



Art of Work

Spinning Yarns, Weaving Tales

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Educator Resources and Lesson Plans

Fall 2016

Lake Titicaca Embroidery, unknown, Peru



Lake Titicaca is one of the world's highest altitude navigable lakes. The lake borders Peru and Bolivia. Lake Titicaca is, according to legend, the birthplace of the Incan civilization. The people who live in the region of Lake Titicaca are farmers, herders, fishers, and artisans. One group, the Uros, initially built floating islands as a defense against other tribal groups. These islands are made from Totora reeds. Today, Uros communities still live on floating islands and tourism is a major portion of their economy. The increase in visitors has caused weavers to incorporate designs to sell to tourists.

From the Lake Titicaca Embroidery, we get a sense of traditional forms of work and celebration. We see herders with alpacas, farmers plowing and planting a field, a fisher, and an embroiderer or weaver. We also see that the work is shared with family, with tasks for both men and women. Additionally, we see a celebration. The embroidery also provides evidence of environmental elements: high peaked mountains, farmland, and a lake or river.

Peru
Lake Titicaca (Titiqaqa) embroidery
Textile
Late 19th / early 20th century
ED2006.2.184

Sarah Nisoneer, Santaquin 1894, unknown, Utah



In 1894, The Enabling Act was approved, allowing Utah to form a constitution and state government and join the union of the original states. It would take Utah nearly two years to gain statehood on January 4, 1896. Santaquin, Utah was settled at the junction of Utah and Juab valleys in 1851, with a fort build about 1855. Farming was prevalent and some industries began (sawmill, flour and molasses mills, even a silk mill) to support the needs of the community. The Santaquin History notes "Horse and buggy were the only means of transportation available until 1875, at which time the Utah Southern Railroad completed a line to Santaquin."

unknown Utah artist
Sarah Nisoneer, Santaquin
Photograph
1894
ED2006.2.4

Spinning Yarns, Weaving Tales

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Overview and Objectives

By observing an embroidered cloth from Peru and a historical photograph from Santaquin, Utah, students will consider cultural and traditional influences on daily routines. Students will design on paper a weaving about either the work they want to do in their future, or the work of a family member, or how their family works together to complete a task or celebration. Students will use the information gained from these observations and their design to write an artist statement about their design.

Intended Audiences/Grade Levels This lesson can be adapted for several grade levels. The objectives listed are with Sixth Grade content in mind.

State Core Links (see State Core Links at the end of this lesson plan)

Duration Two sessions, approximately 45 minutes each

First session is used to observe and discuss artworks, and to begin the weaving design work. In the second session, students complete the design, draft and finalize their artist statements, and begin a written story for the design work.

Materials

1. *Lake Titicaca Embroidery*, unknown Peru, ED2006.2.184 (or reproduction)
2. *Sarah Nisoneer, Santaquin, 1894*, unknown Utah, ED2006.2.4 (or reproduction)
3. Paper
4. Pencils, Markers, Colored Pencils

Vocabulary/Key Terms

artist statement text

spinning wheel text

loom text

weaving text

Activity

Session 1: Showing artworks and discussion: Begin by displaying the *Lake Titicaca Embroidery*. Ask questions to prompt discussion. Ask a student to write their classmates comments on the board. Provide background information as needed.

Suggested questions:

- What can we learn about a group of people and their culture by looking at artwork?
- What images are represented in the tapestry?
- What can we learn about the people of Peru?
- Does the tapestry provide any clues about the environment of Peru?
- What does the artist of the embroidery value, what do they want us to see?
- What is the story that the artist is telling?

Next, display the photograph of *Sarah Nisoneer*. Ask questions to prompt discussion and ask another student to write classmates answers. Provide background information as needed.

Suggested questions:

- What can we learn by looking at the photograph of *Sarah Nisoneer, Santaquin, 1894*?
- What is the machine that appears beside her in the photograph?
- What does the person in the photograph value? How do we know?
- What does the photographer value?
- What is the story the photographer is telling?

Compare the two pieces by asking students to consider their statements about the two artworks. Ask students to discuss in pairs or small groups before bringing them back into the whole group. You may need to guide the discussion to find the commonalities. Lead with questions, if needed.

Suggested questions:

- How are our lists of ideas similar about these two works?
- How are they different?
- How can these two artworks help us define what we value in work and celebration?
- What is the combined story of these works?

Activity: Designing a Weaving

Provide students with paper for their design work. Ask them to consider the work they want to do in their future, or the work of a family member or how their family works together to complete a task or celebration. Ask students to first do a minimal sketch to think through their ideas; then transfer their main ideas to a final copy for sharing with their classmates.

Session 2: Complete final weaving designs: Provide time to complete final copies of weaving designs. Ask students to decide how best to describe their design in words. Define an artist statement as a brief written description to support the viewer in understanding the artist's intent. Allow them to work with a partner to share their ideas. Then, provide time for them to write and refine their statement. Collect final artist statements to display with the designs.

Next, encourage students to turn their design and artist statement into a narrative and write the story of the work involved. Depending on the grade level, give appropriate parameters for the written story. Invite students to orally share their stories.

Extension: Wool hand-spinning kits are available from Utah Agriculture in the Classroom (utah.agintheclassroom.org). Have students try spinning wool to see how the process works. The second video ties the concept back to the Peruvian Embroidery. The following videos provide additional information.

Wool Spinning Tutorial (time: 2:20) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwnxldIMSYo>

Weaving in the Peruvian Andes (time: 4:46) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9bl35sndQvE>

Method(s) for Assessment

Final designs and artist statements show evidence of valued work or combined work to create a celebration.

State Core Links

USBE Fine Arts

Standard 6.V.R.1: Identify and interpret works of art or design that reveal how people live around the world and what they value.

Standard 6.V.R.2: Compare one's own interpretation of a work of art with the interpretation of others.

Standard 6.V.CO.2: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding by analyzing how art reflects changing times, traditions, resources, and cultural uses.

USBE English Language Arts

Standard 6.W.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

Standard 6.W.3: Write a multi-paragraph narrative text to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

Sources

Lake Titicaca Embroidery

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- Weaving Messages Today: Three Decades of Belts in Taquile Island, Peru (1976-2006), Elayne Zorn, University of Central Florida, <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/tsaconf/344>
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- The Deceptive Simplicity of Peruvian Textiles, Lisa Bosley, August 19, 2014, <https://shop.nationalgeographic.com/blog/peruviantextiles>
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- www.unesco.org

Sarah Nisoneer, Santaquin, 1894

- Enabling Act, July 16, 1894, <http://archives.utah.gov/research/exhibits/Statehood/1894text.htm>
- Santaquin History, www.santaquin.org/history