

LESSON TITLE: COILED BASKET

GRADE/AUDIENCE:

- Grade 7-12

STATE STANDARDS:

- Content standard 3: Subject matter, symbols, ideas
- Content standard 4: Visual arts in relation to history and culture
- Content standard 6: connections to daily life, math, science, language arts

LESSON OBJECTIVES:

- Create a coiled basket with rope and yarn
- Use methods, color and design associated with the Pequot Indians

LESSON OBJECTIVES FOR YOUR STUDENTS:

- Learn coiling method of basket-making
- Create a basket in their choice of colors and yarns
- Understand the function of baskets in Pequot society
- Understand what materials were available at this time in history
- Experience the meditative quality of basket-making
- Become familiar with basket-making terminology

COMPELLING / GUIDING QUESTIONS:

- How do you use baskets in your home and life today?
- Can you give me some examples of how you think the Pequots used baskets in their homes and communities?
- Why do you think the Pequots used baskets instead of other containers (for example: wood or clay) in some instances?

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DESCRIPTION OF LEARNING TASKS / ACTIVITIES:

1. Cut 2 yards of rope
2. Thread a yarn needle with approximately 2 yards of your choice of yarn
3. Holding the free end of the yarn against the rope (facing away from the end) begin wrapping the yarn around the rope at about 1-1/2" from the end continue to the end of the rope.
4. Fold the wrapped portion of the rope in half and wrap the yarn around the newly wrapped rope and the end of the rope. This forms the bottom center of the basket (FIG. A)
5. Continue wrapping the yarn around the rope for a short distance. Take the needle end of the yarn and make 3 stitches in the folded section from step 4. (FIG. B)
6. From the connected end of the yarn continue to wrap around the rope for a short distance.
7. Take 3 stitches around both the previous coil and the newly wrapped one.
8. Continue to wrap and anchor the coils until the bottom of the basket is the desired diameter.
*Remember, to make the basket bottom flat, you must lay each consecutive round of rope side by side with the last. (FIG. C)
9. Begin to build the sides of the basket by placing the next row of covered yarn on top of the last row. For a gently sloping side, place each new row at an approximate 45 degree angle. For a basket with straight sides, place each new row directly on top of the last. (FIG. D)
10. Continue to desired height and shape.
11. To end the basket, cut the end of the rope at a tapered angle. Wrap to the end of the taper and anchor it in place. Hide end of yarn by weaving under previous rows. Cut off excess yarn.
*HINT: don't get carried away with the wrapping. You need to keep the anchor stitches fairly close together especially at the beginning. You will begin to see where the anchor stitches need to be as you work.
*To add more rope as you work, taper both the end of the old piece and the beginning of the new piece and tape them together with masking tape. Then continue wrapping and anchoring right over the tape.
*To add more yarn or change colors, lay both the old end of the yarn and the beginning of the new color with the ends facing away from the wrapped section of the rope. Continue wrapping yarn over the rope, encasing both ends as you go.

TIME NEEDED FOR LESSON:

6-10 hours

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MATERIALS, RESOURCES, TECHNOLOGY NEEDED:

- Rope or coiling core material - ½" or ¼" size
- Yarn or raffia in a variety of colors and textures
- Yarn needle
- Scissors
- Yard stick
- Masking tape

PRIMARY OR SECONDARY RESOURCES (WORKS CITED):

- Mashantucket Pequot Museum exhibits
- Rowlandson, Mary. *A True History of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*. 1683. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/851/851-h/851-h.htm>
- Underhill, John. *News From America*. Electronic Texts in American Studies. University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2007. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1037&context=etas>

PRIOR LEARNING, CONNECTIONS, STUDENT NEEDS OR INTERESTS, COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS:

- Ability to use scissors
- Dexterity to use a sewing needle
- Ability to thread a needle
- An understanding of the functionality and set-up of the Pequot wigwam.

HINT: you can use a strip of paper about ¼" wide as a needle threader. Fold strip in half. Push fold through the eye of the needle. Open the fold enough to insert yarn and pull gently back through the eye.

MISCONCEPTION: Baskets can't hold water. If the baskets are coated with pine pitch, they WILL hold water.

SUGGESTED DIFFERENTIATIONS:

- Using larger rope ½" or even ¾" diameter might be easier for a student with fine motor skills deficiency

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- Substitute 1 ½” strips of fabric or strips of plastic bags for the yarn if a student has motor skill problems or coordination issues

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS:

- History of Pequot life/form/function of baskets in everyday life
- Math: measuring, estimating materials
- Science: Hypothesizing what natural materials would have been available and which materials would be best suited for these baskets.
- Language Arts: learning the appropriate vocabulary associated with coiled baskets.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT PROCESSES (INCLUDING STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT):

- Class critique as a group. Positive response to classmates work.
- Self-assessment: How successful do you think you were with this project?
- How successful was your design?
- What did you like most about this project?
- What did you like the least about the outcome of this project?
- What could you do to improve the outcome of this project if you were to make another basket?