standards. I use the more up to date Common Era (CE) designation as opposed to A.D. when referring to dates. This could also be a teaching point about changing concepts relative to history.

Historical Question/Essential Question: #8 How can the viewer “read” a work of art? And how does knowing and using visual art vocabularies help us understand and interpret works of art?

**Lesson 3 Details**

Lesson Opening: First look over the example page and refer to the image from the NMAI collection. Next hand out copies of the image to pairs of students or if technology allows project image of the Susquehannock jar for the whole class to see. Next, ask the students to look carefully at the image and state only what they see, just the facts and write down as a team everything they notice about this jar in the *Description* box. Facts only, such as what shapes do they see, what colors do they notice, what textures do they see, and anything else they can actually “see”. After that, let the teams or pairs of students have time to write down anything that they may infer by looking at
the piece itself and have them write those things in the *Inference* box. Walk around the classroom monitoring and listening to their comments. After a while have whole group share about what they discovered.

Lesson Closing: Ask the class about what they learned about this work of art by looking at it deeply. Ask them if they recalled anything they learned previously in the background knowledge portion of the lesson? What art vocabulary words proved helpful to know? (may use art elements and principles list, posters, or handouts of vocabulary for support) Ask the students if any of their inferences might be incorrect? Which ones? Why? Could they do research to find out if they were correct or not?

**LESSON 4 Tell the legend or the history?**

Instructional Tips/Strategies/Suggestions: Present a handout of an outline of the Wampanoag homeland past and present.

Historical Question/Essential Question: How do people contribute to awareness and understanding of theirs lives and the lives of their communities through art making?

**Lesson 4 Details Ramona Peters Wampanoag Artist**

Lesson Opening: Tell the students that they are going to see only a portion of a You Tube video about a living artist by the name of Ramona Peters who is of the Wampanoag nation located in the southern part of Massachusetts. Point out the area on a map. Explain that out of 69 Wampanoag tribes that existed before the English colonist arrived that there are only three left.

During the Lesson: Monitor classroom behavior during the first half of the video. Stop the video at the point when she begins to show her contemporary forms of pottery, save for later in the unit. This is about halfway around min 44.

[Show the short video: You Tube video “Falmouth Art Center Lecture with Ramona Peters Wampanoag Indian Artist”]

Lesson Closing: Ask the class what does Ramona Peters mean when she says “culturally informed”? Have the class write their answer on the back of their art card. Remind students to use complete sentences or thoughts. Have students turn in for a check of their understanding. Return at the next class meeting.
LESSON 5 Title Contemporary Wampanoag Ceramics

Instructional Tips/Strategies/Suggestions: Review what a culturally informed piece refers to with the class. Another sample could be posted or shown and students could identify things that support the question.

Historical Question/Essential Question: How does art preserve aspects of life? How does art help us understand the lives of people of different times, places, and cultures?

Lesson 5 Details

Lesson Opening: Review questions are put to the students from the previous day’s lesson. What does it mean if a piece of art is culturally informed? Does Ramona Peters live in today’s world? Tell the class that today we are going to look at some additional footage of the YouTube video where she speaks about contemporary Wampanoag art work. The current map of the Wampanoag home land could be projected or students can look at a hand held copy. Do all Wampanoag people live in the same places as their ancestors? Do you?

During the Lesson: Students can take notes of pertinent points on the back of their Art Card. Monitor the class while the video runs.

Lesson Closing: What does Ramona feel about the young people coming up after her?

LESSON 6 Four Part Art Critique

Background: Now the students need to practice using the Four Part Art Critique method. This could be approached in a couple of different ways depending on if the art class has had a lot of background to the formalist concepts of the elements and principles of art or not. It may depend on if your students live in a community that has a strong background in art and art teachers in elementary and or middle school before they get to the high school level. If your classes are already on board with these concepts, then you could go right to the handout, pass it out and project an example of a historically informed Northeast Woodland ceramic vessel or give the students a color copy of an image or you might have a poster of such a thing. Then you could spend another class day doing the same thing for a contemporary Native American ceramic piece. One might have to use an image that is accessible and it might be difficult to find. It would really be wonderful if there was more indigenous art available in the various art curricular teacher resources, but for the time being they are very
heavy on art from Europe, other countries, minority cultures that have the highest population before our own country’s indigenous art is considered.

Really this method can be used with any work of art. I have taken it with me to the Getty Museum in Malibu and the students have used it with Greek ceramic vessels that they choose themselves and it becomes a kind of exit ticket before they leave the gallery or museum space. If your students don’t have a background in the elements and principles of art this will have to be taught before this assignment or lesson even begins. But for most art teachers in America this is pretty standard method of approaching art even if it is very Euro-centric most college art programs also follow this model so the students will need to know about it.

Another thing that would really be the best is to break the four part art critique into two separate days for each of the four parts: 1: Looking at art for just the facts of what we see. 2: Noticing how the elements and principles work together and are present in this example. 3: Interpreting what the piece is about in terms of history, culture, tradition and communication. 4: What does the example mean to you personally, does it work as a piece of art, does it have personal relevance. Practicing them by using a modeling of the concept on the first day and then the next day having the students doing it on their own. Finally, they can do the whole thing together. This could be a part of a weekly routine of looking at different kinds of art from different native cultural areas pre and then post-contact, for example. This would also give an opportunity to show several different examples of ceramics so that students could draw visual conclusions after looking at a varying selection.

Since I have already included a specific practice for the first part (1) using the Smithsonian example and most art teachers are pretty informed about the elements and principles of art already and the fourth part is so individual to the students’ personal analysis, below I am only going to do a sort of walk though for the third component (3) of the Four Part Art Critique as it applies specifically to Eastern Woodland tribally informed ceramics.

Lesson Opening: Let’s take a look at the third part of the Four Part Art Critique specifically and use what we learned from Ramona’s Peter’s video on meaning within a Northeast Woodland or Wampanoag specific piece. Ask the students some questions regarding what they learned from Ramona Peter’s video. But first write the word for clay in the Wôpanâak language on the board: man8nushk. Explain that the word for clay literally means “traded”. Ask the students what the connection might be. [Personal conversation with Jessie Little Doe Baird, a MacArthur ‘genius’ award winner in the revival of the Wampanoag language, July 19, 2017] (the 8 is a long drawn out “o” sound)

During the lesson: Have classroom discussion. Students can get out their handouts from either native tech or the Braun examples to refer to during the discussion.

Questions that might be asked: (one class period)
1. Let’s look at the overall shape of a Wampanoag clay vessel. What is the shape of it? Have different students input descriptions of what they see.

2. Why do you think the bottom is somewhat pointed? Answers should be related to the bag shaped pot being propped up with rocks in the coals of a fire or a later version that has a constricted rim for tying up over a fire (It will depend on the example used)

3. Does the shape help with stability? What about the texture that covers the base of the vessel is it likewise related to stability? Why? Students should be able to relate the texture to a firmer grip when holding the pot and to the ability to possibly turn it using sticks to take advantage of the heat of the coals. Plimouth You Tube video clip helpful here.

4. Is the form of the pot considered male or female? The rounded body of the pot being Female, a holder of tradition, a receptacle. What parts are considered to be of the male and why? Answers should be related to castellated points representing the four directions where men would go to get food - hunt. The marks are straight and angular representing the thoughts of men.

5. What are traditional pots used for? To cook food. What kinds of foods? This changed from the beginning times of hunter (searing meat) gathering to the later times of the growing of corn and the making of porridges.

6. Why is food considered “medicine”? Health, sacred part of our body, nourishment etc.

Questions for another day while examining and discussing a contemporary work of Northeast Woodland (Wampanoag) ceramics.

1. Now let’s look at this contemporary piece. What does contemporary mean? Answers should relate to being made by people today or within the last 50 years.

2. Do you notice anything that is different from the example we viewed the other day? Answers will vary depending on the example being used, does it have any elements of mixed media such as the case when Ramona collaborated with Berta Welch and inlaid her pottery with wampum etc.

3. Is the artist trying to communicate any ideas in this piece?

4. Is the form of the vessel the same or different from the historical piece we looked at the other day?

5. What purpose does this piece or vessel serve today? Is it still being used for cooking?

6. Do artists today make their work for sale, gifting, or for practical use purposes?

7. How have things changed for Native American artists working today?

8. Is the art considered sacred by today’s people?

An extension activity, that in it can take a day or two depending on how it is laid out, is to have the students’ just draw the ceramic vessel before they discuss it. This may provide for more descriptive details in the discussion and or writing responses.
Materials and Sources Used

What primary source(s) is/are being used (full citation)? Please annotate each source.

Although difficult it may be possible to have an example of an authentic work of Northeast Woodland pottery or Wampanoag ceramics. The best would be able to go on a fieldtrip to actually look at a piece that will probably be in a museum or gallery setting. There may be someone from the community that created traditional or contemporary Woodland ceramics, but again this may be difficult to arrange.

What secondary sources are being used (full citation)? Please annotate each source

National Museum of American Indian search Education>collections search> USA; Pennsylvania; Lancaster County catalog# 22/446 (lesson 3)

Land of the Eagle, Volume 1 the Great Encounter, for BBC-TV, WNET, Executive Producer, Peter Crawford, Narrator and Executive Editor George Page, (60 min) Put out by Time/Life Video, VHS.

What other curricular materials do you plan to use to support the curricular project?

( Documents on my computer will not save directly into this template, I will have to send separately)

I would suggest that teachers sign up for the National Museum of American Indian Educator newsletters.

Images can be obtained from the Getty Museum collections, also indirectly through images on a web search.

You Tube video “Falmouth Art Center Lecture with Ramona Peters Wampanoag Indian Artist”

http://wldwind.com/rpeters/pottery.htm (examples of contemporary ceramics by Ramona Peters-I would suggest clicking on image and enlarging it or projecting it if your classroom has the technology available) Some nice examples
are the following: One Thumb Pot, Night Guardian, Legend of Mashpee Pond, The Sophia Pot, and Dances in the Rain.

http://www.massfolkarts.org/object_detail.asp?ObjectID=8150049 (One example of a Ramona Peters’ ceramic piece entitled “Pot-Keepers of the Tradition”)

For examples of images of older ceramics I would suggest a search on the National Museum of American Indian>Education>Resources>Classroom lessons, however after quite a long search I could not retrieve the Templates for the Susquehannock lesson mentioned in lesson 3 Description. That being said here are ways to access the image along with a couple of other ideas. Go to the Collections Search and search by places, here are three examples:

Susquehannock (archeological) (attributed) Jar AD (CE 1645-1665) Place: USA; Pennsylvania; Lancaster County; Columbia NMAI Catalog number:22/446

Late Woodland Tradition Cooking Pot AD (CE 1500-1700) USA; Connecticut; Fairfield County; Brookfield; Squantz Pond; Rockshelter NMAI Catalog number:11/2946

Iroquoian Cooking Pot AD (CE 1500-1600) with faces on rim USA; New York; Jefferson County; Theresa NMAI Catalog number 9/3208

http://plimoth.org/learn/collections-archaeology/wampanoag-collections for example #3 Cooking Pot, 1500-1600 excavated from the banks of the Cape Cod Canal.

http://www.nativetech.org/pottery/pottery.htm


Wilber, C. Keith, Indian Handcrafts. Connecticut: The Globe Pequot Press, 2001. (Note: racist points of view in some parts, but it as information about the process for making pottery and shows some examples of designs and the tools used.) p. 84-86.

Reflection
After teaching the lessons, what suggestions do you have for other teachers who might use this curricular project?

I think that sketching a detailed drawing of an image or better yet an actual piece would be the best way for students to get an informed understanding of Northeast Woodland ceramics past and present styles. This would add another day or class period at least. I would have the students draw the object first before doing the Four Part Art Critique.

Another extension could be for students to use their phones or the computer lab to locate examples of Northeast Woodland ceramics, they could make small sketches of what they find and explain what makes them “Woodland”.

Teachers could download other ceramic examples from other regions by searching the collections that may be in their own geographic area if they live in another area outside of the Northeast. Searches can also be specified to contemporary ceramic works as well.

[http://www.wampanoagtribe.net/pages/wampanoag_way/other](http://www.wampanoagtribe.net/pages/wampanoag_way/other) can give some background information

Lastly but also an obvious choice is to have the students, especially if they are ceramics students, is to have them make a vessel themselves. They could choose if they want to go old school and try and attempt a replica such as what staff at the Plimonth Plantation site do. This would be an example of a real world experience as this is what some people do for a living such is the way that Ramona Peters started out doing. At children’s museums and cultural venues this is a way for them to experience an interaction without risk of damaging actual artifacts.

Students could also use this lesson as a jumping off spot and create their own ceramic piece tied to their own time and life experiences. They could then write a short essay to explain connections to their homeland and if what any marks represented from their life.