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Native American Traditions and Identity in the Art Room

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Introduction

Identity can be a struggle for most young people. In the High School years, especially, young persons are confronted with a host of choices, environmental and personal, by which to define themselves. Neighborhoods claim, clothes inform, and one's experience becomes the bridge to the next level of understanding of who they are and how their world functions. This combination of external and internal characteristics mitigates an image that can be embraced by the individual and recognized or potentially misunderstood from the outside by others. I understand the position that confronts our youth. It is a delicate balance between fantasy and real mechanics, as the individual presents their personal image for mass consumption. Ongoing circumstances make a certain fluidity possible and necessary. I hope to explore these issues and route them through an artistic milieu, celebrating the cultural accounts of my students and the artistic traditions of the American Indians. I propose a unit of study where my students navigate a survey of art, history and personal examination, where one's definition of Identity includes reflection on real and tangible objects and recognizes the inspiration that forms traditions in each group of people. In the Art room, we celebrate cultures by getting into them. Hands on experiences accent our research, and authentic materials, artifacts, music, film and food add background to our work. I try to explore contacts in the community which are appropriate to the culture of study. In this case, there are a few Indian reservations local to Richmond, Virginia and many of my students can claim Native American heritage.

Background

Art seems to be the perfect way to meet the needs of the student population in my school. Accounting for the past achievements of our alumni and the merits of our staff, our school is anticipating its next renaissance. My school is the oldest in our district, operating in various locations since 1867, and has the distinction of having been the first school in our city devoted to the education of African American students.

Each class I teach has multiple grade levels and contains every exceptionality recognized and served in our building. As a result, lessons that include active learning and incorporate a variety of learning styles are a key

to the success of the program and my students. I am glad to be teaching art, a class that naturally includes a variety of instructional methods and activities, and which channels creative energies in likewise creative endeavors.

In the art room, the situations of my students manifest themselves, through interactions with others and through the reflective qualities of their assignments. The channeling of creative energies I spoke of earlier is an absolute boon, as students construct meaning from materials and shape and define themselves through a varied body of work designed to provoke thought. Students complete projects which answer, albeit in an ongoing fashion, the questions of, "Who am I?" and, "How do I relate to the world around me?"

Despite being exposed to pluralistic examples, intended to show multiple perspectives on themes that are personal, artistic and cultural, most of my students remain locked in a limited world view. They neglect the larger view for the realities and complexities of their daily lives that demand attention right in their neighborhoods. It seems more plausible then, when searching for an appropriate and meaningful subject for their assignments, to present a unit of study that focuses on indigenous peoples who share similar life experiences.

My students will definitely connect to the plight of the American Indians. There are compelling comparisons to the disenfranchisement, forcible relocation, racism, quality of life and the treatment of each group at the hands of our government. And while they are forging connections, I will encourage the gathering and interpretation of information which will press the associations further, demonstrating in a positive sense, the spirit of Indian resiliency to the adverse, a return to rich oral and practiced traditions—a model where cultural threads have been woven by the practice of generations and that resists being undone.

Rationale

Why teach issues related to Identity? You can get into some fairly tricky areas when promoting a plan for identity building for another. I maintain the idea of a formative process of identification, that is, where nothing that identifies us need be concrete during its development, but instead takes a malleable form, where change is necessary and absolutely required when presented with new and potential identifying factors. And, the pursuit of the structure of our identity is the indication that we are striving both beyond our current self and striving towards something that we can become as an augmentation of our previous schemas of self. This path to the creation of ourselves can be an uphill and challenging one, supporting the idea that one becomes more of who they are after some sort of experience where they are tried, or tested, and where the outcome becomes a descriptor for the type of person one must be. I personally hope the activities described in this unit, combined with the study of Identity through the exploration of Native American sources will resonate with my students, allowing them to shed a light and gain a sense of the qualities that shape their own ideas about being young in an intense urban setting.

There is a strong feeling, in the case of my students, that you are who you are: a direct link to your people, your neighborhoods and the associations through your deeds. You can't manage a façade on this one, a phenom called, "Fronting," or being, "Fake." Luckily, there is room for improvement and change in the eyes of my students. Frequently persons can manipulate theirs and others' understandings of themselves by honing their skills through practice, whereby new levels of acknowledgements arise from flexing academic and

athletic prowess. A good sense of humor balanced with a keen sense of its delivery is also a coveted social marker and, of course, money helps. Definitely the outer appearance of a person, clothes, hair and grooming is quite possibly the strongest image builder for others and observably affects esteem. One can only change this position with a superior skill demonstrated from the previous lines. Another student can overlook clothing when the individual is seen as a humorist or a proficient ball player. Finally, we take a study in Identity because feelings of identity can form as a result of the pursuit of, "Self-Actualization," (Goldstein, cited by Maslow, 1943) which is the crowning point of Abraham Maslow's, "Hierarchy of Needs." Maslow centers his thinking on the premise that there are basic needs for all humans. These basic needs are also termed, "deficiency needs," and relate to physiological, human needs such as the need for food, water, safety and belonging. They form the bottom three of tiers of the pyramidal model by which he illustrates his theories. At the top of the pyramid are the two needs classified as, "Being needs," which are given as "Esteem," on the fourth level and the aforementioned, "Self Actualization," placed at the very top. Maslow tells us that the Actualization level is the culmination of the bottom levels and is also dependent upon them to materialize. The general sense is that once our biological needs can be met, we are free to strive to be our personal best. Specifically, Maslow says that Self Actualization is, "The intrinsic growth of what is already in the organism, or more accurately, of what the organism is" (Maslow, 1943). With this apparent nod to the vocabulary of Identity, Maslow adds a further facet to the top strata, the need for "Self Transcendence." This concept, which compliments the top of the pyramid model, includes the spiritual needs of humans, describing the meaning of life as, ". . .found in the world rather than within man or his own psyche, as though it were a closed system." (Maslow, 1943). If we are to embrace Maslow's model, highlighting especially the connectedness of the levels, one can see that without the bottom end of the pyramid the top level is rendered virtually unattainable. Herein lies the biggest challenge facing our students—who indeed have basic biological needs which are sometimes unmet and which can prevent them from being those successful self-actualizing individuals that we hope they will be. I believe that the American Indians, as a large confederation of cultures, were largely a self actualized group, fully assuming their potential as evidenced by keen spiritual practices deeply rooted in response to the natural and supernatural world around them. This is, to say in a general sense, and certainly, before mass European contact.

Strategies

I have designed the unit into four modules that can be taught as a whole, broken down into smaller groups, or used individually with separate classes. My plan is to have each section going at the same time, across all four levels of art that I teach. Each section contains a survey of background information, has a project that links the students' learning with a personal and representative artwork and an assessment tool, which is reviewed before the studio project is begun. The overarching objectives of the whole unit are basic: students will become familiar with a sampling of the many cultures of the American Indian and expand their sense of self awareness by incorporating a model of handcrafting objects that contain identifying characteristics of the individual. References to family, local geography, communities and cultural practice will be required. American Indian peoples used such indicators when creating their things, whether they were intended for personal or ceremonial use.

In preparation of unit, it is suggested to have students conduct their own research at the onset, taking choices from the specified American Indian tribes and cultures. This allows for the inclusion of student findings and

gives students a chance to make use of media services in the building and to share their papers with others. Topics that separate myth from reality and those that inform about what arouses curiosity in the students, on the subject, will give students background info and broaden their knowledge base. Outside of the prescribed Indian topics, local tribes or Indian issues could be substituted, as the overseeing teacher deems appropriate. I set my writing prompts at 1-2 pages, a length guaranteed to ease student anxiety about writing, but long enough for substantive responses.

Modules are independent, but can be interrelated by the united themes of Identity building and the development of personal themes. An adaptable assessment document can be used for each project and can be found in the teacher resource section. The sections are titled **Mask**, **Vessel**, **Cloth** and **Path**. Each section provides activities that encourage the student's developing sense of self and includes a presentation of American Indian art and culture.

Mask

Perceptions of self vs. perception of self by others: Mistaken Identity?

This section opens with the image of the American Indian as portrayed in Western art and in other sources. Multiplicity in images will fuel the discussion on multiple aspects of representations and perspectives. I will use at least four examples taken from a variety of sources: early American photographic examples in the daguerreotype format, where the subject is considered a curiosity, examples of paintings from the "Wild, Wild West" genre, in the style of the artist George Catlin, product and or sports team logos which feature stylized Indian references and an example taken from the 1970's anti-littering campaign, Chief Iron Eyes Cody, the famous crying Indian. Teachers' note: If your school happens to be close to a Fine arts museum, or a Natural History Museum, a search of their collections may reveal images that would be appropriate and provide an excellent opportunity for a field trip. As in the case of one colleague, access to a Natural History museum included materials and artifacts available for classroom loan. Materials and Exhibits are usually paired with educational content, engineered to be relevant to school curriculums, and to match state standards, making a journey to the Museum an activity easily approved in an environment where academic time on task is a mandated priority. The time needn't be contained in the school building, alone. Art or objects viewed in a formal setting can be approachable to students when paired with a teacher-generated guide. Content of a guide should include inquiry about the artwork; beginning with simple colors and shapes presented and move to more specific content related to perceived meanings or functions. An examination of the artists' perspective and possible motivation for creating the artwork falls after the initial discussion. If a field trip were not feasible, it would be helpful to have the examples on display in the classroom in the largest format available, for impact and if possible, grouped together, for investigation. Discussion of examples can include the romanticized treatment of the subjects. The romantic qualities of a painting will be found when exploring the way the lighting of the painting is completed and with examination of the details included. What has the artist included in the example and what is not present? Are there inferences of meaning or can meaning be found in the sum of the elements of the painting? Consider the overall composition or layout of the image, symbols or props that may be present and the overall mood of the artwork as elements for discussion. Students can compare examples and contrast examples. What was the motivation for such idealized versions of the American Indian? Have you ever been in a similar situation? This is a wonderful way to use discussion and artistic analysis to segue to another discussion, which includes student thoughts on how the way you are

perceived by others can often be different from what was intended by the individual. This premise of mistaken identity can be the basis for the composition of student made masks. A discussion on generalities and stereotyping would be natural extensions to our dialogue.

For the studio portion of this section, designs for masks will be first completed in rough sketches, which can be reviewed by teacher and collectively brainstormed for materials that translate into increased meaning for the final, multimedia project. Images of American Indian facial tattooing, ceremonial face painting and traditional masks shown in support of the lesson will assist students in gathering ideas. See Teacher resources for ideas on sources. The base form for the mask will start with castings of the students' faces, using plaster coated gauze strips. Plaster gauze is readily available in most craft shops and can be cut to workable sizes. Other materials can be substituted for the plaster. Paper, cardboard and even clay could be used. When using plaster it is important to take care that it does not get washed down a drain, as it may block the drain. Vaseline makes a good barrier for the plaster on the face so that the mask doesn't stick to the facial hair, (eyebrows, sideburns, hair line, etc.). Small strips, about a ¼ of an inch work well around the nostrils, while varying lengths will work when covering the nose and other portions of the face. Carefully position strips horizontally along the bridge of the nose first and follow with a couple of strips vertically along the septum down towards the lips. Breathing is easy this way, and the rest of the shape of the nostrils can be built up after the mask has been removed, by applying more small pieces. Layers are applied in alternate directions and smoothing the plaster strips as you go along keeps the surface nice. Students will likely enjoy the activity after the teacher and a volunteer have demonstrated it to them. Students' plaster masks will be ready for removal from faces in less than 30 minutes. Again, care must be taken in cleaning up any plaster residue left on the students' faces. Use a paper towel to remove all possible Vaseline and bits of plaster before allowing the student to wash up. As an addition to the lesson and as a support for further meaning, masks can be finished with the inside and the outside considered. The interior of the mask could provide a metaphor for how the student envisions himself or herself, while the outside could form the impression of others or that which the student wishes to present to others. The assertion of identity on this level begins with a mixture of internal and external factors, and allows students to interpret perspectives on American Indians and qualify the existing statements for accuracy. In this portion of the unit, students begin to understand that identity is developed through an ongoing process of self-exploration, as they work to represent themselves through the composition of their masks and by the process of choosing materials and determining the identifying features.

Vessel

Identity through location: Where're you from?

In this section students actualize identity through connections to the James River, in their hometown of Richmond, Va. Students will be able to collect and work with clay gathered from the riverbanks. Harvesting the river clay requires some experimental firings and possible additions made to the clay body may be necessary in an effort to gain the right consistency and desired results. Plans for a functional water vessel can take inspiration from a variety of forms presented from American Indian examples. A decorative narrative motif will be required as part of a completed treatment of the surface.

By the time John Smith managed a small boat down a section of the James River on his second trip towards the Tidewater region of Virginia, several Indian tribes had already had limited European contact and were

flourishing in the regions along the James, stretching to the Chesapeake Bay. Interactions were mostly cordial, with initial standoffs between parties resolving into cooperative treatment, guides and feasting celebrations. Barter of goods, copper trinkets and iron implements ensured the survival of early English settlements (Gallivan, 2003: xii).

In the early 1600's Chief Powhatan commanded a reasonably large group of Indian subjects with definite organization and centralized his control effectively into a hierarchal system where he ruled from the top and through middle agents, or local officials (Gallivan, 2003: xi, xiii). Within range of the great Powhatan nation were other organized groups, still having presence across Virginia today. The Algonquin were under the control of Powhatan authority, and Monacan tribes inhabited Virginia's central region during the space of pre-contact history known as Woodland period, from 1000 BCE to 1500 CE (Gallivan, 2003: 3). The study of these so-called early Virginian "Riverine cultures" is important, as it is noted that, "Waterways began to channel social interaction within the Chesapeake region," indicating, ". . . a shifting set of material culture," and, "the sharing of stylistic innovations (exemplified by ceramic decorative motifs). . ." (Gallivan, 2003: 4).

In a true sense, the James River is ever as important in the development of commerce and culture for the population of modern-day Richmond, as it was for the indigenous peoples of the past. Further explorations of the dependence on the James reveal communities enriched past the material sustenance of its water and its fish, and include desirable sites for housing, exchange of goods, modern day festivals and furnish directional identifiers for regions of our city. Southside residents of Richmond are positionally south of the flow of the river, while my own students in the East end of town live in housing situated along the eastern turn of the waterway. These roots to the water form the references that my students use when they call out their stomping grounds. Businesses' names throughout the city reference the river and there is a humbling respect for its power, which delivers floodwaters of the extreme sort, complete with the requisite left over sludge of silt and debris, stories high. Students in our river city are fortunate though, to have a beautiful stretch of Public Park works, amounting to over 20 miles of trails, canals and easily hiked small islands. Within her cache of riches, the river boasts a local clay source that can be accessed through coordination of Park services and students in the field. The physical removal of clay and the subsequent working of it will provide students an immediate connection to the life source of their city and allow for an authenticity when crafting their water vessels for the studio section of this module.

Teachers Note: I am presenting this section of the unit from a potter's perspective, as I create my own artworks from locally processed clay. I take clay in the body of my curriculum very seriously and routinely wait until the third quarter of the school year before I introduce clay work with my first level of art students. Additionally, while outlining requirements for working with the clay and demonstrating the clean up of the material in the classroom, I have my students sign a Clay Contract binding them to the responsible methods or they'll be responsible for a five page, typed research paper on the topic of our study. I find that students are willing to respond to the instructed techniques, as there is something quite magical in the tactile qualities of clay.

I will enlist the help of a local clay supply company to determine the additives that may be needed for the clay body coming from the riverbanks. Regular processed clay can be substituted for the locally gathered clay used in this lesson. Detailed requirements for the clay vessel can be outlined on the Assessment sheet located in the Teachers' resource section of the unit, to include that the vessel be built with a modified coil construction technique demonstrated by the teacher and viewed in examples. This method is a traditional way of making pottery practiced by generations of Pueblo potters. This way uses a saucer or a wide mouthed bowl as the form for the bottom of the vessels by pressing a slab of clay into the rounded surface. A piece of newspaper or

thin cloth should be placed between the support and the clay to prevent the clay from sticking, and can be removed before firing. Pueblo pots are finished in the usual coil method and fired in shallow, protected pits close to the potter's house. Pueblo potters also dig their own clay and consider their clay sources sacred, only sharing the location with their families. Samples of Pueblo pottery can be displayed and examined with their artistic qualities discussed in a group setting before beginning construction. The quality and value of Pueblo pottery can be witnessed by viewing a website which covers the yearly Indian Market which takes place in Santa Fe, New Mexico and by checking the galleries and artist biographies listed. A link to the official site is included in the Teachers' Resource section. A description of the coil building method is described in the Classroom Activities section of the unit. Pueblo cultures can also claim association to our discussion of river culture due to their proximity to the Rio Grande, in New Mexico. Students should consider that their vessel will be designed to hold water and when they have finished building the form, plans for a decorative motif highlighting the aspects of belonging to a river culture can be sketched first and then added as a finishing detail.

Cloth

Creating a Unique & Personal style: Wear your heart on your sleeve.

Conveying status and image through what we wear is a very familiar way of identifying ourselves. Students in this section will complete wearable art projects reflecting the study of Inca weaving and materials. Research and interpretation of symbols from Inca garments can yield clues and give inspiration for student designs. Students would be responsible for modeling their creations or designating an alternative for presentation of their projects.

The Inca people, famous for their textiles and magnificent stonework, originated in the mountainous regions of Peru. Sustaining one of the world's most compelling and well-organized cultures at altitudes above 10,000 feet in the Andes was no small task. The Inca were a remarkable people and enjoyed a decent way of life, despite harsh environmental conditions, that would be a marvel by today's standards. Fresh stores of seafood, giant strawberries, potatoes, squash, beans, tomatillos, chilies, cacao, and the highly adaptable maize in surpluses in their cultivated areas, were available to all through a network of distribution and storage facilities.

Complete plant protein sources were derived by the invention of adding wood ash to soaking maize and serving the maize product with cultivated beans. Animal protein in the new world consisted of a diet of guinea pig and occasionally llama. A secure and nutritious food source engineered by the leadership of the ruling Inca meant that the populations' energies could be spent on crafting and building exceptional stone buildings and monuments in tribute of the ruling elite. The Inca tradition of weaving denotes the same quality and precision of craft and surviving historic samples have been called, "among the finest fabrics ever produced." (Murra, 1962: 710). Weaving in the tradition of the Inca was traditionally done by the women in the population and was woven on ingenious backstrap looms using the wool of the domesticated llama, a creature of the highlands, and the cultivated cotton of the lowlands. The combination of fiber sources indicated a cooperative union of the Inca people and provided each area with quality clothing, in the same manner of the engineered food cooperative model. Woven clothing, also stored in surplus, was considered more valuable than the stunning hammered and cast gold body decorations worn by the ruling class. Inca weavers used sophisticated loom techniques that rendered complex and dynamic patterning. Local dyes were of superior quality and can be seen in still vivid examples today. Clothing for the Inca constituted wealth as mentioned above, but also

told an observer about the person wearing it. Identity could be indicated through specific woven patterns, specialty dyes and the actual fibers themselves. Coarse woolen fibers were for the lower classes while the garments made from the softer fibers of the vicuña llama and even woven feathers were reserved for the ruling Inca. Cloth remained the preferred gift among all peoples and could make a suitable sacrificial object (Murra, 1962: 712). Perhaps the greatest tribute of the woven practice of the Inca, after the clothing of the ruler, was the provision of fine textiles for the veneration of the dead. Delicate patterns and bold dyes in multiple layers formed the wrapping of the mummified dead, which were routinely kept and paraded as function and ceremony dictated. The deceased royal Inca maintained in death, all of their living treasures, which was almost completely their identifying and specially woven garments.

In the studio section of this module, students will construct a wearable art project inspired by the presented information and their own creative additions. Themes of family and personal references will be included in the final "garment." A section of the final work will be required as a direct interpretation of the weaving techniques observed in examples and can contain experimental use of materials and the artistic elements of design to include color, texture and pattern. Students can start the process by rendering sketches of their intended outfits to meet the intended objectives and coordinate their drawings into paper patterns. Following these steps will allow for teacher and student collaboration on materials and techniques, limiting potential setbacks. A variety of materials could be used with success, covering all media. Students should present their projects in a fashion show format, where they are themselves a model and where their explanations of design choices will add to the meaning of the pieces for their classmates.

Path

Which way did he go? Which way did she go?

This section represents the discovery of identity through the journey of experience. Future goals and past accomplishments should be included in the students' design for this final segment. Creation myths and American Indian legends will provide the universal basis for our own stories. A search for traditional themes in storytelling and plot & character analysis will function as tools. Students will compose from a real life event, a current and personal parable to be presented in an open format that has been approved on an individual basis. Students may choose to complete representational or objects for use in their ceremonies, such as storytelling Cochiti dolls, temporary sand paintings, or to present their stories through a choreographed performance/presentation.

A mentor of mine once said, "Once you have survived childhood, you have the material to write a book." We all have our stories, this is true, and the lessons we have or have not learned from our encounters in life. Each anecdote is a glimpse into our experience and our particular perspectives and can illustrate resounding and repeating themes that communicate with others. We are shaped by our experiences and the retelling of our stories promotes a desire to share information about ourselves, but to also validate our experience and to include others in the conditions of our realities. Stories are lessons about behaviors. Common experience makes our messages valuable to others. In this value system, motivation for relating our stories may lie in hope that others will gain some knowledge in preparation for similar situations, allowing for enlightened decisions when the proper time arises. Our own needs for self-preservation are an important motive for telling about ourselves. Personal asides and unique points of view reveal identifying characteristics of our

personalities and when shared, allow others to assimilate our voices and our ways to more people when retold. A longevity is granted by this process of relating these parables to the author and provides a basis for a strong oral tradition of learning. People seem to have an inherent need for stories that matches the need for sharing. Stories of others entertain and teach us, providing a road map of sorts, which can serve as a guide in our own lives.

Native American peoples carry a strong oral tradition, as do members of African American communities. In both cases, tutelage occurs that is beneficial for the recipient and serves as a compunction or duty of the storyteller, usually an elder, in each society. In most cases, the oral tradition serves as the only access to these bits of personal wisdom and to the history of family and community.

In this section of the unit, students transform personal stories into presentations designed to inform and entertain. An exploration of materials which link Indian wisdom to the natural world will be a bridge to understanding and allow methods those students can use in the relation of their own stories. Sensitive to the reading of Native American animal stories, a resource for this section of the unit, I have just heard the repeated hooting of an owl, four distinct calls over the din of construction equipment in high gear, indicating that I may be on the right track.

Creating objects for this section inspired by Native items such as effigies or Cochiti storyteller figures provides a physical vehicle whereby students can relay their history in three dimensions. Content clues of the sculptural pieces should inform, as a narrator would, giving a special significance to the creation of storytelling things. Students may wish to compose original lyrics or music, tell their stories through symbols, Indian hand gestures, or by other individually conceived methods. It will be important to develop ideas as sketches and as workable plans that can be reviewed by the teacher as the process unfolds. The final performance should be dynamic and informative, with students offering their stories in the tradition of learning and as a method of their own longevity. A guide, or written description of the personal story should accompany the presentations.

Studying the ceremonial practices of the American Indian can be a little elusive. Many rites are reserved as a manner of sacred practice, and may not be suitable for repetition in the non-Indian setting. I propose that students complete a cursory examination of how Native practices celebrate community and the natural world and respond on this level. Mere copying of traditional sources may undermine the creation of new ceremonial regalia by the individual student.

For students attending a neighborhood school in Richmond, Virginia, art is a class where you make something. All students wonder, seated in art or other classes, how their time spent in those classes will really apply to their life experiences. "How is this going to help me?" and, "What's this got to do with me?" are questions directly posed and read in the facial expressions of some, and the body language of others. Providing art projects that require personal introspection, connection to the community and offering closure through an opportunity to present ideas, promotes the milieu for creating meaningful and relevant artworks—directly and indirectly giving an answer to those questions.

Classroom Activities

Lesson plans for activities described in the unit follow. They are intended as open models of techniques and daily operations in an art studio and can be adapted to suit another class situation or school environment. I have classes that meet on block scheduling, every other day for 90 minutes at a time. Typical lessons can last weeks long, with the longest period resulting in using class time as studio time for projects. All lessons are finished by offering group critiques of student works. I explain that the critique, as closure to the lesson, is as important as the introduction. Students receive credit towards their grades by participating. In addition to Visual Arts standards, these lessons on Indian culture and personal identity touch on a number of Virginia state-mandated standards of learning concepts, and are designed to compliment and reinforce core subjects by providing alternative experiences: i.e. learning outside of the academic classroom. I use standards in English through writing prompts, including the oral presentations of artworks and by giving research opportunities as required and extra credit assignments. I anticipate using a large wall map to include geographical references and exercises in map reading skills, which naturally come up during class.

Lesson: MASK

Opening Activity

Place on Board: Describe a situation you know of or have experienced yourself, where racial profiling took place. How does this situation present it self, (social precursors), and what are the outcomes (physical and emotional)? Students can respond on paper or in journals. Answers can be used in a discussion as an introduction to displaying images of American Indians. Teacher can moderate discussions to keep students on task and within time constraints, (10-15 minutes, first day).

Focus (Ongoing Objectives)

- Students understand that identity is developed through an ongoing process of self-exploration.
- Students interpret perspectives on American Indians and qualify the statements for accuracy.
- Students identify themes and commonalties that exist across cultural boundaries.
- Students recognize connections between to the histories of the American Indians and African Americans.

Virginia Standards of Learning (VaSOL's)

Art: Visual Communication and Production AI.1-AIV.1, AIII.7, Cultural Context & Art history—AI.14, AII.13, Judgment & Criticism— AI.19, AII.20

English: Oral Language— 9th-12th standards

Virginia and United States History: VUS.1, VUS.2-3

Practice & Application

Day One: Conduct introductory activity with discussion. Allow time for student response and discussion of topic. Student response should be varied and may need moderating. Teacher will use discussion to open questions for students to consider during the viewing of the American Indian in various forms. Teacher will

introduce images in the largest format available, allowing for easier viewing and adding appeal for the students. Teacher should allow for display of images in groups to add cross exemplar discussion. Begin the examination of images with the general details and end up with suggested meanings and technical judgments for the representations. Teacher asks students: Why is the image of the American Indian represented so differently across the examples? Whose perspective is being represented? How does the treatment of the subject matter in the various examples reinforce or shape stereotypes? Trace connections between the stereotyping of African American males to those of the Indians. Are the connections viable or unsupportable? Allow students to respond to questions and to record notes and responses of their own and others in their journals.

Day Two: Review Assignment and Assessment sheet with students and outline procedure for the next classes. Show examples of student made masks, if available and also examples of Indian masks. Examples of Haida masks from the Northwestern coasts of Canada and Alaska will require some discussion of animal symbols and how each clan claimed an animal reference to celebrate ancestors and to inform future family members of family traditions. Native Americans also claimed a representation to individual and group identity through materials used in the creation of their objects. Locally gathered, raw materials were transformed by Indian hands into motifs and base elements of the final products. Teacher informs the students that their masks will be created to represent themselves in multiple perspectives. The outside of the mask will be required to show outward appearances: those mitigated by self and interpreted by others, while the inside of the mask will be used to display the "somewhat private or inner side" of the student: those which are representative of the actual or emerging sides of the students' self image.

Students will be reminded to add details, which add meaning and open interpretation of their work, by others, (colors, shapes, symbols, expression, exaggeration of features, etc.). Teacher hands out sketch paper and allows students to use remaining time to begin sketching ideas for final projects. Students will be encouraged to add writing to identify details, color choices and to add supporting information, which is helpful when presenting ideas to teacher.

Day Three: Students work on sketches of proposed masks. Review sketches with students individually while remaining students work on sketches. Teacher provides guidance, suggestions and problem solving to keep students within intended project goals. Teacher should make sure that the intended materials choices of the student can be made realistically available, and that they will add to the project's meaning. Meaning can be conveyed with a little subterfuge if authentic materials cannot be used. Gold is not an option, surely, but a mask made of heavy gauge aluminum foil, finished with a gold stain will be seen as golden, at least symbolically. Teacher needs to secure a volunteer for the next class. Remind students to wear suitable clothing for working with plaster or have them bring in smocks to protect clothing.

Day Four: Prepare materials in advance. Cut plaster gauze into 4-5 inch strips (at least thirty or so), and a few in smaller, narrow $\frac{1}{4}$ inch strips as described in the main unit. Use warm water in a bowl to activate the plaster and have students coat their faces liberally with Vaseline or thick Vitamin E oil. Have the student volunteer lie prone on their back on a flat surface or table that has been covered with newspaper. Teacher outlines the process of applying the mask to the student volunteer's face. The student's face has been coated with the lubricant, slightly overlapping the hairline and with generous application on areas with facial hair. Show materials to students and narrate while demonstrating the process in order:

1. Dipping the strip into the warm water and wiping away excess water with the pointer finger and middle finger of one hand, (plaster strip is between the fingers), while holding the top of the strip with the other

hand,

2. Applying the plaster strip to the face in alternating layers of horizontal and vertical strips, slightly overlapping the previous strips as you go.
3. Smoothing each piece as it is placed on the face to improve final surface texture,
4. Applying the gauze strips (smaller sizes) to the nose and nostril areas as described—horizontal layers for the bridge and a couple of vertical strips to separate the nostrils,
5. The clean up procedure—the provision of a pre-washing bucket of warm sudsy water allows students to remove most of the plaster on their hands before heading to the classroom sink. All utensils used must go through the same pre-wash. Plaster washed down the sink will usually lead to blocked plumbing. Have adequate paper toweling for students to wipe excess moisturizer and bits of plaster off their faces before washing up as well.
6. The importance of talking to and providing comfort/reassurance for the student who is having their mask being made.

Students may want to come up with a signal or a basic language that they can use in their masked state to communicate basics to the partner they will need. Students are encouraged to provide the comfort asked for in step 6. Payback can be uncomfortable.

In all, the teacher will monitor progress of student pairs and ensure that safety is being maintained. Inform students that the mask making will take about 30 minutes or so to complete. Students can wait as long as is comfortable, up to 10 minutes or more, after the mask has been completed in at least three to four layers, for the mask to set up. Students will feel the plaster mask warming as it begins to harden, caused by the chemical reaction to the water and the bonding of the plaster molecules. Masks can be removed by helping the student turn on their sides or stomachs and while supporting the mask on the sides of the face, gently turning their face from side to side. A gentle pulling may be needed. Allow gravity to help while the student's face is pointed downward. Freshly formed masks can be stored for the next time right side up and supported by balled up newspaper from underneath.

Day Five-Six: Students work on casting facial masks with the help of another student.

Students who have formed their masks work on refining the surfaces, preparing the surfaces for mixed media and adding features. Teacher reviews work individually and monitors progress of mask making, repeating demonstrations and techniques as necessary.

Day Seven-Nine: Studio time for students. Students use time to complete 2-sided masks representing themselves through featured elements, structures and materials. Teacher checks on progress and assists and problem solves as necessary.

Day Ten: Students complete Assignment and Assessment sheet and turn in with their masks after participation and display of their work in a group critique.

Assessment

Students complete Assignment and Assessment sheet and turn in with their work (See Teacher resource section).

Students participate in a group critique of student works.

Lesson: VESSEL

Opening Activity

Ask Students: What are the characteristics of your environment, neighborhood, section of town? How would you describe its good and not so good points to an outsider? Expand the discussion to include larger geographical areas: What contributions to the good of its residents has a particular area made? What are some identifying landmarks, natural and man made that exist within the area? Expanding further, ask students about the resources of the region, focusing on our city as a whole sum of its parts and in cultural and geographic contexts. Encourage student response into a group discussion and allow time for students to record their answers and those of some of their peers in their journals. Provide a blank Virginia map for students, available from the Virginia Department of Education website. Students can use the map throughout the section to orient themselves to the James River and the Chesapeake Bay and to identify regions of Virginia where there have been Indian settlements. Students may keep the maps in their journals.

Focus (Ongoing Objectives)

- Students understand that identity is developed through an ongoing process of self-exploration and can be connected to geographic region through associations to resources or traditions.
- Students identify themes and commonalities that exist across cultural boundaries.
- Students understand how materials, form and decorative elements can provide clues for determining identity.
- Students practice traditional forms of pottery decoration to add meaning to their works of art.

VaSOL's

Art: Visual Communication and Production AI.1-AIV.1, AIII.7, Cultural Context & Art history—AI.14, AII, AIII.13, Judgment & Criticism— AI.19, AII.20

English: Oral Language 10-12th grades, Research: 10-11th grades

Va. Studies: VS.1-3, 9a (including mapping)

Practice & Application

Day One: Students complete introductory activity and compare answers with their peers and teacher. Allow time for discussion and for recording answers in journals. In the natural course of discussion direct student response to include the river in their scheme of favorable attributes of our city. Define the roles that the James River has had in terms of commerce, wildlife habitat, and resources and in defining communities. Ask students to consider the success of our city as its connection to the river. Allow students to present examples of other river cities and river cultures that they are aware of. Let students collaborate and support their statements of assertion about the quality of life in a river town by making and presenting lists in groups to other classmates. Review the Assignment and Assessment sheet with students. Begin showing students examples of Water vessels that come from the Southwest region of Indian tribes, notably the Pueblo and Hopi potters. Explore each example with basic components of color and shape use and inclusion of animal and symbol motifs first, before considering the purpose of the pottery. Have permission forms for field trip ready for review with students. Go over forms for information and requirements and repeat deadlines for return of forms, lunch procedures and behavioral expectations. Be firm and fair. Students who follow all procedures and bring back

their forms completed should be the only ones allowed to participate in the field trip.

Day Two: Field Trip, (Optional). A field trip coordinated with river park personnel will allow my students to work with clay they dig from the river's banks and permit the students to experiment with clay in its natural forms and environment. Students can use methods outlined by the teacher, park staff and clay supply staff when attempting to use the locally gathered clay and to mold it into experimental and functional objects. Use of traditional methods of early ceramic developments, such as using clay to line baskets and later firing those baskets could be explored in equally experimental firing in outdoor pits or in raku style containers. How the raw clay responds to additions made to the clay body and the firing process will be intriguing variables. Students may find results exciting.

Commercial clays, available from ceramic supply houses or hobby stores can be substituted when the novelty of working with the local clay wears off. Documenting the field trip to review later with the class as you discuss the methods used when working with and gathering the clay would be fun to watch. In absence of a Day Two field trip, students can work on developing sketches of their ideas for a final water jug with a decorative surface treatment; explaining their connection to culture identified and shaped by living in proximity to the James River.

Day Three: Students finish work on sketches and review ideas with teacher. Teacher will review clay contract with students will collect contracts before continuing and demonstrating the method for building a water vessel with coil building style:

1. Clay must be wedged, (kneaded to work out air bubbles) and prepared as a $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ inch slab, or flat tile, which can be slumped inside of a saucer or shallow bowl, lined in newspaper to prevent the clay from sticking. Trim excess clay to fit the rounded edges of the form you're using.
2. Walls of the jug are formed by first grabbing a piece of clay and squeezing it into a long log shape between the hands, working from the top to the bottom of the log shape. This compresses the clay to reduce the chance of air bubbles.
3. The clay is then worked into a smooth cylinder shape by placing the clay on a flat surface and applying gentle pressure from the palms and inside of fingers while rolling the clay back and forth. Hands should be kept together while rolling the clay and can move together along the length of the coil as it is being made. Be careful to allow the coil to rotate fully to avoid flat spots. If these occur, rotate the flat portion so that the narrow portion is located up and apply pressure gently to flatten the raised area and continue to roll. Coils should be uniform in size, keeping the walls at a consistent thickness throughout the project.
4. Coils can be laid out to the proper size, in a circle with ends overlapping slightly. Cut coils to size using a 45% angle, miter style, for strength and good contact. Coil ends should be attached to each other using the method outlined next.
5. Each coil must be attached to the one below it as you go along. Both the surface you are attaching to, and the surface you wish to attach to must be crosshatched with a scoring tool (a fork will do nicely). Lines should be in multiple directions, but not destroy the surface of the coil or its ends. After scoring, a dab of slip (clay mixed with water) is applied to each surface with a finger and the sections are then pressed together firmly. Individual coils can be smoothed on the outside, (welding the seam,) together in groups, of two to four levels. Be careful to support the inside of the pot with your other hand while joining the outside of the coils. This will protect the shape. A banding wheel, which turns freely, can help minimize handling of the pot while it is wet. Consider working on newspaper or a cloth covering the table for clean up purposes, but also turning the piece using the corner of the cloth or the newspaper

will be made easier. For our purposes, the inside of the pot can remain as unsmoothed coils, with the exception of the first coil to the slab base, which should be welded completely, inside and out.

6. The overall shape of the vessel is determined by placement of the coils. Coils placed directly above the previous ones will build the form straight up, while coils placed on the inside or outside edges of previous coils will direct the shape inward or outward as placed. Care should be taken to transition the shape of the clay walls slowly for greater success and control in the final form.
7. Clay work needs to be stored wrapped in plastic, between working sessions. Include a wet sponge or wet paper towels wrapped around a piece for long intervals between sessions. Pieces should be handled gently and moved carefully.
8. Students will use trimming tools and clay ribs to refine the shape of the vessel when they have reached the required height requirements and to smooth the outside in preparation for decorative surface treatments.
9. A combination of two ceramic decorative techniques will be explored for the surface treatment of the water vessels: Intaglio—where original scribing marks into the surface of the clay are made and the vessel fired before being decorated by rubbing glaze onto the surface. The surface is then wiped clean with a wet sponge, revealing glaze remaining inside the scribed lines. The result picks up the image like a line drawing and accentuates the various irregularities of the surface in interesting ways, and Sgraffito—where a contrasting coat of colored clay slip is applied to the outside surface before the firing and drawn through, also before the firing, revealing the color of the clay body underneath. Strategic and inventive use of the color contrasts and negative space concepts with this technique add to the interest and beauty of the finished piece. Students may want to press found objects, representative to their themes into the surface for added meaning, which can also be highlighted through the glaze application.

Day Four-Six: Studio time for students. Students continue working on their water vessels and adhere to the policies outlined for handling clay and completing clean up at the end of sessions. Students can use rulers to measure for height requirements and when they have built their vessels tall enough can begin the surface treatments as outlined. Final work must be stored and dried in a protected space until the kiln can be fired.

Day Seven-Nine: Each piece will have to undergo two firings. One firing solidifies the form and binds the slip to the surface of the jug, (bisque firing), and a second glaze firing affixes the glaze for the intaglio method and seals the inside of the water vessel to allow the wares to be functional. Be sure to use lead free clear glazes to ensure that the jugs are food safe. During this time, students should be finishing up the last bits of surface embellishments and queuing their pieces for final firing.

Day Ten: Final day and Group Critique. Students complete Assignment and Assessment sheet and turn in with their work for grading.

Assessment

Students complete Assignment and Assessment Sheets and turn in with their artworks.

Students participate in a group critique of artworks.

Lesson: CLOTH

Opening Activity

Students are easily grouped by neighborhoods in my school. Some will claim a personal style or clothing choice, which is intended to further align them with their neighborhoods. Colored garments and accessories worn in specific styles claim to identify and differentiate students as well. Clothing becomes a code in this sense, and my students are able to translate. This readability is what I hope to explore in the opening activity.

Student volunteers are called up to line up in front of the classroom. They are introduced game show style with the volunteers filling in the information for where they come from and some other personal tidbits (Tell us about yourself, John). After their introduction, the class can debate the identifying signals that each student may be wearing. The discussion can lead to whole new inferences of how we wear what we wear as more than clothing. Students can keep their answers in journals and include notes on the new information they have gathered based on the volunteers' participation.

Teachers' Note: It's possible that a discussion may include specific manner of dress that is attributed to select, so called gang population represented in our school. Students may explore as far as they feel comfortable and as much the teacher feels the situation remains constructive. Students in my class understand from the very beginning of the year that the only censorship that exists in the classroom is connected to gang-style graffiti. Other unique topics may engage our discussion, certainly. I try to keep things clinical, to the best of my knowledge. But on representation of the various groups, the students know I am firm. It would also be necessary to explain that the sort of project they will complete only begins with being young and urban, going deeper than neighborhood cliques, connecting to past generations and larger geographic concepts, starting with Richmond, Virginia. In the examination of student dress, I anticipate students will claim that what is worn is only done so in the sense of fashion. The students like how they look. Personal choice on color supersedes colors relegated by gang members. A discussion on following trends and fashion would be appropriate. I like to ask questions that compare the ubiquitous size and placement of the brands of clothing lines to the branding associated with cattle and human bondage. Who really defines our personal style? Is it Mr. Hilfiger, or his customer, seated in my class? A discussion of labels and preconceptions based on appearance would come naturally and recall conversations from earlier in the unit. Students should connect to what it means to "dress to impress," by association to classroom dialogue and images from modern and Inca sources, translating the concept to their own designs for wearable art that represents themselves personally. Intended designs can be checked throughout the process to see that they adhere to guidelines and remain appropriate. Ultimately, it may be that in Richmond, the gang clothing identifiers are really a farce, and that a fresh white tee just provides an easy and affordable presentation of the personal image.

Focus (Ongoing Objectives)

- Students understand that identity is developed through an ongoing process of self-exploration.
- Students identify themes and commonalities that exist across cultural boundaries.
- Students understand how materials, form and decorative elements can provide clues for determining identity.
- Students use traditional and nontraditional methods and a variety of materials to create a wearable art project intended to represent the student personally.

VaSQL's

Art: Visual Communication and Production AI.1-AIV.1, AIII.7, Cultural Context & Art history—AI.14, All, AIII.13, Judgment & Criticism— AI.19, All.20 Visual Communication—AIV.6-7

World History: WHII. 1-4

Practice & Application

Day One: Have students participate with the described activity in the Opening section. Students will have a chance to qualify volunteer responses and to observe the visual clues that the volunteers are wearing and interpret them for representational content. Allow time for students to journal answers in column style according to neighborhood and items worn. Teacher can review Assignment & Assessment form with students and begin introduction to the module by showing an example of the Inca's tunic in a projected image taken from Guaman Poma's 800-page book from 1615-1616 CE, which contains the history of the Inca in hand-drawn accounts of clothing and customs. Students will be asked to comment on the garment of the Inca, to analyze its symbols, form and likely materials used. Teacher will explain how the garment represented the Inca rulers, down to the fibers. This is a good time to begin the introduction of the Inca way of statehood described in the unit's narrative section.

Day Two: A follow up to what was learned previously, concerning the identifying qualities of Inca cloth and garments, can take place before students begin working on sketches for their ideas for final, wearable art projects. Students will be required to include a form of weaving into their projects, to be a main feature of interest. Students should show their sketches to the teacher for suggestions, problem solving and adherence to the project guidelines. Once the design, materials and features have been discussed and approved by the teacher, a paper pattern should be worked up first to begin the construction phase of the project. A similar material can be used in the mock up of the final project, helping to eliminate snags later. Materials choices and styles of fastening the garment should be experimental and cover a range of available supplies. Locally found objects can lend physical reminders to the environment of the student artists, as can the ways in which they were used. Bottle caps for button closures will spin a tale of the bottles and the lots they came from, as well as become freshly translated to the students' visions once they are included.

Day Three-until Final Day: Student need for studio time in class may vary. A system of checking on student progress daily, linking more productive students with others that may be experiencing difficulty, and in-process critiques, (those offered before the final presentation,) will help move things along. Students should attend to the craftsmanship component of the project and make their constructions sturdy and wearable. The final session of this module should function as a fashion show of sorts, where students can ham it up a little on the runway while another student emcees the event by reading student-made descriptions that accompany the wearable artworks as they are shown.

Assessment

Students complete Assignment and Assessment sheet and participate in a final, "Fashion show of their projects where the student him or herself is the model. Fashioned student work should be accompanied by a written description.

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