# LESSON TITLE: HAND BUILT CLAY POT

### **GRADE/AUDIENCE:**

- Grade 7-12
- Grade K-6 could do this project using pinch pot method only

### STATE STANDARDS:

- Content Standard 3: Subject matter, symbols and ideas
- Content Standard 4: Connecting visual arts to history and culture
- Content Standard 6: Visual arts connected to daily life, science and language arts

### **LESSON OBJECTIVES:**

- To hand-build a clay vessel using traditional Pequot (Native American) methods
- To decorate the vessel with traditional Native American (Pequot) symbols and designs
- To experience the satisfaction of creating something from a raw material that comes directly from the earth

#### LESSON OBJECTIVES FOR YOUR STUDENTS:

- To understand why the Pequots made clay vessels
- To understand the necessity of using the natural resources at hand
- To understand the many uses of a clay vessel as opposed to wooden or woven ones
- To become familiar with the vocabulary associated with hand-building with clay

## COMPELLING / GUIDING QUESTIONS:

- If you were a Pequot, how would you utilize your hand-built pot?
- Do you know where to find clay in nature?
- How do you go about getting clay from its natural location?



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DESCRIPTION OF LEARNING TASKS / ACTIVITIES:

- 1. Start with a fist-sized ball of clay.
- 2. Form the clay into a ball.
- 3. Using your thumb, poke a hole into the center of the ball of clay at a 90 degree angle.
- 4. Working around the ball of clay with your thumb inside the clay and your fingers outside the ball of clay, pinch the clay to make the hole deeper and the walls taller and thinner.
- 5. Take another ball of clay and roll it into a long rope about 1/4"-1/2" thick, by rolling on a table or between the palms of your hands.
- 6. Place the coil on top of the pinch pot's top edge and work the two pieces of clay together.
- 7. Continue adding coils and shaping the pot until you reach the desired height. You can make the pot wider or narrower as you build.
- 8. When you have reached the desired shape and height, begin smoothing the outside surface if desired.
- 9. At this time, you may want to let the clay dry out a little before incising any decoration.
- 10. When completed, let clay air dry until hard
- 11. Paint as desired with tempera or acrylic paints.
- \* Keep clay moist while you work, by covering with plastic wrap or putting in a plastic bag.
- \* If clay becomes too dry to be malleable, mist with a water bottle
- \* Incise decorations and add textures before completely dry.

#### TIME NEEDED FOR LESSON:

2-3 hours

#### MATERIALS, RESOURCES, TECHNOLOGY NEEDED:

- Sample pots or images of pots
- Air dry clay
- Water spray bottles
- Modelling tools (popsicle sticks, plastic cutlery ,tooth picks, onion bag netting, fabric scraps)

#### 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. <u>http://www.gutenberg.org/files/851/851-h/851-h.htm</u>



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 Underhill, John. News From America. Electronic Texts in American Studies. University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2007. <u>http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1037&context=etas</u>

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

- Understanding of the qualities of clay
- Understanding how clay is harvested (ex. we dig clay out of bodies of water : rivers, lakes, ponds)
- Understanding how the Pequots used clay vessels on a daily basis so as to choose what kind of pot they would like to make

# SUGGESTED DIFFERENTIATIONS:

- A student with limited strength could build the entire pot with the coiling method s it may be easier to use both hands at the same time
- Painting decoration may be easier than incising if a student has fine motor skill difficulties

## **CROSS-DISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS:**

- History: Connection to actual Pequot pottery fragments found
- Science: Learning about the qualities of clay as a by-product of the earth
- Science: Understanding of the physical changes in the clay when the pots are baked in a low fire to harden them (precursor to the modern day kiln)
- Language Arts: Becoming familiar with the vocabulary of pottery

# FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT PROCESSES (INCLUDING STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT):

- Whole class critique: Analyze all student work and offer positive comments
- Self-assessment: What was the most difficult part of this project?
- Did you feel that you reached a successful conclusion with your pot?
- What could you have done to be more satisfied with the end result?

