

National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum®

January 28 - April 8, 2012



Pueblo to Pueblo
The Legacy of Southwest Indian Pottery



Activity Guide

Courtesy of the Kansas City Museum and Union Station, Kansas City, Missouri
Tour Management of Smith Kramer Fine Art Services, Kansas City, Missouri

Activity Guide
For
Pueblo to Pueblo: the Legacy of Southwest Indian Pottery

Native American Coil Pots
Suitable for Age 8+

Pueblo pottery of the Southwest is one of the most beautiful and lasting artistic traditions in all of Native North America. It is a tradition that has a long history that is not only an expression of cultural identity but also serves as a reflection of the relationship of Pueblo peoples to influences from outside their own community. Today there are about 20 pueblos with a total population over 50,000 people and historically the production of pottery has been an artistic tradition that has been passed down from one generation to the next over the course of hundreds of years. It is a tradition, while keeping to established practices, has been flexible enough to be adapted or changed as necessary over time. Maria Martinez and her husband Julian were two potters who added their own ideas and creativity to tradition techniques.

Time Required: Three, 45 minute lessons

Objectives: Familiarization with Pueblo Indian arts and crafts, lifestyles, value systems of Native American Pueblos, Maria Martinez and her well-known black pottery made in the San Ildefonso Pueblo

Materials

Native American tapes or CDs of drums
white clay-individual chunks about 3" X 3" X 6"
small pans for water, slip, paint, gloss medium
trays to hold pans
bristle brushes
one gallon size plastic bags with ties inside and a tag stapled to open end
soapy water buckets, dry towels, sponges
6" X 6" paper towel pieces
Individual circles rolled and cut by teacher approximately the size of a small coffee can
Plastic clay tools
White slip
Sienna and blue tempera paints
Acrylic gloss medium
Paper fans

Lesson 1

1. Divide clay chunk into three equal pieces and roll each new chunk into a coil. It may take a little practice to get used to the forward rolling motion. It is easier to stand and use a forward rolling, then lifting, hand motion. When the clay reaches the edge of the table, lift it and move it back, starting over. It does not work well to roll the hands 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.

Lesson 2

1. Pass everyone a paper towel and round slab circle. (Teacher should put last name and class section on bottom of each.) Teacher does a demonstration of scoring and painting slip around top edge of slab. Add coil, pressing gently, pinch off and smooth together ends when it is wrapped around slab and they meet. 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. Be sure to stress that everything that is added **MUST** be scored and slipped. Also stress that the clay coil pot should not be picked up. Turn the paper towel as you work to build it, and the shape will not get lopsided.
2. Add two more coils in the same way. There are now three rows high on the slab.
3. The last two rows may be any design we have talked about.
4. Smooth out any cracks by painting water or slip over them.
5. Projects must dry and be fired.

Lesson 3

1. Paint acrylic gloss medium tinted with blue tempera on whole top and sides of coil pot. Do not paint the bottom. Make sure you get into all the crevices with the bristle brushes and acrylic medium. Clean and dry the brushes thoroughly.
2. Gently fan pot till completely dry.
3. Paint the sienna over the whole pot covering the acrylic with sienna. Do not paint the bottom.
4. Teacher wash off the sienna, leaving the brown color in the deeper parts to create an antiqued effect.

Resources:

"Scholastic Art Magazine", April/May 1992

Materials:

www.dickblick.com