



Mexican Folk Art

Utah Museum of Fine Arts

Evening for Educators

September 21, 2005 • 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm

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Special thanks to Elizabeth Firmage for the digital photography in this packet.



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List of Postcards

1. Mexico
Oaxacan Lizard
Wood, pigment
Education Collection of the Utah Museum of Fine Arts
Museum # 1996.13
2. Mexico
Tiger Mask
Papier Mâché, paint, bristles
Education Collection of the Utah Museum of Fine Arts,
Museum # D656
3. Mexico
Arbol de Vida (Tree of Life)
Ceramic
Purchased with funds from Friends of the Art Museum
Museum # 1990.024.001
4. Mexico
Virgin de Los Dolores
Paint on tin
On loan from Owen D. Mort, Jr.
Museum # L1987.4.248
5. Mexico
Day of the Dead Figure, 1955-1965
Earthenware and polychrome
Purchased with funds from Friends of the Art Museum
Museum # 1996.011.001
6. Mexico
Nativity Scene with Dancers
Ceramic
Gift of Lisa I. Hansen
Museum # 1991.019.004

Oaxacan Lizard



Mexico
Oaxacan Lizard
Wood, pigment
Education Collection of the Utah Museum of Fine Arts
Museum # 1996.13

The Zapotec people of the Mexican State of Oaxaca (Wa-HA-ka) are known for their woodcarvings, called *alebrijes*, dating back to pre-Hispanic times. In the mid-1900s, responding to the tourist market, a new carving method, attributed to Manuel Jimenez, emerged out of Oaxaca using the wood of the Copal (or Copillo) tree. Often mistakenly called *alebrijes*, this new carving method has now turned into a popular form of art.

Lizards such as this one are a common type of carving, along with turtles, armadillos, giraffes and devils. While the wood is still green and workable, carvers sculpt it into various forms, using the natural shape and grain of the wood to determine its final appearance. The sculpture is then sanded down, treated to protect it from insects, and then painted with acrylics, often using traditional Zapotec colors and designs. While copal wood is the standard material, carvers also use other woods such as pine, cedar and other more exotic woods.

Oaxacan carvings have become an international craze. Once one of the poorest states in Mexico, Oaxaca is now becoming a competitive marketplace of artisans practicing their trade producing these sculptures.

Oaxacan Animal Sculpture

Lesson

An art lesson plan for *Oaxacan Lizard* written by Tiya Karaus

Objective:

Students will be able to describe where and how the Oaxacan Lizard was made.
Students will sculpt and paint an animal inspired by Oaxacan woodcarvings.

State core links:

Standard 1

Making: Students will assemble and create sculpture by manipulating art media and by organizing images the elements and principles.

Objective B Create sculpture using art elements and principles.

- Create expressive sculpture using art elements, including line, texture, form, negative space, and value.
- Create expressive sculptures using principles to organize the art elements, including unity, proportion, emphasis, and balance.

Standard 2

Perceiving: Students will find meaning by analyzing, criticizing, and evaluating works of art.

Objective A Critique works of art.

- Describe artworks according to use of art elements and principles.
- Examine the functions of art.
- Interpret works of art.

Materials:

Postcard of Oaxacan Lizard
Flour and salt for Baker's clay (recipe listed in sources section)
Cookie sheets
Small cups for water
measuring cups, wooden spoon, large bowl if mixing clay in classroom
paint
paint brushes
sand paper (optional)

Initiation:

Display postcard of the Oaxacan Lizard. Ask students what the sculpture is of, how it was made, what is unique about the way it is decorated.

(Give background information on the Oaxacan Lizard appropriate to age and interest level of students. A map of Mexico and links to websites with examples of Oaxacan carvings appears at the end of the lesson plan in the sources section.)

Activity:

1. Make Baker's clay. If appropriate, have students help measure, mix, and kneed the clay. Distribute a portion of clay to each student.
2. Have students construct their animals. Remind students to use a little water to attach pieces of clay together.
3. When sculptures are complete place on a cookie sheet.
4. Bake sculptures in an oven. They may plump just a bit as they are cooked in the oven.
5. Paint a base coat of paint and let dry.
6. Paint designs on animal sculptures. Students should use at least three different colors. It may help to allow one color to dry before applying the next. Oaxacan artists often use dots and repeating lines to adorn their carvings. Encourage students to experiment and express themselves by painting a variety of patterns or designs on their animal (at least three).

Assessment: Oaxacan Animal Sculpture Rubric

Neat Appearance

5 points The sculpture is very neat in appearance.	4 points	3 points The sculpture is somewhat neat in appearance.	2 points	1 point The sculpture is not neat in appearance.
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Color

5 points 3 or more colors are used to paint sculpture	4 points	3 points Only 2 colors are used to paint sculpture	2 points	1 point Sculpture is only painted with base color
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Pattern variety

5 points 3 or more patterns/designs are present	4 points	3 points At least two patterns/designs are present	2 points	1 point Only one pattern/design is present
--	----------	---	----------	---

Complete

5 points Sculpture is painted with patterns	4 points	3 points Sculpture is painted without patterns	2 points	1 point Sculpture is not painted
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Variations:

For younger students the baker's clay can be rolled out and animal forms cut with cookie cutter. These can then be baked and painted by students.

For younger students or a quick one day project, have students color Oaxacan inspired pattern on one of the animal stencils. If stencils are photocopied or traced onto heavy paper, they can be decorated and the attached to a tongue depressor to create a puppet. Use the puppets for the language arts extension activity.

Extensions:

Social Studies: Mexico is a country rich in history and culture. Have students research and present a report on a Mexican topic. (Zapotec people, the states of Mexico, Maya civilization, etc.)

Discussion topic: The woodcarvings of Oaxaca have increased the economic prosperity of the region. Discuss art as an economic force. Could a similar approach help other economically depressed regions?

Language Arts: Write fables, stories, or plays about the animals you created.

Map from www.worldatlas.com



Baker's Clay

4 cups unsifted flour

1 1/2 cups water

1 cup salt

Yield: Makes enough dough for 6-8 fist sized portions

NOTE: Do not halve or double recipe.

Mix ingredients together thoroughly and knead for 5 minutes. If mixture is too dry, work in extra water with hands. Use your hands or kitchen utensils to shape and form figures. Use water as a glue to fasten dough segments together. Place designs on a cookie sheet and bake in a preheated 350 degree oven for 1 hour or until done. (Or they may be baked at 250 degrees F for two hours) When done, sand lightly if desired and paint.

The above recipe and other clay recipes can be found at the following website:

<http://www.recipegoldmine.com/childclay/childclay.html>

Websites with examples of Oaxacan woodcarvings:

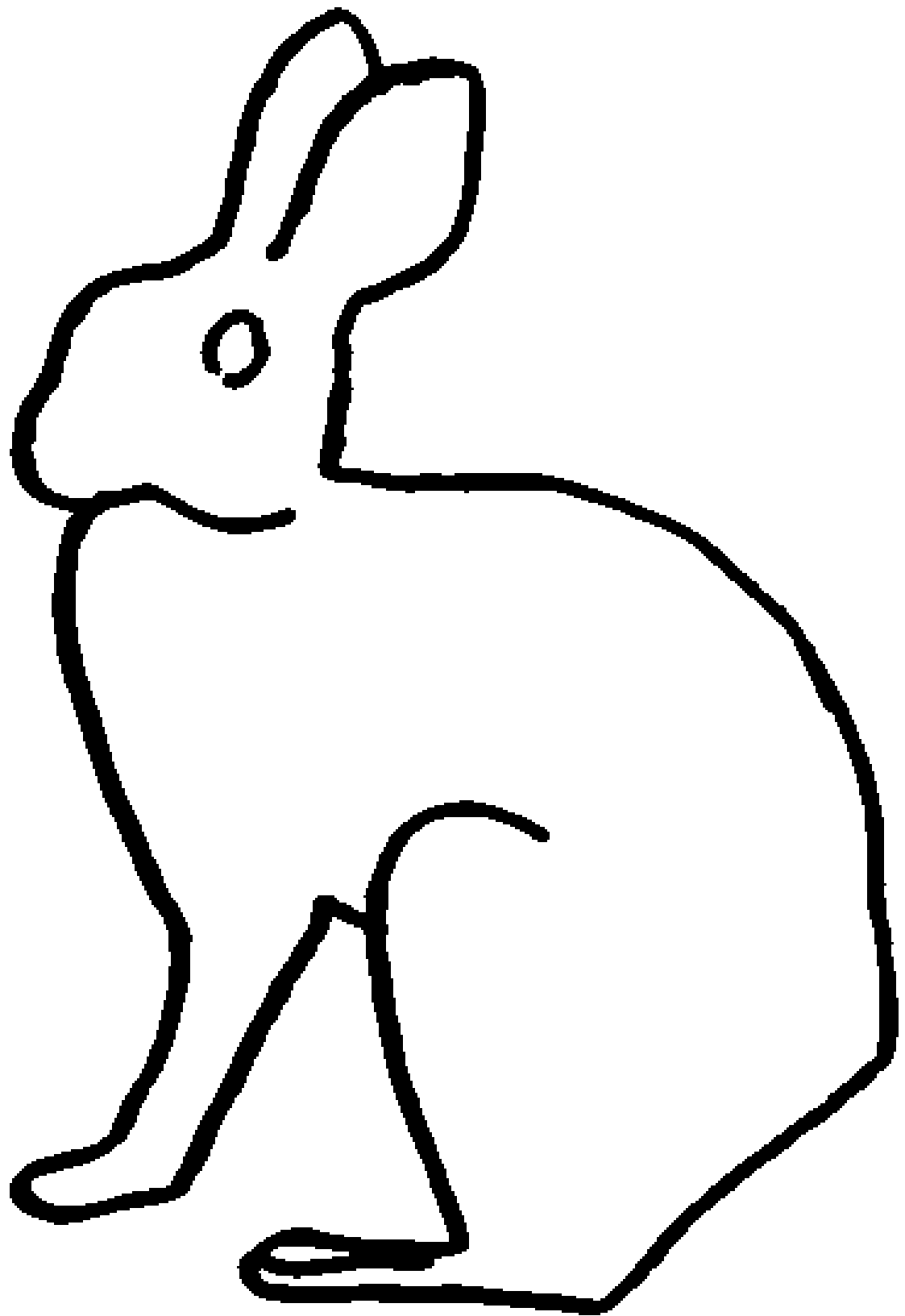
<http://www.oaxacanwoodcarving.com/> check out the art guide, excellent information and examples

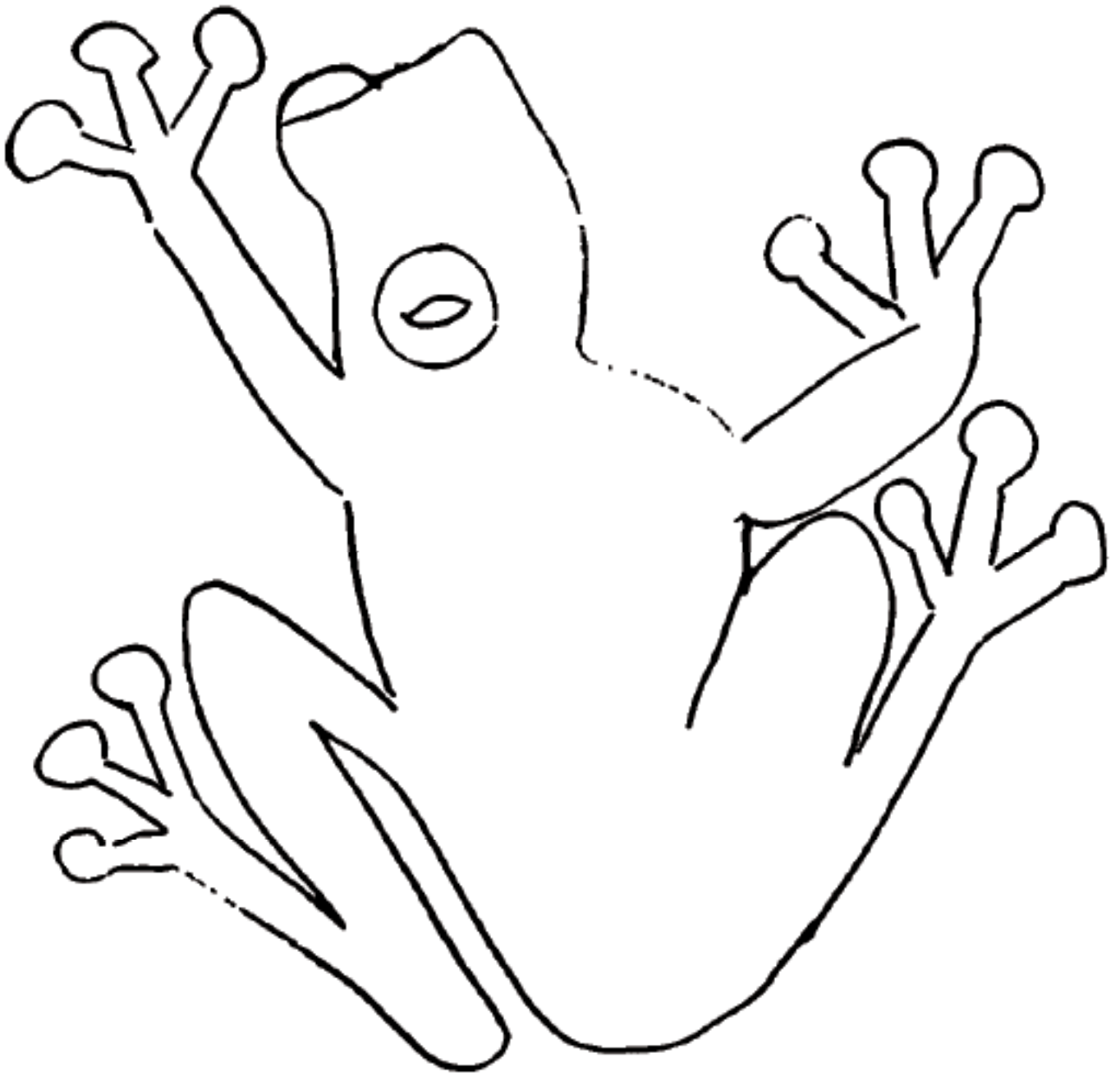
<http://www.lizardkingarts.com/Oaxacan%20Carvings.htm>

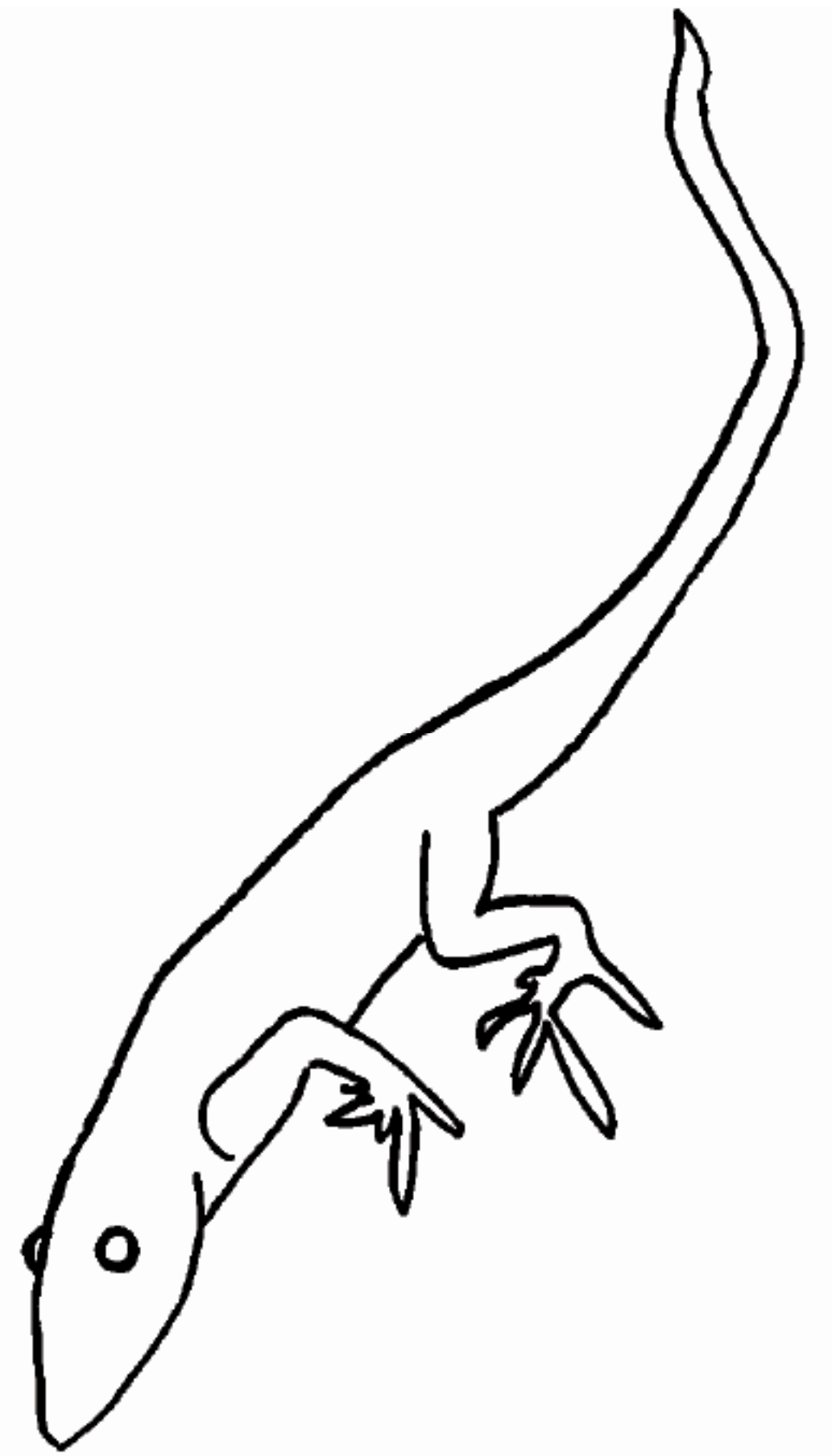
<http://www.oaxacafinecarvings.com/woodcarvings/aurorasosabunny.htm>

Sources:

The UMFA Teacher Resource Center has this object available to check out. Call 581-3580 to reserve or visit www.umfa.utah.edu







Tiger Mask



Mexico
Tiger Mask
Papier Mâché, paint, bristles
Education Collection of the Utah Museum of Fine Arts
Museum # D656

The jaguar (called *el tigre* by the Spanish who had never seen a jaguar) was an important animal in the cultures of pre-Hispanic Mexico. Not only was it a symbol for war, conquest, and the destructive forces of nature, but the jaguar was also deified as a model for the Aztec, Olmec, Toltec and Zapotec way of life. And, if tamed by proper rituals, the Jaguar was a symbol for fertility as well. Today, these masks, despite the jaguar's scarcity in Mexico, are the most popular masks used in *fiestas* or dances. This particular mask was crafted in the state of Guerrero by the Nahua Indians, who are descendants of the Aztecs. Guerrero is known for creating masks with animal motifs. The mask is first carved from soft woods while the wood is still green. Then layers of lacquer are added after the wood is dry. The mask is also painted and has other unique characteristics, such as boar bristles for whiskers and mirrored eyes.

Shamanism, a belief that there are connections between the living and the spirit world affected by Holy Men, or Shamans, is slowly disappearing in Mexico today. However, elements of it are kept alive by native cultures, such as the Nahua Indians, who survived the Spanish conquest. These masks are still understood as agents of profound mystical transformation. They also embody the ethnic, social, and religious aspects that make Mexican folk art so culturally insightful.

Create Your Own Ceremonial Animal Mask Lesson

An art lesson plan for *Tiger Mask* written by Katie Fowers

Objective:

Art History: Students will be able to identify the state of Guerrero on a map where the Nahua Indians lived and identify some qualities of Aztec and Mexican Folk art.

Art Criticism: Students will understand that the mask is a ceremonial object as well as a piece of artwork and a historical artifact.

Art Production: Students will create their own animal papier mâché animal mask to display or wear.

State core links:

Standard 1

The student will explore and refine the application of media, techniques, and artistic processes.

Objective 1

Explore a variety of art materials while learning new techniques and processes. Standard 3

The student will choose and evaluate artistic subject matter, themes, symbols, ideas, meanings, and purposes.

Standard 3

The student will choose and evaluate artistic subject matter, themes, symbols, ideas, meanings, and purposes.

Objective 1

Explore possible content and purposes in significant works of art.

Objective 2

Discuss, evaluate, and choose symbols, ideas, subject matter, meanings, and purposes for their own artworks.

Standard 4

The student will interpret and apply visual arts in relation to cultures, history, and all learning.

Objective 1

Compare the arts of different cultures to explore their similarities and diversities.

Objective 2

Connect various kinds of art with particular cultures, times, or places.

Introduction:

Around the thirteenth century, the Aztecs migrated from the north to the highlands of Mesoamerica. At one point they were enslaved by another tribe, but eventually gained their independence in 1325.

We have learned a lot about the Aztecs through storytellers and ancient manuscripts that passed their history and culture down through the ages. However, as with other cultures, we have also gained vast amounts of insight and knowledge about this culture through their art that has been preserved over the years.

The main materials used in Aztec art include volcanic stone, basalt and other hard stones, feathers, paint, leather, human and animal bones, turquoise, jade, starfish, sea urchins, gold, colored shells, amethyst, agate, opal, jasper, and onyx. The traditional and common colors that the Aztec used in their art consist of blue, olive, green, crimson, pink, ocher, black, and white.



Because they used materials that were durable and strong, they have lasted through the ages and give us insight into their lives. Most of their art reflects their everyday life, what was important to them. Fertility was an important aspect to the Aztecs in order to carry on their tribe, so we often find drawings of pregnant women and, of course, the jaguar, which is a symbol for fertility in many different art pieces. Other important themes in Aztec art include serpents, death and monstrous deities.

Aztec art reached its peak under the reign of its last rulers. Missionaries and conquerors that encountered the Aztec destroyed much of their artwork because it represented idolatry to them, and in consequence, went directly against the missionaries' teachings and beliefs. Very little remains of what was once a vast collection of Aztec art. The Nahua Indians who made this particular jaguar mask were among those who survived the onslaught of the Spanish conquest. What has been recognized by the world, however, had its effect. Present day artists still mirror their own work after Aztec art.

Like the Aztec, popular Mexican arts of today are of such a variety that it is hard to focus on just one particular craft. These crafts are made with vibrant colors, exciting designs, and are from a variety of materials. These materials include wax, metals, tree bark, clay, wood, wool, and materials found in the environment.

This mask, as well as ones like it, is found in museums around the world. They are considered "artwork", but also serve other purposes. When they were made, they were ceremonial objects used in rituals and dances. Their original purpose is different from what it is when it is displayed in a museum. It is considered artwork because the people expressed their emotions, beliefs and artistic talents when they made it. It is also considered a historical artifact because we have learned much about their culture just by studying the piece.

Materials:

newspaper (cut into strips 1 inch wide)
flour and water mixture (wall paper paste also works)
plastic bowls
paint brushes
tempera paint
masking tape
shellac
buckets
sand paper
pencils and scratch paper
optional: feathers, fake fur, beads, raffia, etc.

Activity:

*You may want to advise the kids to wear old t-shirts or aprons, as this is a somewhat messy project (but very fun!). Also, set down newspaper over working area before starting to make clean up easier and less messy.

1. Have the students brainstorm possible ideas and make sketches of the animals they may want to make. Try to encourage the students to choose an animal that expresses personal values, interests, personality traits, etc.
2. You can use plastic bowls to make the base of the mask so that it will sit upright. However, if the students wish to wear the masks, they can just form the shape of the head out of crumpled newspaper and masking tape
3. To make the paste, mix about 2 cups of water to 1 cup of flour to the consistency of cream. You can use the buckets to mix it in
4. Dip a shred of newspaper in the paste mix until it is completely saturated. Wipe off extra paste by pulling the strip between your fingers before applying it to the animal head.
5. Smooth the paper strip down with your fingers. Continue this process until you have completely covered the frame.
6. Let it sit overnight.
7. Add about 3 to 5 layers and allow to dry overnight.
8. You may use sand paper to smooth the surface if desired (make sure the heads are dry).
9. Decorate the heads with paint, or if desired, feathers, beads, raffia, etc. You may paint over the finished product with shellac or clear plastic to maintain permanence.
10. When cleaning up, do not dump the paste mixture down the drain, throw it in the garbage. Wipe off hands well with newspaper or paper towels before washing them in the sink.

Variations:

Since this is a messy project and somewhat time consuming, it is always possible for younger children to make animal masks out of construction paper, scissors and glue or to color/decorate paper plates.

Assessment:

Have each member of the class give a one-minute description (or show and tell) of their head to the class, why they chose the animal they did and what meaning it has to them. Also, for grading assessment, see attached rubric.

5 Points Closely followed instructions On task during time	4 Points	3 Points Didn't quite follow direction May have been distracted during time	2 points	1 Point Didn't follow instruction Did not stay on task during time
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Instruction and Participation

5 Points Project is complete, painted and on time	4 Points	3 Points Project is almost completed by due date – some paint finished	2 Points	1 Point No paint on project, late for due date
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Completion

5 Points The project is neat, attention to detail and care given to craftsmanship	4 Points	3 Points Somewhat sloppy and careless in craftsmanship	2 Points	1 Point Disregard for neatness; no detail or recognizable animal
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Neatness and Craftsmanship

15 Points

Sources:

www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units

www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons

UMFA Pre-Columbian packet (Evening for Educators) 2004

<http://encarta.msn.com/map>

The UMFA Teacher Resource Center has this object available to check out. Call 581-3580 to reserve or visit www.umfa.utah.edu

Notes:

Arbol de Vida (Tree of Life)



Mexican ceramic tradition dates back to the ancient Olmec culture. Since then, other cultures, including the Aztecs, Mixtecs, and Spaniards helped evolve these traditions into the regional styles of today. The *Arbol de la Vida*, or “Tree of Life,” is a distinctive object from the last 100 years from the state of Metepec. The “Tree of Life” gets its name from the original versions of the trees, which explained the origins of life, i.e. the biblical story of Adam and Eve. Today, *Arboles de la Vida* can have many narratives, which are generally meant to be “read” from bottom to top and may include biographical scenes.

The trees are made of clay with a flat base. The leaves, fruit, figures and/or animals are all attached by wire to the tree. They used to be painted by aniline paints until the 1960's, when acrylics proved more durable. Many trees are now left unpainted, often made with red terracotta, for a more distinctive look. The *Arboles* have crossed over into other aspects of Mexican culture; Day of the Dead and Nativity trees have recently become popular.

Arboles de la Vida have become one of the most well known objects in Mexican folk art. Today they are sought after by art collectors from all over the world.

Mexico
Arbol de Vida (Tree of Life)
Ceramic
Purchased with funds from Friends of the Art Museum
Museum # 1990.024.001

Student Autobiographical “Tree of Life” Lesson

An art and art history lesson plan for *Arbol de Vida* written by Jo Bradbury

Objective:

Students will learn about the Mexican ceramic tradition and the art of creating an *Arbol de la Vida*, or Tree of Life. They will use this knowledge to create their own, autobiographical narrative using these symbols, methods, and imagery.

State core links:

Ceramics (7-12)

Standard I: Making

Students will assemble and create ceramics by manipulating art media and by organizing images the elements and principles.

Objective B

Create ceramics using art elements and principles.

Create expressive ceramics using art elements, including form, shape, negative space, and texture.

Create expressive works of art using principles to organize the art elements, including contrast, repetition, balance, and unity.

Drawing (7-12)

Standard I: Making

Students will assemble and create drawings by manipulating art media and by organizing images with the elements and principles.

Objective A Refine techniques and processes in a variety of media.

Experience and control a variety of media, including current arts-related technologies.

Select and analyze the expressive potential of drawing media, techniques, and processes.

Practice safe and responsible use of art media, equipment, and studio space.

Materials:

- Drawing paper, pencil, crayons or oil pastels.

- Ceramic materials:

Clay, slip, water, sponges, crafting tools, access to kiln (see variations if no kiln access).

Activity:

Students will create an autobiographical narrative and make their own *Arbol de la Vida* which will tell the story of their life, including significant events such as birthdays, vacations, events they remember, etc.

•To begin, give an introduction to the Mexican ceramic tradition and Mexican Folk Art. Show the *Arbol de la Vida* shown in this packet as a cultural exemplar. Discuss the tradition of the Aztecs, Mixtecs, and Spaniards and how they evolved this tradition over time. They began by depicting the tale of Adam and Eve and the origins of life, the “Tree” form symbolizes this. Discuss further how today, these *Arboles de la Vida* are used to portray biographical narratives and other scenarios using symbolism.

- Next, have the students design their *Arbol* on paper to prepare for the ceramic final product.
 - o These narratives generally “read” from bottom to top, and so the students will plan their *Arbol* in a drawing.
 - o Using drawing media and skills they will start by drawing a “tree” form on paper with pencil.
 - o Then they will divide the tree into three parts using a ruler. In each of the segments they will illustrate an event in their lives using simple symbols as they did in the example.
 - o They will then organize the series of events from bottom to top, using pictures that represent the events that slowly “grow” throughout the “Tree.”
- With the 2-D drawing as a reference, its time to move into the ceramics studio!
 - o Using clay, the students will create their “Tree of Life” starting with a flat base (depending on how much clay is available, the size of each students’ project could vary from 7” to one or two feet).
 - o They will build up from the flat base, molding the symbols of their lives experiences and connecting them to their tree form. They will also mold leaves and fruit of the tree to decorate the overall form.
 - o When the *Arbol* is done, and has reaching bone dry, fire.
 - o Because the traditional *Arboles* are sometimes left unpainted, you could leave this as the finished project.
 - o An extension would be to use Acrylic paints to paint the surface of the *Arbol*.

Sources:

Handout in this folder.

Variations and Extensions:

Students could tell only one event in their life, if the series is too complicated. Also, if a ceramic kiln is unavailable, there is non-fire clay that air dries and can also be painted.

Assessment:

Assessment will be based on the following rubric:

Description: Students study Mexican folk art and create autobiographical Arboles de la Vida, or "Trees of Life"

	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement
Drawing/Planning	Using information from lecture, student created a <u>Arbol</u> in the tradition of Mexican Folk Art. Great drawing showing three events in students' life using a "tree" format	Idea ok, didn't really apply the symbols of the Mexican Folk artists in the example. Shows three or less (less thought out) events in students' life. <u>Satisfactory</u> drawing.	Bad drawing, no connection to the symbols of the example shown. Didn't show events in students' life.
Ceramic Tree	Using clay, student creates a wonderful example of the Mexican <u>Arbol de la Vida</u> , telling three events in <u>their</u> life from bottom to top. Wonderfully crafted and solidly built.	Ok construction, tells story of three or less events, not a great example of <u>Arbol</u> but satisfactory.	Badly built, poorly crafted. Doesn't clearly portray stories.
Finished Product	Wonderful example of <u>Arbol de la Vida</u> . Tells three discernable stories from student's life. Painted clearly.	Passable example of <u>Arbol de la Vida</u> . Depicts three or less somewhat discernable stories. Less effort in final product.	Bad example of <u>Arbol de la Vida</u> . Two or less confusing stories. Little or no effort in final product.

Virgin de Los Dolores



Mexico
Virgin de Los Dolores
Paint on tin
On loan from Owen D. Mort, Jr.
Museum # L1987.4.248

In Catholic Mexico, the Virgin Mary is revered in many different personas, each embodying either different events and times in her life (called *advocacions*), or in her many appearances during history (*apparitions*). Our Lady of Sorrows, or *Nuestra Señora de los Dolores*, is an *advocacion* where the Virgin is in grief at the foot of the cross where her Son is dying.

Artists paint Our Lady of Sorrows in three traditional poses. In the first, she is standing at the cross with her face turned upward, her hands clasped in prayer. In the second, seven daggers pierce Mary's heart, symbolizing the Seven Sorrows of Mary. These seven painful events pertaining to her son in Mary's life were: 1. The Prophecy of Simeon that Jesus will die; 2. The flight into Egypt; 3. The loss of the child Jesus for three days; 4. Meeting Jesus on the way to Calvary; 5. The Crucifixion; 6. Jesus taken down from the cross; 7. Jesus laid in the tomb. And in the third pose, like this painting, a sword is penetrating her heart, in fulfillment of the biblical prophecy of Simeon in Luke 2:34-35. Upon presenting the baby Jesus in the temple, Simeon prophesies that Jesus would bring redemption to the people of Israel, and that "a sword shall pierce your own [Mary's] soul..." In all three poses, she is depicted in widow's veils. There are other biblical symbols in this painting that tribute to Mary's sorrow. The column represents the one that Jesus was bound to when he was flagellated. The cloth with the image of Jesus is the towel that

Veronica gave to Him with which He wiped His face, leaving the impression of His countenance. And the rooster is the one that Jesus refers to in The Gospel of St. Matthew, where He says to St. Peter: "Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice."

On each of the Fridays of Lent, special religious events take place in the villages and towns of Mexico. Altars, dedicated to sacred figures, are erected in homes, streets and churches. *Viernes Santo* (Holy Friday) is the last Friday of Lent, the Friday before *Semana Santa* (Holy Week). This is the day of the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, where the *Virgin de los Dolores* is celebrated by masses and processions. Images such as this one accompanied by a cross are set on altars. Flowers and candles in shades of purple are often arranged around the image to symbolize grief. The *Virgin de los Dolores* is an example of the role that images of venerated figures, or *Santos*, play in Mexican folk art, and also in the lives of everyday Mexicans.

Mexican Folk Art and Art of the Santos, Symbolism in Art, Value, and Proportions of the Face Lesson

An art history lesson plan for *Virgin de Los Dolores* written by Jo Bradbury

Objective:

Student will understand the meaning of symbolism in art through an art history lecture and a drawing project. Students will be able to identify symbols in the image, *Virgin de Los Dolores* and create a symbolic self-portrait in pencil.

State core links:

Standard 3: Expressing

Students will create meaning in drawings.

Objective A: Create content in drawings.

- Identify subject matter, metaphor, themes, symbols, and content in drawings.
- Create drawings that effectively communicate subject matter, metaphor, themes, symbols, or individually conceived content.
- Create divergent, novel, or individually inspired applications of art media or art elements and principles that express content.

Materials:

- Information on *Virgin de los Dolores* provided in Evening for Educators packet, image included.
- Pencil.
- 2 pieces large sketch paper.

Activity:

Begin by showing image of *Virgin de los Dolores* on overhead or Powerpoint. Discuss the piece in fullness, focusing on the different objects that have symbolic meaning, such as; the column in the background represents the one that Jesus was bound to when he was flagellated, the sword in Mary's heart symbolizing both her sorrow, and the premonition of Simeon, etc. (Remember to keep the religious topics in a cultural perspective and avoid religious doctrines/opinions in the diverse classroom).

Then show how symbolism affects us in our current lives, i.e., the flag symbolizes patriotism, the heart symbolizes love, the dollar sign symbolizes greed, etc. Ask the students to brainstorm on one piece of sketch paper symbols that apply to their lives. Maybe a book shape would symbolize their joy of reading or learning, or a banana shape symbolizes their love of food, etc. They could even be more literal with a T.V., soccer ball, or a shopping bag, whatever they enjoy in their lives.

Following the brainstorm session, students will draw a self portrait in an iconic state (flat face, maybe some mannerisms found in this genre of Mexican Art of the Santos) and then incorporate the symbols that they created for themselves. Using pencil with value, the students will continue to work on the portrait until completion.

Assessment:

Students will be assessed in a class critique. Each student will put his/her symbolic self-portrait up in front of the class. The rest of the class will try to identify the symbols in the portrait and what they mean. The teacher will grade according to participation, quality of final portrait, and completion of project.

Sources:

You should be able to complete the lecture with the materials provided in this Evening for Educators packet.

Variations:

Students could use aluminum pieces and draw their self-portraits on them in the manner of the Santos pieces. They could color with oil pastels or colored pencil to incorporate color.

Extensions:

To extend this lesson in to an entire unit, the teacher could research middle ages European Art, and work their way through time ending up at the 20th century surrealists who all use symbolism. This is a great way to discuss art history, making it more interesting and personal to students.

Notes:

Day of the Dead Figure



A ritual known as *Día de los Muertos*, or “Day of the Dead,” is practiced today in Mexico and many parts of the United States. Celebrated by the ancient Aztecs, Day of the Dead today is a Mexican tradition combining the Aztec practice with Roman Catholic beliefs. It is held on November 1 and 2, during the Catholic holidays of All Saint’s Day and All Soul’s Day. This is when it is said that souls of the deceased return to visit the living. During the festival, people honor the souls of the departed with various customs. Families visit cemeteries and decorate graves with flowers and candles. Some people build shrines of dead family members in their house and remember them by eating their favorite food or playing their favorite music. Starting in October, stores in Mexico stock up on many Day of the Dead goodies such as candy coffins, skulls and a sweet bread called *pan de muerto*.

Wood or clay skeletons, like this one, are used for different rituals during Day of the Dead. Parades are a popular custom during the festival. People march through the streets putting on mock funerals, carrying skeletons and coffins with a live costumed person inside. The skeletons are also used during the parades to act out humorous weddings. There are skeletons used for decoration on altars or gravesites or as toys as well. This sets the tone for the holiday not as a somber and quiet remembrance, as death is usually treated in most parts of the United States, but as a joyous and festive celebration.

Mexico

Day of the Dead Figure, 1955-1965

Earthenware and polychrome

Purchased with funds from Friends of the Art Museum

Museum # 1996.011.001

Dia de los Muertos Sugar Skeletons

Lesson

An art lesson plan for *Day of the Dead Figure* written by Tracey Matthews

Lesson Purpose:

To introduce students to varying customs of remembering the dead, focusing on Dia de los Muertos, or the Day of the Dead.

Content Objectives:

- Students will complete readings discussing Memorial Day, Halloween, and Dia de los Muertos.
- Students will discuss different perspectives that exist throughout cultures by participating in a Creative Debate Exercise.
- Students will reflect on the discussed ways of remembering the deceased by writing about their own perspective and thoughts.
- Students will analyze the *Day of the Dead Figure* and discover similarities and diversities to other kinds of sculpture art.

Process Objectives:

- Students will use materials appropriately and safely to create sculptures inspired by the *Day of the Dead Figure*.
- Students will create sculpture that possesses symbolic meaning.

State core links:

Language Objectives:

Standard VII- Comprehension-Students understand interpret and analyze narrative and informational texts.

Standard VIII- Students write daily to communicate effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Fine Arts Elementary Core Standards:

Standard 1

The student will explore and refine the application of media, techniques, and artistic processes. Objective 3- Handle art materials in a safe and responsible manner.

Standard 3

The student will choose and evaluate artistic subject matter, themes, symbols, ideas, meanings, and purposes. Objective 2-Discuss, evaluate, and choose symbols, ideas, subject matter, meanings, and purposes for students' own artworks.

Standard 4

The student will interpret and apply visual arts in relation to cultures, history, and all learning. Objective 1- Compare the arts of different cultures to explore their similarities and diversities. Objective 2-Connect various kinds of art with particular cultures, times, or places.

Materials:

Classroom Activities Materials-

- Copies of Readings

Supplies for clay sculptures-

- Clay, modeling tools, sponges, rolling pins, cutting wires, water sprayers

Supplies to make Sugar skulls-

2 cups sifted powdered sugar

1 egg white

1 tablespoon light corn syrup

1/2 teaspoon of vanilla

1/3 cup of corn starch

food coloring

1 fine paintbrush

Preparation: Mix egg white, syrup and vanilla in a dry bowl. Mix the sifted powdered sugar into the mixture gradually with your fingers until it forms a ball (if not using molds later, use plenty of cornstarch). Sprinkle cornstarch on a table or cutting board. Place the mixture on the table and shape it into a smooth ball. Wrap tightly in plastic and chill until ready (It will keep for several months). After molding, wait for figures to dry and then paint with food coloring.

Activity:**Setting the Stage:**

The three readings provided should get students thinking about the different ways people remember those that have passed away.

1. Divide the class into thirds with each group focusing on one of the following holidays: Memorial Day, Halloween, Dia de los Muertos. Have each group record previous knowledge about their assigned holiday, and then pass out the appropriate reading. Instruct students to record important information from the reading, and then talk about how we think of the deceased on this holiday. Write on the board, "During this holiday, how do people think about those who have died? How do people act or what do they say?" and have each group write a collaborative response to the question.

2. Then have each group take turns answering the question. Guide a debate about how people "should" think of those who have died. Ask the students why these different attitudes exist. Ask the students to think about their own feelings for those that have passed away.

Introduction:

The introduction should provide students with a basic overview of Dia de los Muertos and highlight the similarities and diversities of holidays they may already be familiar with. Often extended family members or others in the community would be happy to visit with the class and discuss the importance of Dia de los Muertos in Mexican culture. There are many books and videos available that provide information about Dia de los Muertos for every grade level. Here are a few: *The Days of the Dead: Mexico's Festival of Communion With the Departed* by John Greenlegh, *Digging the Days of the Dead: A Reading of Mexico's Dias De Muertos* by Juanita Garcimagodoy, *Through the Eyes of the Soul, Day of the Dead in Mexico - Michoacan (Through the Eyes of the Soul, Day of the Dead in Mexico)* by Mary J. Andrade, *Day of the Dead* by Tony Johnston, *Day of The Dead Through The Eyes Of The Soul: Mexico City (Great Heartlanders Series)* by Mary J. Andrade, *Festival of the Bones / El Festival de las Calaveras :The Book for the Day of the Dead* by Luis San Vicente, *The Latino Holiday Book: From Cinco De Mayo to Dia De Los Muertos: The Celebrations and Traditions of Hispanic-Americans* by Valerie Menard.

1. Introduce the project- People often spend days preparing for Dia de los Muertos festivities. On Dia de los Muertos children often play with funeral toys and enjoy sweets like sugar skulls. People often eat them like Valentines day candy and it reminds them that someday they too will die. This is not morbid or sad, but reminds people to enjoy life while they are alive. Sugar model making dates back over 100 years and has developed into a remarkable skill. We will be making skeleton sculptures similar to this practice (You may choose to actually make sugar skeletons and a recipe is included in the materials section, or you may use clay). Have students look at the Day of the Dead figure. Like many other skeleton figures created for the Dia de los Muertos celebration, the skeleton is depicted active and dressed in festive clothing.



Individual Activity:

Tell students that the way the skeleton is depicted in the day of the dead figure reflects Mexican cultures outlook towards those who have passed away. Have students ponder how they think about the dead now and plan symbolic meaning for their skeleton sculpture. You may have students create skeletons similar to those used for *Dia de los Muertos* or you may ask them to create a skeleton sculpture reflect the way they think of the dead.

1. Instruct students if modeling clay that when attaching two pieces of a clay you must create a secure bond by rubbing the join together. Also because of the plasticity of clay children tend to elongate the clay into thin pieces that extend from the main form. When the clay dries these become extremely fragile and easily broken. One last word of warning: do not let students wash clay down school sinks, instead have buckets of water available. For more guidance on using clay with children I would recommend the book *Clay in the Classroom* by Peter Clough (\$12.50), however many great websites also exist such as <http://www.earlychildhood.com/Articles/index.cfm?A=430&FuseAction=Article>.

2. While students are sculpting skeletons teach the Spanish words for the parts of the body. Face-*La Cara*, Knee- *La Rodilla*, Stomach- *El Estómago*, Head-*La Cabeza*, Leg-*La Pierna*, Foot- *El Pie*, Eye- *El Ojo*, Thumb- *El Pugar*, Finger- *El Dedo*, Neck- *El Cuello*, Arm-*El Brazo*, Hand- *La Mano*.

3. About half way into creating their sculptures have students stop. Ask for volunteers to talk about their piece, what it means, and what has been difficult.

4. After students finish their sculptures hold a class critique to praise people's work let each student talk about their piece.

5. As some students finish before others begin a game of Simon Says but in Spanish. Begin by saying *Simón Dice tocar*, which means Simon says touch or *Simón Dice Mover*, which means Simon says move....And then review the human anatomy in Spanish. It may be necessary to write all of the words for body parts in Spanish on the board.

Closing Activity:

Have students complete an "Out of this World" Reflection. Have students write for ten minutes on the following: Your spacecraft has just landed outside the school building and your first stop is our classroom. The students in our classroom have a great deal of information to share. Write your observations of the skeleton sculptures you discover and what the students tell you about them.

Evaluation/Assessment:

Evaluate students by assessing their participation, safety practices, creativity and sculptural complexity, as well as their final written reflection.

Additional Images to Look at:

Diego Rivera. *Urban Day of the Dead (The Fair on All Souls' Day)* 1923-1938 Fresco. Court of the Fiestas, Ministry of Public Education Mexico City

Diego Rivera. *Rural Day of the Dead (The Cemetery)*. 1923-28 Fresco. Court of the Fiestas, Ministry of Public Education Mexico City

First Reading

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

May 2, 2000

Memorandum on the White House Program for the National Moment of Remembrance

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: White House Program for the National Moment of Remembrance

As Memorial Day approaches, it is time to pause and consider the true meaning of this holiday. Memorial Day represents one day of national awareness and reverence, honoring those Americans who died while defending our Nation and its values. While we should honor these heroes every day for the profound contribution they have made to securing our Nation's freedom, we should honor them especially on Memorial Day.

In this time of unprecedented success and prosperity throughout our land, I ask that all Americans come together to recognize how fortunate we are to live in freedom and to observe a universal "National Moment of Remembrance" on each Memorial Day. This memorial observance represents a simple and unifying way to commemorate our history and honor the struggle to protect our freedoms.

Accordingly, I hereby direct all executive departments and agencies, in consultation with the White House Program for the National Moment of Remembrance (Program), to promote a "National Moment of Remembrance" to occur at 3 p.m. (local time) on each Memorial Day.

Recognizing that Memorial Day is a Federal holiday, all executive departments and agencies, in coordination with the Program and to the extent possible and permitted by law, shall promote and provide resources to support a National Moment of Remembrance, including:

- Encouraging individual department and agency personnel, and Americans everywhere, to pause for one minute at 3:00 p.m. (local time) on Memorial Day, to remember and reflect on the sacrifices made by so many to provide freedom for all.
- Recognizing, in conjunction with Memorial Day, department and agency personnel whose family members have made the ultimate sacrifice for this Nation.
- Providing such information and assistance as may be necessary for the Program to carry out its functions.

I have asked the Director of the White House Millennium Council to issue additional guidance, pursuant to this Memorandum, to the heads of executive departments and agencies regarding specific activities and events to commemorate the National Moment of Remembrance.

William J. Clinton

Note: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 3.

Second Reading

The History Channel: Evolution of a Holiday

http://www.historychannel.com/exhibits/halloween/holiday_origins3.html

As European immigrants came to America, they brought their varied Halloween customs with them. Because of the rigid Protestant belief systems that characterized early New England, celebration of Halloween in colonial times was extremely limited there. It was much more common in Maryland and the southern colonies. As the beliefs and customs of different European ethnic groups, as well as the American Indians, meshed, a distinctly American version of Halloween began to emerge. The first celebrations included "play parties," public events held to celebrate the harvest, where neighbors would share stories of the dead, tell each other's fortunes, dance, and sing. Colonial Halloween festivities also featured the telling of ghost stories and mischief-making of all kinds. By the middle of the nineteenth century, annual autumn festivities were common, but Halloween was not yet celebrated everywhere in the country.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, America was flooded with new immigrants. These new immigrants, especially the millions of Irish fleeing Ireland's potato famine of 1846, helped to popularize the celebration of Halloween nationally. Taking from Irish and English traditions, Americans began to dress up in costumes and go house to house asking for food or money, a practice that eventually became today's "trick-or-treat" tradition. Young women believed that, on Halloween, they could divine the name or appearance of their future husband by doing tricks with yarn, apple parings, or mirrors.

In the late 1800s, there was a move in America to mold Halloween into a holiday more about community and neighborly get-togethers, than about ghosts, pranks, and witchcraft. At the turn of the century, Halloween parties for both children and adults became the most common way to celebrate the day. Parties focused on games, foods of the season, and festive costumes. Parents were encouraged by newspapers and community leaders to take anything "frightening" or "grotesque" out of Halloween celebrations. Because of their efforts, Halloween lost most of its superstitious and religious overtones by the beginning of the twentieth century.

By the 1920s and 1930s, Halloween had become a secular, but community-centered holiday, with parades and town-wide parties as the featured entertainment. Despite the best efforts of many schools and communities, vandalism began to plague Halloween celebrations in many communities during this time. By the 1950s, town leaders had successfully limited vandalism and Halloween had evolved into a holiday directed mainly at the young. Due to the high numbers of young children during the fifties baby boom, parties moved from town civic centers into the classroom or home, where they could be more easily accommodated. Between 1920 and 1950, the centuries-old practice of trick-or-treating was also revived. Trick-or-treating was a relatively inexpensive way for an entire community to share the Halloween celebration. In theory, families could also prevent tricks being played on them by providing the neighborhood children with small treats. A new American tradition was born, and it has continued to grow. Today, Americans spend an estimated \$6.9 billion annually on Halloween, making it the country's second largest commercial holiday.

Third Reading

Day of the Dead by Kathleen Jenks, Ph.D.

The Day of the Dead is a uniquely Indo-Hispanic custom that demonstrates a strong sense of love and respect for one's ancestors; celebrates the continuation of life, family relationships, community, solidarity and even finds humor after death—all positive ideas!

The Day of the Dead offers us the opportunity to examine this universal experience in the context of a family tradition, illuminated by the hope of an afterlife. In this way, it loses some of its terror and becomes more meaningful, even beautiful. This is an ancient festivity that has been much transformed through the years, but which was intended in prehispanic Mexico to celebrate children and the dead. Hence, the best way to describe this Mexican holiday is to say that it is a time when Mexican families remember their dead, and continuity of life. The original celebration can be traced to the festivities held during the Aztec month of Miccaihuitontli, ritually presided by the goddess Mictecacihuatl ("Lady of the Dead"), and dedicated to children and the dead. The rituals during this month also featured a festivity dedicated to the major Aztec war deity, Huitzilopochtli ("Sinister Hummingbird").

The ancient festival was originally celebrated in late July/early August. Spanish priests moved the feast to All Hallows' Eve, but the original tone and exuberance, despite the best efforts of those priests, remained the same. To the indigenous peoples of Mexico, death was considered the passage to a new life and so the deceased were buried with many of their personal objects, which they would need in the hereafter. Sometimes, when people of other cultures hear for the first time about the celebration of Day of the Dead, they mistakenly think it must be: gruesome, terrifying, scary, ugly and sad. Nothing further from the truth, Day of the Dead is a beautiful ritual in which Mexicans happily and lovingly remember their loved relatives that have died.

Living alongside death means that Mexicans have to learn to accept it within their lives. Death is apparent in everyday life. It is in art and even in children's toys. It is not respected as it is in other cultures. Children play "funeral" with toys that are made to represent coffins and undertakers. Death is laughed at in its face. Many euphemisms are used for death, *La calaca* (the skeleton), *la pelona* ("baldy"), *la flaca* ("skinny"), and *la huesada* ("bony").

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<http://www.peoplesguide.com/pages/chapts/viva/dodead/dodindex.html>

<http://www.public.iastate.edu/~rjsalvad/scmfaq/muertos.html>

<http://www3.niu.edu/newsplace.nndia.html>

Nativity Scene with Dancers



Mexico
Nativity Scene with Dancers
Ceramic
Gift of Lisa I. Hansen
Museum # 1991.019.004

When the Spanish conquistadors began to arrive in the New World in the sixteenth-century, Spanish friars were concerned with the problem of disseminating the Christian religion to the native peoples. They used paintings, songs, dances, and sculptures to show scenes from the bible, including the *Nacimientos*, the Nativity, or birth of Jesus Christ. The Native Americans, being already versed in the use of ceramics, began making sculptures of biblical scenes themselves. These practices developed into the religious folk art that we have today, *Nacimientos*, like this example.

The standard *Nacimientos* shows the Holy Family in a stable setting with an angel, shepherds, and an ox and donkey. The three kings are also present, typically portrayed riding a camel, an elephant and a horse. However, there are many deviations from the standard Nativity scene that may be unique to a particular area in Mexico. For instance, sometimes the Holy Family is dressed in clothing common to the area where the artist of the piece lives. The Three Wise Men are not always carrying the traditional gold, frankincense and myrrh. Often, they will have items that are important to the local economy. Local geography, such as a nearby volcano, is often included in the scene. Sometimes, artists may portray something completely removed from the traditional Nativity setting, such as the inclusion of dancers, as in this scene.

This particular *Nacimientos* includes a lily and three doves above the family. These symbols reference the

apocryphal story of how Joseph was chosen to be Mary's husband. Mary's suitors were required to bring wooden staffs to the temple. Joseph's bloomed overnight, and thus he was the chosen bridegroom. In another version of the story, a dove, symbolic of the Holy Spirit, landed on Joseph's staff.

Nacimientos are yet another example of Mexican folk art that so uniquely blend the cultural and historical aspects of both pre-Hispanic Mexico and European Catholic beliefs.

Peace/Tolerance Scenes inspired by Mexican Nativity Scenes

An art lesson plan for *Virgin de Los Dolores* written by Tracey Matthews

Lesson Purpose:

The purpose of this lesson is to teach students to view nativity scenes in the context of Central America's history, and use the idea of nativity scenes as a vehicle to spread a positive message.

Content Objective:

- Students will use the Internet to find out about the history of Central America.
- Students will look at maps and readings about Central America's Pre-Columbian civilizations and Spain's colonization.
- Students will create small sculptures contained in a box (similar to a Nativity scene) that the class will use to encourage peace and tolerance in the community.
- Students will present their Peace/Tolerance Scene to another person.

Process Objectives:

- Students will use materials safely and appropriately to create small sculptures contained in a box.
- Students will use symbols to convey peace and tolerance.

State core links:

Standard 1

The student will explore and refine the application of media, techniques, and artistic processes. Objective 3- Handle art materials in a safe and responsible manner.

Standard 3

The student will choose and evaluate artistic subject matter, themes, symbols, ideas, meanings, and purposes. Objective 2-Discuss, evaluate, and choose symbols, ideas, subject matter, meanings, and purposes for students' own artworks.

Standard 4

The student will interpret and apply visual arts in relation to cultures, history, and all learning. Objective 2- Connect various kinds of art with particular cultures, times, or places.

Materials:

Classroom Activities Materials-

- Copies of maps for each student
- Access to the Internet
- Peace/Tolerance box materials made of paper:
 - Shoe Boxes (or other boxes) for each student, i.e. index card paper, decorative papers, colored pencils, markers, rulers, glue, and foam core cut into 1/2 inch squares (ten for each child).
- OR Peace/Tolerance box Materials made of paper:
 - Shoe Boxes (or other boxes) for each student, clay (i.e. earthen clay, polymer clay, salt clay, model magic), paper or paint to decorate the boxes, possibly paint to decorate sculptures, brushes, water cups, and paper towels/rags for cleaning desks.

Activity:

Setting the Stage:

Get students excited about learning about Central America's history by having them visit the following website which belongs to the Presidency of the Republic of Mexico: http://www.elbalero.gob.mx/index_kids.html Encourage them to read about Mexico's history, including the sections on Mesoamerica, the colony, the independence, and the revolution.

Introduction:

Once students are familiar with the general history of Central America, talk more in depth about the colonization of the Americas. Display the *Nativity Scene with Dancers* for the class and explain that the Spanish friars arriving in the 1600's first used Nativity scenes like this one to teach people about the Roman Catholic religion. Today Catholicism is Mexico's largest religion: in 1990, 89.7% of people were Roman Catholic. Nativity scenes were first used as a tool but today they are considered a beautiful and unique art form.

Inform students that they will be creating sculptures similar to the nativity scene they are looking at; however instead of depicting Roman Catholic stories they will be depicting scenes of peace and tolerance of others. Discuss peace and tolerance in today's society by asking what peace and tolerance are? Why is it important? etc. Talk about symbols and how important they are to convey a great deal of information with little imagery. You may choose to discuss the symbolism in the Nativity Scene provided. Have the students brainstorm symbols they could use in their sculpture to convey peace and or tolerance. List ideas on the board.

Individual Activity:

Creating Peace/Tolerance Scene using paper-

1. Have student's begin sketching out their ideas.
2. Have students think about the relationship between the background of their box and the foreground of their box (where they will place their primary figures and symbols).
3. Student's should then decorate the outside and inside of the box. Student's could use paint, decorative paper, or paper they have colored on.
4. Next have students draw the figures and symbols they will be using in the foreground on drawing paper. Have student's place their box lying down so the ground plane is vertical to the table and the background plane is parallel to the table. Glue a foam core square to the back of the figure or symbol and then glue it to the background so it is raised from the background. Use more than one square to bring it farther into the foreground.

Creating Peace/Tolerance Scene using salt dough, polymer clay, clay, or model magic-

1. Have students first mold their primary figures or symbols small enough to fit in their box.
2. Next depending on the type of clay you choose you may decide to use either paint or paper to decorate the box.
3. Now have students paint their small sculptures and after drying have them place their sculptures inside the box.

Closing Activity

Once the boxes have been completed it is important that students use the box to teach others about the message they have created. This can be done in numerous ways. Here are a few ideas of how you might have students do this:

1. Have your students visit another classroom to present their Peace/Tolerance Scene with a presentation about their message and how Mexican Nativity Scenes inspired them.
2. Have students present their Peace/Nativity Scene to their parents and have parents sign a presentation completion form.
3. Ask people in the community if you can display your class's creations in their public space. A library, post office or community grocery store might be the perfect choice.
4. At the very least have students present their message to the other students in the class.

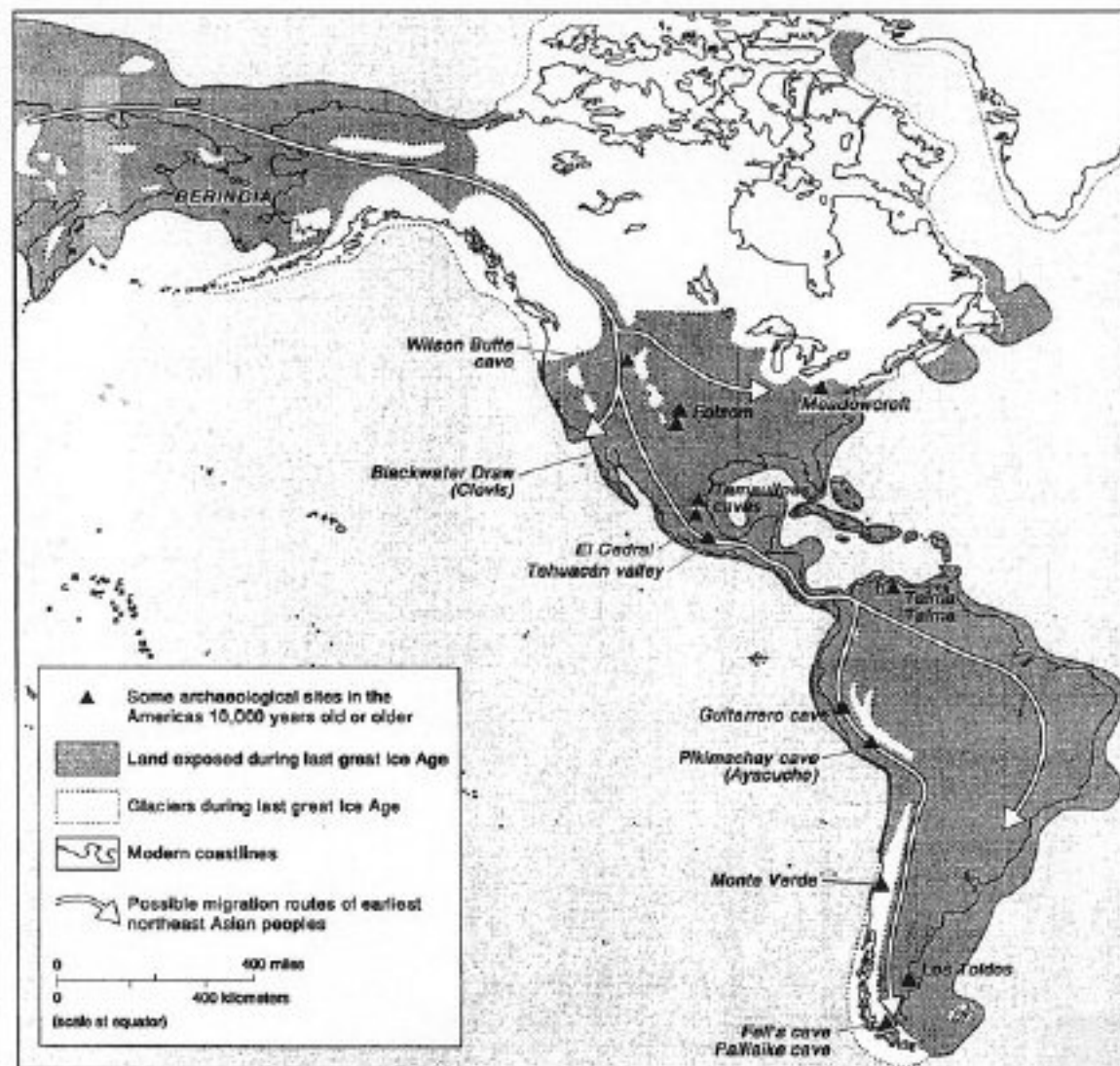
Evaluation/Assessment:

Evaluate students by assessing their participation, safety practices, creativity and sculptural complexity, as well as their final presentation.

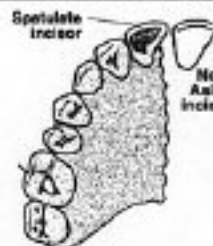
Crossing the Bering Strait Land Bridge c. 10,000 BCE

During the last great Ice Age (at its peak some 18,000 years ago), much of the earth's water was locked up in ice sheets. Sea levels fell, and land now under water was exposed, including a "land bridge" we call Beringia, connecting Siberia and Alaska. Archaeologists agree that people from northeast Asia crossed that land bridge and made their way south—probably down an ice-free corridor—to populate the Americas. The first

crossing was certainly accomplished by 12,000 years ago, though some experts think it could have taken place 25,000 years ago, or even earlier. In any case, spear points and other evidence show that the migration quickly spread throughout the Americas. By 10,500 years ago, humans of northeast Asian ancestry populated all of the Americas. They made stone tools and hunted mammals.



Stone Age artifacts like the point shown here have been found throughout the Americas. This point type is attributed to the Clovis group, named for the New Mexico town near which it was first discovered in 1932.



Evidence about where the first Americans came from: A "spatulate" tooth, found among Asian peoples, is also found among all original inhabitants of the Americas.

Long before 1776,
Mexico was a land of high cultures...



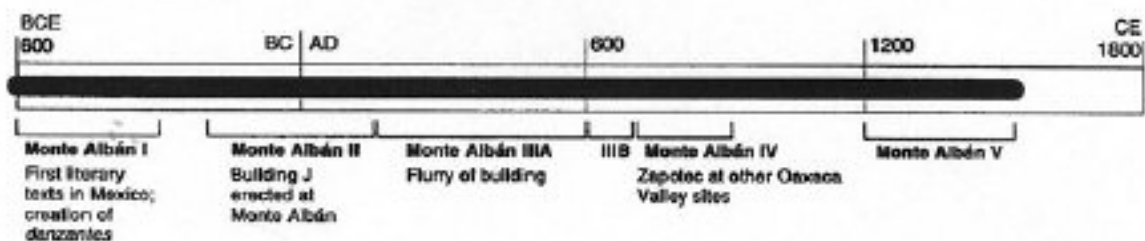
Mucho antes de 1776,
México era un país de cultura avanzada...



The Zapotec Culture in Oaxaca c. 600 BCE–1800 CE

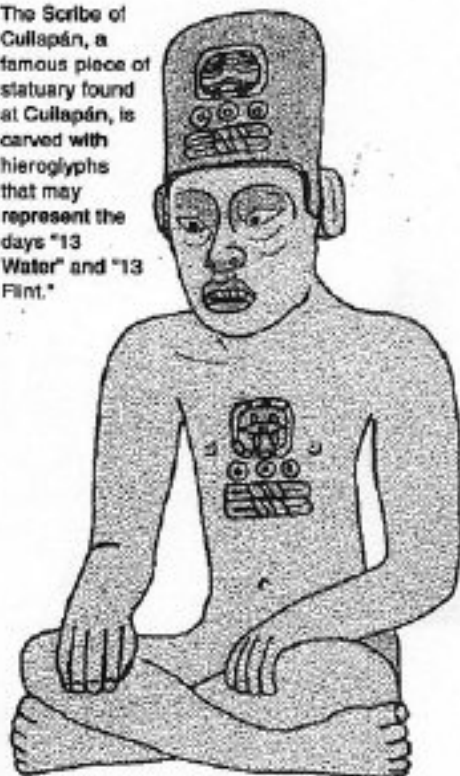


In Mexico's Oaxaca Valley, the Zapotecs built what may be the first city in the Americas, Monte Albán. The Zapotecs authored the first true literary texts in Mesoamerica. Carved on stone slabs, some of these texts included figures called *danzantes*, or dancers, shown below.



Monte Albán is famous today for its *danzantes*, some 150 bas-reliefs on stone slabs that portray men who seem to be dancing, but most likely are not. Archaeologists believe these slabs show the corpses of slain enemies of the Zapotecs.

The Scribe of Cuicatlán, a famous piece of statuary found at Cuicatlán, is carved with hieroglyphs that may represent the days "13 Water" and "13 Flint."



The Olmec Civilization of Mesoamerica



In a rain-drenched area along Mexico's gulf coast, the Olmecs built Mesoamerica's first great civilization. We know little about them, where they came from or even what language they spoke.

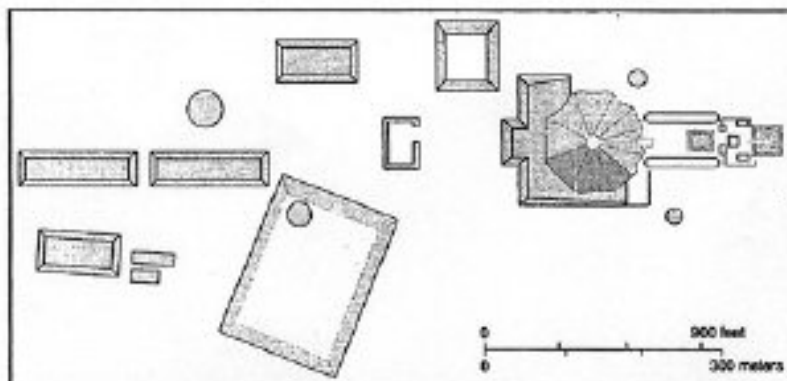
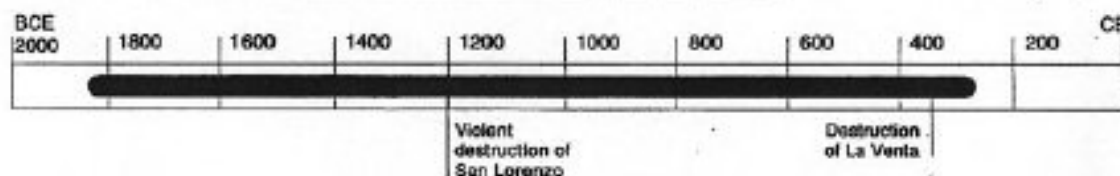
Today, archaeologists find evidence of Olmec settlements (possibly trading posts) at key crossroads from central Mexico to El Salvador, but their main settlements were along the gulf coast. By about 1800 BCE, the Olmec settlement

at San Lorenzo had become a major community populated by maize farmers and by a hereditary elite class with judicial, military, and religious powers.

San Lorenzo was destroyed about 1200 BCE, probably by an invasion or a revolution. In the destruction, monuments were smashed and defaced, then buried in a ritual fashion. The Olmec civilization survived in a powerful religious center at La Venta until it, like San Lorenzo, was overthrown and destroyed.



The two most important Olmec cities known to archaeologists are Tres Zapotes (founded in about 300 BCE) and La Venta (which flourished from 800–450 BCE).



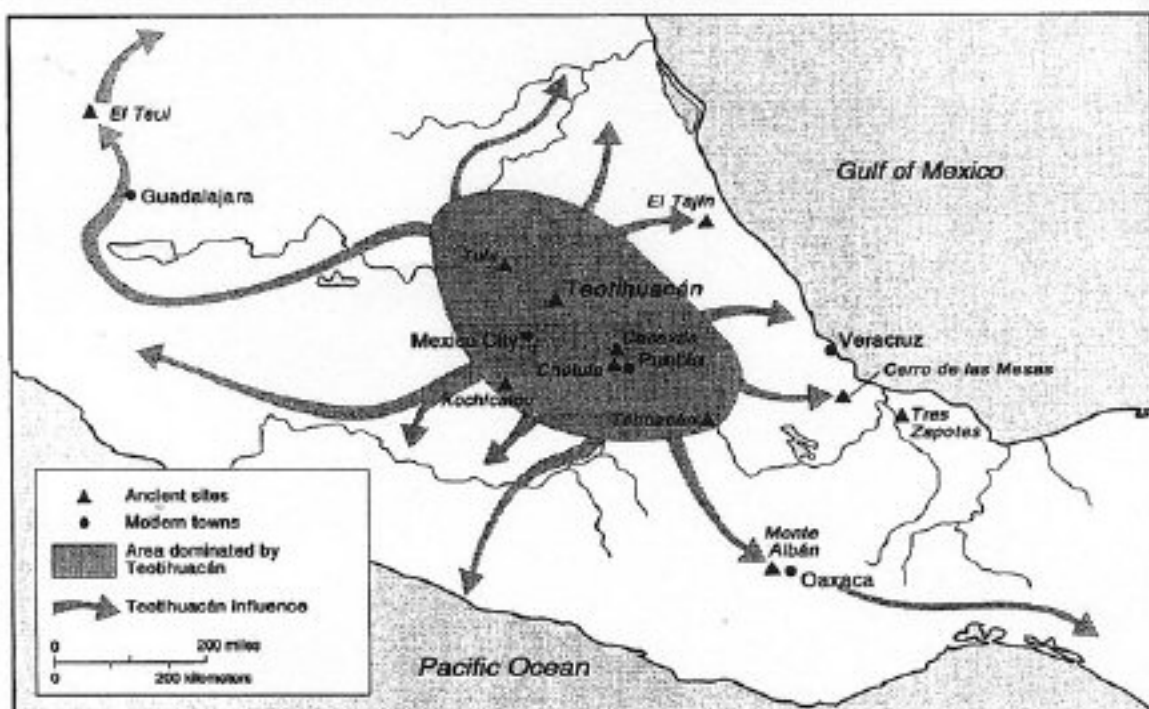
In the ceremonial cluster at La Venta, platforms and mounds were painted in red, yellow, and purple, while differently hued clays were used for the floors. The volcano-shaped pyramid is 100 ft. high. Some believe that La Venta was not a community but purely a religious center, though as many as 18,000 people may have lived there.

Teotihuacán: The Unknown People of Mesoamerica

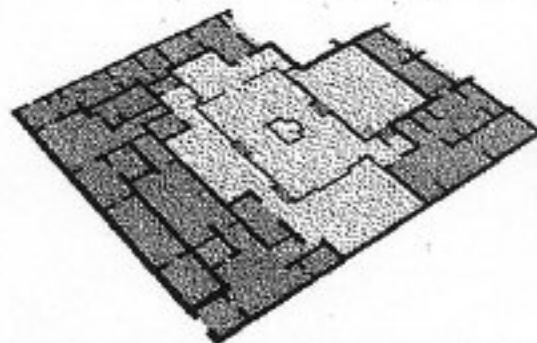
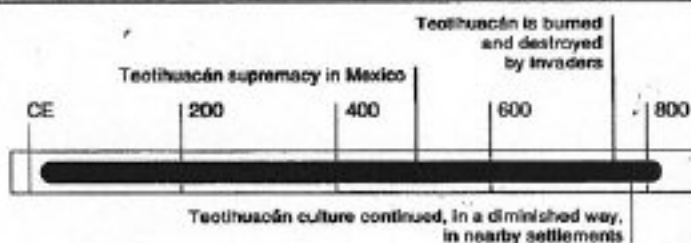


The pyramids that sit atop a high basin north of Mexico City have been a mystery for many centuries. Even today, almost nothing is known of the people who built them or of their culture, which we call Teotihuacán. Yet that

culture had enormous influence in its time. Today, archaeologists find traces of Teotihuacán art and architecture in sites throughout Mesoamerica, where it is believed the people of Teotihuacán traded, and where their distinctive way of building was adopted.



Unlike the art of other Mesoamerican cultures, that of Teotihuacán does not portray specific rulers or seek to glorify them. This ceremonial vessel depicts a seated man.

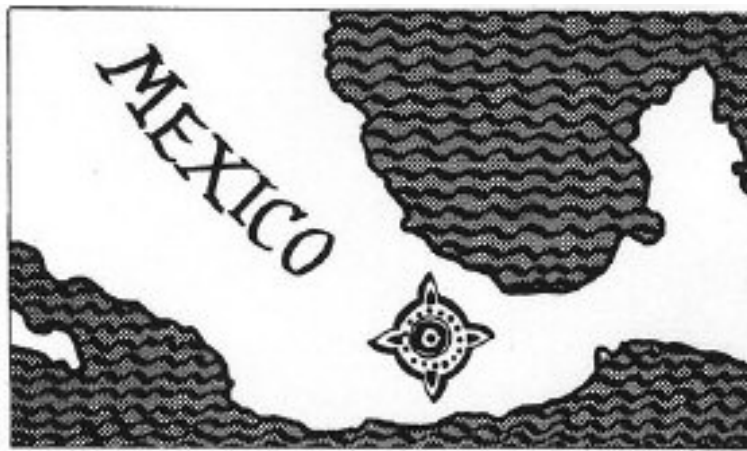


Inhabitants of the city of Teotihuacán lived in elaborate apartment compounds—so spacious that they were long thought to be small palaces. No other culture in ancient Mesoamerica is known to have invested so much in housing.

The idea of private property did not exist;
the land with all its riches belonged to the people



El concepto de la propiedad privada no existía;
la tierra con toda su riqueza pertenecía al pueblo



**THEN CAME THE SPANIARD
TO GRAB GOLD AND
ENSLAVE THE INDIANS**

**Vino el español para robar oro
y hacer esclavos a los indígenas**





They conquered with
violence and disease...

Conquistaron con
armas y enfermedades...



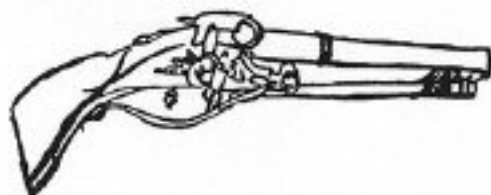
EL NACIMIENTO DEL MESTIZO

La conquista española
creó un pueblo nuevo, -
los hijos de la mujer indígena
y del español, quienes después
también se mezclaron con esclavos
africanos que trajo España.
El mestizo. La Raza.
Unos nos llamaron "la raza cósmica"
porque mezclamos a todas las llamadas
razas del planeta,
la blanca, la amarilla-roja y la negra,
para crear una gente nueva
llamada Raza de Bronce.
Gente nacida de un acto de destrucción
Gente nacida de una violación
Un pueblo nuevo de América nacido
para rebelarse.

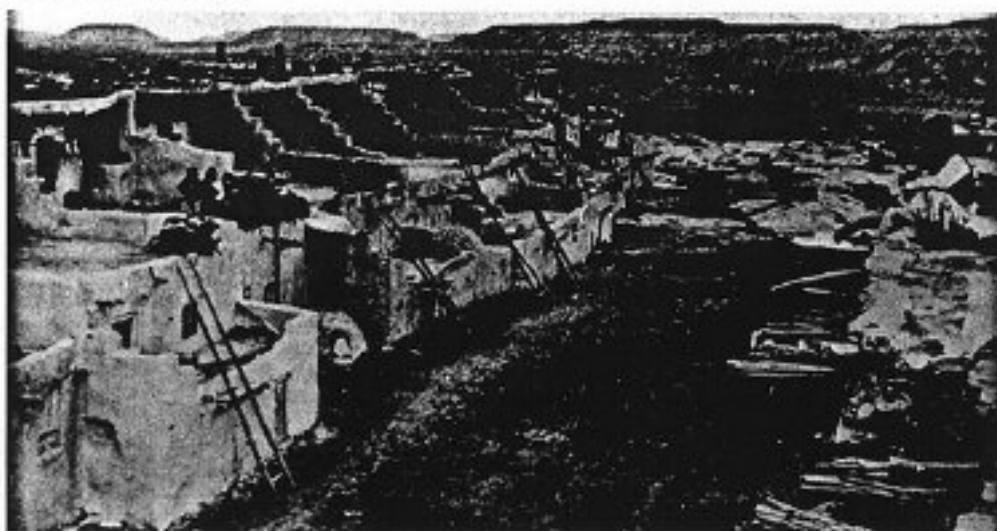


BIRTH OF THE MESTIZO

The Spanish Conquest
also brought a new people
into being -
children of the india woman
and the Spaniard -
later, also mixed with
African slaves brought by Spain.
El mestizo. La raza.
Some called us
"the cosmic people"
because we mixed
all the so-called races
of this planet,
white, yellow-red and black,
to make a new people called Brown.
A people born
from an act of destruction
A people born
from an act of rape
A new people of America
born to revolt.



Acoma Pueblo, N.M.



Spain sent explorers to what is now New Mexico, looking for more gold. The Native Americans accepted them or were killed by them, as at Acoma Pueblo. Again it was a time of broken spears. Now Spain had a new colony.

España mandó exploradores al territorio que ahora es Nuevo México, en busca de más oro. Los indios los aceptaron, o fueron muertos por ellos, como en el pueblo Acoma. Otra vez fue un tiempo de lanzas rotas. España tenía una colonia nueva.





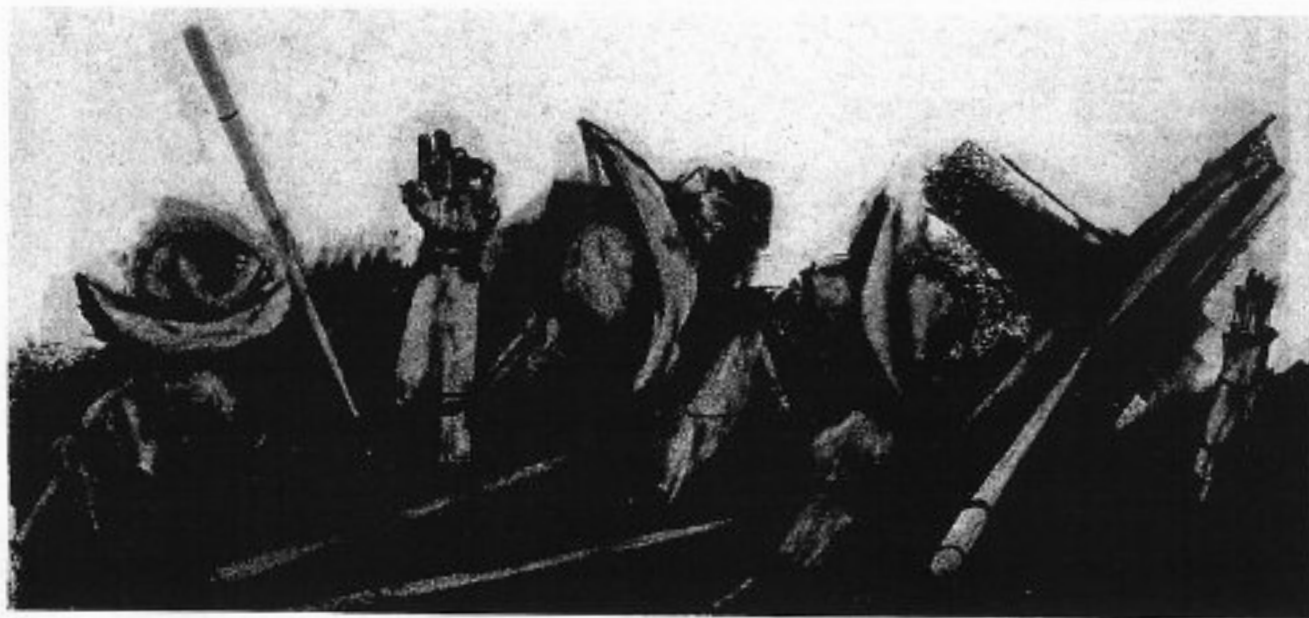
1680 ¡REBELION! Indians Revolt, with Mestizo Support

On August 10, 1680, Pueblo Indians all over the Spanish colony of Nuevo México rose in revolt. Their leader was Popé, a doctor, whom the Spaniards described as "a whirlwind." The revolt had been planned for 12 years if not more. Indian runners went to each pueblo carrying a cord with knots that showed the date for revolt. When that day came, the Pueblo people quickly drove out the Spaniards—to El Paso—and burned Santa Fé. They were supported by poor mestizo workers in the barrio of Analco, who also hated their masters.

Twelve years later, Spain returned with cannons and sweet talk of peace. The colony was restored. Spain extended its rule in Nuevo México, California, etc.

El 10 de agosto de 1680, los indios Pueblo se alzaron en rebelión por toda la colonia española de Nuevo México. El líder fue Popé, un doctor, a quien los españoles llamaban "remolino de viento". La rebelión había sido planeada por doce años o más. Mensajeros indios iban a cada pueblo llevando un cordón con nudos que significaban la fecha de la rebelión. Cuando el día llegó, la gente Pueblo rápidamente empujó a los españoles hasta El Paso, y quemaron Santa Fé. Tuvieron el apoyo de los trabajadores mestizos pobres de Analco, que también odiaban a sus amos españoles.

Doce años después, España regresó con sus cañones y palabras dulces de paz. La colonia fue restaurada.





1830 - 1910

Conquest and Colonización

Mexico's long war of independence from Spain left a new nation that was exhausted, weak and backward. The rulers of the United States, who had had their eyes on Mexico since the time of Jefferson, now saw their chance. They had already gobbled up huge areas of land in addition to the 'Thirteen Colonies.' They got the Midwest from France in 1803 (the Louisiana Purchase) and they took Florida by force from Spain in 1819. Soon they would take Oregon from England.

The U.S. was a rising capitalist nation while European empires were declining. The Yankees said it was their "Manifest Destiny" to expand.

We will now see the real forces behind this so-called 'manifest destiny.' We will see how half of Mexico was ripped off by trickery and violence. We will see how Chicanos became a colonized people. In the process of being colonized, we were robbed of land and other resources. We were murdered and lynched, like Josefa in Downieville, California on July 4, 1851. But we resisted, with our lives. And we endured.

La larga guerra de independencia de México contra España dejó cansada, débil y atrasada a la nueva nación. Los gobernantes de los E.U. que desde los tiempos de Jefferson habían fijado sus ojos codiciosos en México, ahora vieron su oportunidad. Ya se habían posesionado de inmensas cantidades de tierra, además de las tierras que les habían quitado a los indios. En 1803 compraron de Francia el medio oeste ("Louisiana Purchase") y despojaron a España de la Florida por fuerza en 1819. Pronto ocuparon Oregon, que estaba en manos de Inglaterra.

Los E.U. eran un poder capitalista creciente, mientras que los poderes europeos estaban debilitándose. Los yanquis decían que era su "destino manifiesto" que extendieran sus territorios. Ahora vamos a ver las verdaderas fuerzas detrás de lo que llamaban "destino manifiesto". Ahora veremos cómo los chicanos se convirtieron a un pueblo colonizado. En el proceso de colonizar nos robaron nuestra tierra y otros recursos. Fuimos muertos, y linchados, como Josefa, en Downieville, California, el 4 de julio de 1851. Pero nos aguantamos y resistimos.

