

STUDENT MATERIALS



First_Nations_Art_Objects_UBC-2009. Photo by Leoboudv for Wikimedia. Released under CC-BY-SA-3.0

CLB
5

Aboriginal Art

In this unit, you will learn about different types of traditional and contemporary art made by Aboriginal artists in BC. You will learn about some of the designs used by Aboriginal artists and where these designs have come from. You will also discover the important role that art plays in Aboriginal cultures.

Reflect

Thinking critically

Answer the questions. Then share your answers with a partner.

1. What is art? Put a check beside all of the items that you think can be art.

_____ a sculpture

_____ a house

_____ jewellery

_____ clothes

_____ a painting

_____ a hat

_____ a photograph

_____ a boat

_____ a handbag

_____ a song

_____ a blanket

_____ a dish

_____ a movie

_____ a box

_____ a musical instrument

_____ a TV show

_____ shoes



Porcelain. Photo by Mononc' Paul for Flickr. Released under CC-by-2.0



Classical guitar. Photo by Benny Lin for Flickr. Released under CC-by-2.0



Business card display box. Photo by Lenore Edman for Flickr. Released under CC-by-2.0

2. Finish this sentence. Art is important because...

3. What types of art do Aboriginal artists in BC make?

4. What types of materials do they use?

Imagine

Before you listen – vocabulary

Adjectives are often used to describe nouns. Many different adjectives can be used to describe the same noun. For example, we can say “a soft blanket” or “a comfortable blanket.” However, some adjectives and nouns don’t match. For example, it sounds strange to say “a soft dish” or “a curly dish.” Look at the lists below and match the adjectives with the nouns. How many combinations can you make?

Adjectives

- beautiful
- curly
- flat
- flexible
- hard
- heavy
- huge
- round
- soft
- strong
- warm
- wide

Nouns

- blankets
- books
- carpet
- diapers
- dishes
- furniture
- hat
- jewelry
- rope
- sofa
- utensils
- umbrella

Remember when we use 2-3 adjectives to describe a noun, we need to be careful about the order of the adjectives. Usually, but not always, we put adjectives in this order:

Opinion	Size, Length, Height	Age	Colour	Origin	Material	Purpose	NOUN
beautiful	tall	young		Canadian			woman
cute		new	red		rubber	rain	boots

Listen

You are going to hear a short description of something. Listen carefully and put a check beside all of the words in the lists above that you hear. When you are finished, share your answers with a partner.



What is it?: <http://youtu.be/WDBQ3qokxAk>

Now, look at all of the words that you put a check beside. All of the adjectives describe the qualities of the thing being described. All of the nouns are things that can be made from it. Can you guess what it is? Write your guesses below.



Thuja plicata, commonly called western or Pacific red cedar.
Photo by abdallahh for Wikimedia. Released under CC-by-2.0

Talk about it

Discuss the following questions with a partner.

1. Look at the picture of the red cedar. Write the names of the different parts of the tree next to the picture.
2. What part of the cedar tree might be warm, soft and comfortable?
3. How can 100 people sit in a cedar tree at the same time?
4. How do you think people can make the following items from a cedar tree?
 - a. clothes
 - b. diapers
 - c. handbags
 - d. jewelry
5. Do you know of any other ways that BC's Aboriginal peoples used cedar trees?

Read and share

Read the article and answer the questions.

WEAVING CEDAR - PARTNER A

So how do people make clothes, blankets, handbags and jewelry from a cedar tree? They use the inner bark and roots of the tree. The inner bark of cedar trees is soft and flexible. Aboriginal weavers use long narrow strips of inner bark to make many items. In traditional times, they wove these strips of bark together to make essential items for daily life such as blankets, clothes, hats and baskets for storing household items and cooking. Today, Aboriginal weavers continue to show their amazing skill with the beautiful baskets, hats, bracelets and fashionable handbags that they create.



Squamish basket maker Sophie Frank in 1903. Photographer- T.W. Fripp. Source- Vancouver Public Library, VPL 9414.

There are many different ways to weave cedar bark. These different techniques make different patterns. Therefore, baskets, blankets and other items made by different weavers from different Aboriginal cultures often have different patterns and styles. In traditional times, particular families owned certain weaving designs and styles, so people often knew which family made a specific basket or blanket from the way it looked. A mother or grandmother taught these designs to her daughter or granddaughter. In this way, the skill of weaving and the weaving styles and designs were passed down from one generation to the next.¹

Because so many different things can be made from the cedar tree, many Aboriginal communities consider it to be a sacred part of the natural world.

Therefore, when a weaver goes to the forest to get cedar bark to make a hat or basket or other item, she will be careful to only take what she needs and not harm the tree. She will also respectfully say a prayer and acknowledge the gift that the tree is giving.

Aboriginal weavers on the west coast of BC have also used other materials such as wool, mountain goat hair and spruce tree roots for weaving. Today, some Aboriginal artists in BC have become very well-known for their expert weaving skills and the many beautiful works of art that they weave.



Photo by Shannon Halliday. Courtesy of the Province of BC. Released under CC BY-NC-ND 4.0.

¹ Jones, M. (2005). Coast Salish: The beauty of everyday things. In *Listening to our ancestors: The art of Native life along the North Pacific Coast*. Washington, DC: The National Geographic Society.

Understand main ideas

Write a letter on each line to match the paragraph with its main idea.

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. _____ paragraph 1 | a. Cedar trees are very important and special to many Aboriginal cultures. |
| 2. _____ paragraph 2 | b. There are many different styles and patterns of woven cedar bark items. |
| 3. _____ paragraph 3 | c. Aboriginal weavers also use other materials for weaving. |
| 4. _____ paragraph 4 | d. Talented Aboriginal weavers make many things from the cedar tree |

Understand details

Write a short answer for each question.

1. What parts of the cedar tree are used for weaving?
2. What are some things that can be woven from cedar bark?
3. Why are there many different styles of woven baskets, blankets, hats and other items?
4. What do weavers do before taking the cedar bark? Why?

Share your information

Now use your answers to the questions above to tell your partner about your reading. You can also show the pictures from the reading when you are explaining your information.

Did you know...

Some Aboriginal weavers are able to make baskets that are water-tight. This means that these baskets can be filled with water. In the past, these types of baskets were used like pots for boiling food by placing water and hot rocks in them.



Skwxwú7mesh kex sitn (coiled cedar root carrying basket) attributed to Melina Moody, Shíshálh (Sechelt) married into Skwxwú7mesh. North Vancouver Museum & Archives. NVMA 1986.019.0165.

Read and share

Read the article and answer the questions.

CARVING CEDAR - PARTNER B

So how can 100 people sit in a cedar tree at the same time? A master carver carves the tree into a huge canoe. In fact, cedar trees are used for carving many different items. Aboriginal carvers choose the wood of the cedar tree for carving because it is softer and straighter than other types of wood. Yellow Cedar is softer than Red Cedar, so it is often used to make smaller items such as ceremonial masks. Red Cedar is often used to make large items such as canoes and totem poles. It takes many years to become a master carver or a master canoe builder, and it is a skill that is often passed down from one generation to another. Today, some Aboriginal artists in BC have become very well-known for their expert carving skills and the exquisitely carved items that they create.



Susan Point, Musqueam, Flight Spindle Whorl (1995)- Courtesy of Vancouver International Airport.

In traditional times, Aboriginal carvers made a variety of objects for daily life such as houses, dishes, canoes, boxes and spindle whorls from the wood of cedar trees. Many Aboriginal cultures on the west coast made and used large and small canoes for travelling and fishing. They also made different sized boxes for storing different household items and for cooking. Sometimes the outside of these boxes were carved and painted if they held special ceremonial items such as blankets or masks. The spindle whorl was another important item that was carved from cedar and other types of wood. It is a circular piece of wood with a hole in the middle, which was traditionally used to spin wool into yarn. The Coast Salish peoples, who are known to be talented weavers, have carved many beautifully designed spindle whorls. Some Aboriginal master carvers still make cedar canoes, boxes and spindle whorls today.

Along with everyday items such as canoes, boxes and spindle whorls, ceremonial items such as masks, drums, feast dishes and rattles are also carved from cedar. These items are used during special occasions such as potlatches when Aboriginal families and communities gather to celebrate or recognize an important event such as a wedding, the birth of a child, or the death of a community member.

Because so many things can be made from cedar and it is such an important part of West Coast Aboriginal cultures, many Aboriginal communities consider it to be sacred. Therefore, before a carver cuts down a cedar tree to make a canoe, boxes or other items, he will respectfully say a prayer and acknowledge that the tree is a great gift from the natural world.

Understand main ideas

Write a letter on each line to match the paragraph with its main idea.

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. _____ paragraph 1 | a. Ceremonial items are carved from cedar. |
| 2. _____ paragraph 2 | b. The wood of the cedar tree is good for carving. |
| 3. _____ paragraph 3 | c. Cedar trees are very important and special to many Aboriginal cultures. |
| 4. _____ paragraph 4 | d. Many everyday items can be made from the cedar tree. |

Understand details

Write a short answer for each question.

1. Why is the wood of a cedar tree good for carving?
2. What are some things that can be made from the wood of a cedar tree?
3. Why are spindle whorls important to Coast Salish people?
4. What do carvers do before they cut down a tree? Why?

Share your information

Now use your answers to the questions above to tell your partner about your reading. You can also show the pictures from the reading when you are explaining your information.

Did you know...

Many cultures make boxes from wood, but there is something unique about the cedar boxes made by BC's Aboriginal carvers. Do you know what it is? The sides of these boxes are made from only one piece of wood instead of four separate pieces. This long piece of wood is carefully carved, steamed and then bent to make the four sides of the box. That is why these boxes are called bentwood boxes.



Three-Quarter View - Orca and Thunderbird Bentwood Box - Bruce Alfred. Photo by A.Davey for Flickr. Released under CC-by-2.0

Building Vocabulary

When we learn a new word, it is helpful to also learn the different parts of speech. Use your dictionary to find the different parts of speech of the following words and write them in the correct column.

Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
carver			-----
	-----	ceremonial	
	create		
		different	
painting			-----
sculpture			-----
	-----		traditionally
	weave		-----

Using new vocabulary

Now complete each sentence with the correct word from the table above. Be sure to use the correct part of speech.

1. Traditional _____ items such as masks, drums and blankets from long ago show that art has been an important part of Aboriginal society for a long time.
2. Many young Aboriginal artists are interested in learning the _____ art styles that were used in the past.
3. _____ from different Aboriginal cultures often use different techniques to create baskets and blankets.
4. Some artists _____ their totem poles and house posts with bright colours, while others leave the _____ pole as it is.

Did you know...

Not all Aboriginal cultures in BC weave and carve cedar. In fact, the Yellow Cedar and Red Cedar are only found on the northwest coast of North America. Therefore, traditionally, only Aboriginal cultures from the west coast carved and weaved cedar bark items.

Consider



(left) Peggy Shannon, Haida Gwaii First Nation, an active member of the Elders Program at VAFC. Photo by Laura Forster.

(right) Totem pole carved by Nisga'a artist Robert Tait, from northern BC. The totem pole is located at Native Education College, Vancouver.

Before you listen

Work in a small group. Discuss the following questions.

- Look at the map of First Nations people in BC and answer the questions.
 - How many Aboriginal culture groups are included on the map?
 - What part of BC are the Coast Salish people from?
 - What part of BC are the Haida from?
 - What part of BC are the Gitksan from?
 - Which Nation is the host of the city that you live in now?
- Which animals do you often see on Aboriginal art from BC? Circle your answers.

• beaver	• bear	• eagle
• hummingbird	• raven	• orca
• salmon	• frog	• sea otter
- What other designs or figures are sometimes used?
- Why do you think Aboriginal artists include these animals and other designs in their artwork?

Listen

Listen and check whether your answers to questions 2, 3 & 4 are correct. Share your information with your group.



Designs in Aboriginal Art: <http://youtu.be/EqMV6K5zppU>

Comprehension

Listen again. Circle T for true. Circle F for false.

Then rewrite any false statements to make them true.

1. T / F Many Aboriginal people feel a close connection to their traditional land.

2. T / F Images of dogs are often seen on Coast Salish art.

3. T / F Aboriginal artists use animal figures in their art because they worship animals.

4. T / F All images on Aboriginal art are crests.

5. T / F Some pieces of Aboriginal art refer to community stories such as legends and myths

Vocabulary

Write a letter on the line to match each word to its definition.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. _____ supernatural being | a. an image that identifies a person or family |
| 2. _____ survive | b. to stay alive |
| 3. _____ rely on | c. someone who is related to another person who lived long ago; a person's grandson or granddaughter |
| 4. _____ crest | d. a family member that lived a long time ago |
| 5. _____ ancestor | e. an animal or person who has powers or abilities that cannot be explained by science or the laws of nature |
| 6. _____ descendant | f. to need someone/something for support; to depend on someone/something |

Think, write and share

Write short answers to the questions below. Then share your answers with a partner from a different country.

1. What types of designs are used by artists in your culture?
2. Why are these particular designs used?
3. Are there many stories that include supernatural creatures in your culture? If so, describe one of these creatures.



Bill Reid, Haida, of Haida Gwaii- The Jade Canoe (1994).
Courtesy of Vancouver International Airport.

The Facts

Discuss

DIFFERENT STYLES OF ABORIGINAL ART



Each First Nation on the west coast of BC has its own unique style of traditional art. For example, in traditional Coast Salish art there are 3 main shapes: a circle/oval, a crescent, and a trigon. A trigon is a shape with 3 sides. Often the use of these shapes creates a feeling of movement, or a ripple effect, in the artwork. A ripple effect is what happens when a person drops a small rock into water. The rock produces circles in the water. Work with a partner. Try to find these 3 shapes in the Salish artwork below.



Storm Sewer design by Susan Point and Kelly Cannell. Courtesy of the City of Vancouver.



Wade Baker, Squamish, Salish North Star in Maple Leaf (2010). Courtesy of the City of Vancouver.

Now look at these images of artwork from other Aboriginal cultures. What are some design features (shapes, colours, etc.) that are used by these cultures?



Tony Hunt, Kwakwaka'wakw, Thunderbird House Post at Brockton Point (1998). Courtesy of the City of Vancouver.



Joe David, Nuu-Chah-Nulth, Welcome Figures (1986). Courtesy of Vancouver International Airport.

Before you read

Discuss the following questions in a small group.

1. How often do you write emails in English?
2. Who do you write emails to?
3. What kinds of things do you write about?

Read

Read the email and answer the questions.

An update from Canada!

To: Sue Anderson
Subject: An update from Canada!
From: Cathy
Signature: None

Hi, Sue,

How are you doing? How is your family? We are all good here. I have been busy with work and school, and the kids are growing like weeds. You won't believe how tall they are now.

So, remember I told you that my class was going to start learning about B.C.'s Aboriginal people? Well, we started that topic last week, and so far it's been pretty interesting! Right now, we are learning about Aboriginal art. I have been really surprised to learn that there are so many different kinds and different styles of Aboriginal art in B.C. This is because there are over 30 different Aboriginal cultures in B.C.

Do you remember when you were here visiting, and we went to see the totem poles in Stanley Park? Remember we were trying to figure out what they were for and why there were animals on them. Well, guess what? I know the answers now! Actually, there are many different types of totem poles. Some are memorial poles that are made to honour a powerful or important person who has passed away. Other poles are made to identify and celebrate a powerful and wealthy family. In the past, these types of poles were put in front of the family's house so that everyone in the community knew who lived there. There are also carved house posts and welcome poles. Welcome poles look like human figures with their arms out. The animal and human figures that are on the totem poles are crests, or designs, that belong to particular families. These crests refer to family stories and histories.

Do you remember how different the poles looked? Well, I learned that this is because these poles were made by Aboriginal artists from different cultures, and each culture has its own unique style. For example, the Kwakwaka'wakw people use a lot of colour and large figures on their totem poles, but the Gitksan poles have less colour and smaller figures. I also learned that not all Aboriginal cultures in B.C. make totem poles. In fact, my teacher told us that traditionally the Aboriginal peoples who are from this area, the Coast Salish, didn't make them. This means most of the totem poles that are in Stanley Park were carved by Aboriginal artists from Vancouver Island, Haida Gwaii and Northern BC.

Well, I guess I should get back to my homework now. I'll write again soon and tell you more about Aboriginal cultures. When you have time, send me an email to let me know how you are doing. I miss you tons!

Take care,
Cathy

Comprehension

Write a short answer for each question. Then share your answers with a partner.

1. Is the tone of this message formal or informal? Underline the clues in the message that help you decide?

2. What is the relationship between the sender and the recipient of this email message? Are they friends, family, co-workers? How do you know?

3. What are 3 surprising facts the writer has learned in her class?

4. Write a letter on the line to match the totem pole and its purpose.

1. _____ welcome pole	a. These poles are used by some cultures to remember and honour a person who has died.
2. _____ mortuary pole	b. These poles were used by some cultures to show the wealth and power of a particular family.
3. _____ house post	c. These poles are used by some cultures to tell or remind visitors whose land they are visiting.
4. _____ house front pole	d. These poles were used to hold up the roof of a large house. The carvings were seen on the inside of the house.

Did you know...

The phrase “low man on the totem pole” is often used to describe someone who has little power status, but this expression is actually incorrectly used. The lower part of the totem pole is just as important as any other part. In fact, some people say that it is actually a more important part because it is often the master carver, not the apprentice, who carves the lower part of the pole.

Parts of an email

Work with a partner. Fill in the table.

	formal email	informal email
What information should be included in the subject line?		
What are 3 salutations you can use to start your email?		
What information should be included in the first paragraph?		
What are 3 closings you can use to end an email?		

Write and email

Work on your own. Complete the following tasks.

1. Look online for an image of a piece of Aboriginal art or a piece of art from your culture that you like. This can include an image of a totem pole, a basket, a blanket, a painting, a sculpture, a mask, a piece of clothing or jewellery, a piece of pottery, a photograph or any other item that you find interesting.
2. Find out as much information as you can about this piece of art.
 - Who made it?
 - Which First Nation/culture/country is this artist from?
 - When was this artwork made?
 - What is it made from?
 - How big is it?
 - What colours are used?
 - What designs or images are used?
3. Write an email to a classmate or your teacher about this piece of art. In your email include the following:
 - an appropriate subject line
 - an appropriate greeting including the name of the recipient
 - an appropriate first paragraph
 - a description of the artwork using the information you found
 - an explanation of why you like this piece of art
 - the link to the website where your reader can see a picture of this artwork
 - an appropriate closing including your name
4. Send your email. If you have exchanged emails with a classmate, read the email you have received and send a reply.

Stories

AN ART EXHIBITION

Before you read

Discuss the questions with a partner.

1. What is an art exhibition?
2. Describe an art exhibition that you have been to.
3. Where was the art exhibition?
 - in an art gallery
 - at a museum
 - in a community centre
 - at a school/university
 - other
4. How many artists were showing their work?
5. What type of art did you see?
 - paintings
 - sculptures
 - photographs
 - pottery
 - silkscreens/serigraphs
 - drawings
 - weaving
 - carving
 - other
6. Describe a piece of art that you liked.



Art Gallery. Photo by Albuquerque South Broadway Cultural Center for Flickr. Released under CC-by-2.0

A silkscreen or serigraph is a unique type of painting. To make this type of art, the colours of the image are pressed into a piece of paper or cloth one at a time. The artist will put on the first colour and let it dry for 24–48 hours. Then he will add the next colour and let it dry. He will repeat this process until all of the colours of the image are added.

Read

WEST COAST NIGHT

AN EXHIBITION OF ABORIGINAL TALENT

WHEN?

Saturday, March 15th

WHERE?

**All Nations Gallery
243 Cedar Drive**

WHAT TIME?

**Doors open at 5:00pm
Meet the artists 6:00pm
– 9:00pm**

FEATURED ARTISTS**Aaron Nelson Moody**

(Squamish Nation) lives and works on Vancouver's North Shore. He is perhaps best known for carving large wood structures such as panels and doors. He carved 4 large wall boards for the Squamish / Lil'wat Culture Centre in Whistler, British Columbia during the 2010 Olympics. He also carved the entrance doors for the Canada House Pavilion for the 2006 Olympics in Torino, Italy. Recently, he has been making beautiful, carved, bracelets and other jewellery.

Damian George Stalaston

(Tsleil-Waututh Nation) is a talented serigraph artist who lives in the Vancouver area. He has been interested in Haida and Tlingit art since he was a child. However, many of his prints incorporate the circle, crescent and trigon shapes that are characteristic of his Salish roots. He blends different styles and traditional and contemporary elements to create truly unique images.

Debra Sparrow

(Musqueam Nation) was born and raised on the Musqueam Indian Reserve, which is located south of Vancouver. She is a talented artist who creates large, colourful, woven blankets and beautifully designed clothing. She is also an educator who loves to share the rich culture and history of her people with others. Debra's work can be seen in many places around Vancouver including the Vancouver International Airport and the University of British Columbia.

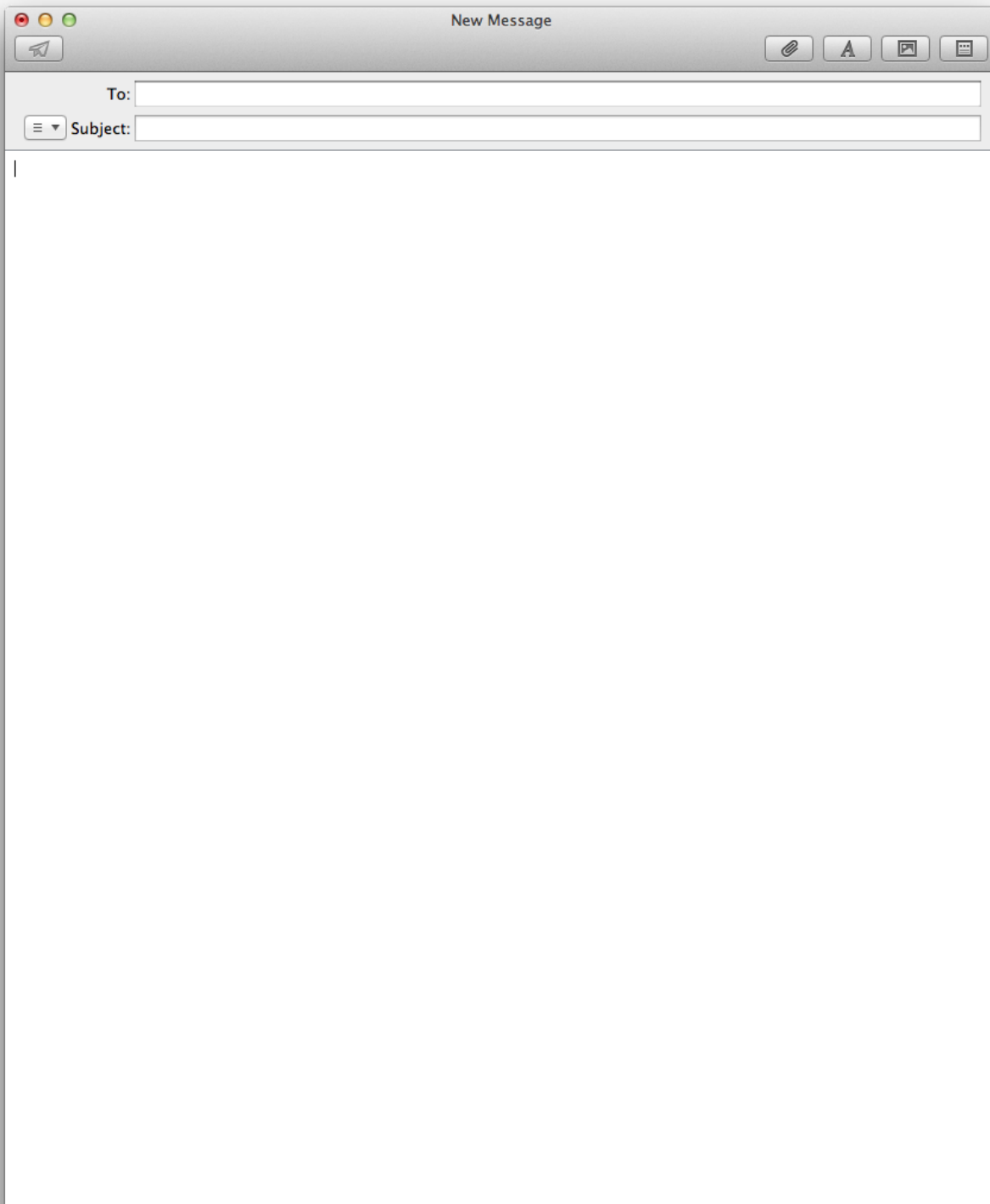
Comprehension

Circle T for true and F for false.

1. T / F Aaron Nelson Moody belongs to the Squamish Nation.
2. T / F He carves wood and silver.
3. T / F He competed in the 2010 Olympics.
4. T / F More people knew about him and his art after the 2010 Olympics.
5. T / F Damian George Stalaston is from the Tsleil-Waututh Nation.
6. T / F He is a talented weaver.
7. T / F He uses only traditional Salish designs in his art.
8. T / F Debra Sparrow is a member of the Musqueam Nation.
9. T / F She is a talented carver.
10. T / F She is proud of her culture.
11. T / F Many people have seen her art work.

Write an invitation

Write a short invitation to a friend inviting him/her to go to the “West Coast Night” art exhibit with you. In your invitation, tell your friend when and where the exhibit is and what your friend will see. Also, give suggestions about how you and your friend can get to the exhibit.



The image shows a screenshot of a 'New Message' window in an email client. The window has a title bar with the text 'New Message' and standard window control buttons (red, yellow, green). Below the title bar is a toolbar with icons for sending (paper plane), attaching (paperclip), bold text (A), inserting a picture (picture icon), and inserting a link (chain icon). The main area of the window is divided into two sections: a 'To:' field and a 'Subject:' field, both with empty text boxes. Below these fields is a large, empty text area for writing the message, with a vertical cursor at the top left.

Create

Host an art exhibition in your classroom

Share what you have learned about Aboriginal art and artists with the other classes in your school by hosting an exhibition in your classroom. Follow these steps.

As a whole class:

1. Choose the Aboriginal artists you will include in your exhibition.
 - Include both traditional and contemporary artists.
 - Choose artists that have different styles, use different materials and create different kinds of art.
2. Choose the date and time you will hold your exhibition.

In pairs or small groups:

3. Choose one of the selected artists to do research for the exhibition.
4. Choose 2–3 artworks by this artist that you like. Find pictures of these artworks in magazines, newspapers or online and print/save them.
5. Write a formal invitation to invite the other classes to your class exhibition.
6. Visit another class and do a short announcement about your exhibition. Hand out the invitations you made to the teacher and/or students of that class.
7. Write a short biography about the artist that you can post next to the pictures of his/her work.
8. Write some speaking notes about the artist and the works that you chose.
9. Use these notes during the exhibition to tell your visitors about your artist and his/her work.

As a whole class:

10. Decide how and where you are going to display, or show, the pictures of the artwork in the classroom. Remember to put the biographies next to the artists' works.
11. After your exhibition, create a class art magazine or blog to record your event. Include the artist biographies and pictures of their artwork in your magazine.

My Perspective

Projects & Assignments

These projects and assignments give you a chance to share your ideas and perspective on this topic.

Journal / Blog

- Write a paragraph about what you have learned about Aboriginal art. Write about the surprising or interesting things that you have learned.
- Write a paragraph describing a piece of Aboriginal art. Include the following information in your paragraph.
 - What type of art is it? (weaving, carving, sculpture, painting, etc.)
 - Describe its size.
 - What is it made from?
 - What colours are on it?
 - What designs are on it?
 - Why do you like it?
- Write a paragraph that describes one style of traditional art in your country. Include the following information in your paragraph.
 - What is this style of art called?
 - What type of art is it?
 - What types of materials are used to create this art?
 - What colours are used?
 - What kind of designs does this art have?
 - Where can people see this type of art?
- Write a paragraph that describes a popular or famous artist from your country. Include the following information in your paragraph.
 - What is this artist's name?
 - Where and when was the artist born?
 - How did the artist learn to be an artist?
 - What type of art does the artist create?



First Nations Art Objects, UBC-2009. Photo by Leoboudv for Wikimedia. Released under CC-BY-SA-3.0



Museum of Anthropology at UBC. Photo by Guilhem Vellut for Flickr. Released under CC-by-2.0



Tsimshian Bentwood Box. Photo by A. Davey for Flickr. Released under CC-by-2.0

Presentation

- Do a short presentation on an Aboriginal artist and his/her art work.
- Do a short presentation on a style of traditional or contemporary artwork from your country.

Sharing & Connecting

Projects & Assignments

These projects and assignments give you a chance to learn more about this topic and/or share what you have learned with others.

Plan a trip to a gallery, museum or cultural centre

The best way to learn about and appreciate art is to see it with your own eyes. Plan a class trip to an art gallery or cultural centre that displays Aboriginal art.

1. Find a gallery or cultural centre in your area that displays Aboriginal art. The Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia website is a good place to start. <http://www.aboriginalbc.com/>
2. If there is a website for the gallery or cultural centre, look for the address and hours of operation. Also, look to see if any tours or workshops are offered.
3. If there isn't a website, call the gallery or cultural centre. Ask about the address, hours of operation and available tours or workshops.
4. Choose a date and time to go to the gallery or cultural centre. Then plan how you will get there. For example, look up the route and departure and arrival times for taking public transit.
5. While you are at the gallery or cultural centre, take notes about what you see. Your teacher may give you a specific assignment to complete.
6. After your visit, write a journal/blog post describing the gallery or cultural centre and a few of the items you saw there. If you did a tour or workshop, make a list of a 3–4 things that you learned.
7. If you did a tour or workshop, write a letter/email to thank the staff at the gallery or cultural centre.

Invite a local Aboriginal artist to your class/school

Invite a local Aboriginal artist to your class or school, so you can learn more about Aboriginal art.

1. Research local Aboriginal artists in your area.
2. Research the protocol (or etiquette) about inviting Aboriginal guests to come to your school. For example, sometimes a small gift will be offered to the person as a “thank you” for coming.
3. Find the artists' contact information (email or mailing address).
4. Write a formal email/letter to invite one or more artists to come and speak at your school. (Remember, many artists are very busy, so not everyone will be able to come.)
5. Once a date and time has been set for the visit, create a poster/pamphlet about the visit for the other classes. Include a brief biography about the artist, some pictures of his/her work and the date, time and location of the visit.
6. Visit the other classes to make a brief announcement about the event and invite the other students to come.
7. After the artist's visit, write a formal email/letter to thank the artist for coming.

EXPLORE ABORIGINAL ART IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Many towns and cities in BC have public art installations. These are sculptures or paintings that are placed outside in public areas. Many of these artworks have been created by Aboriginal artists. Have you seen this type of Aboriginal art in your neighbourhood?

1. On many city websites there is a searchable list of public art. Go to the website of your city. For example, if you live in Vancouver, go to the City of Vancouver website. If you live in Victoria, go to the City of Victoria website. You can also look in *First Peoples: A Newcomers Guide for art around Vancouver*.
2. In the search bar on the city website, type “public art installations.” You may find a list or inventory of public art.
3. Sometimes you can look for public art in specific neighbourhoods. Sometimes you can look for specific types of public art such as Aboriginal or First Nations art. Use the search tool to find public art by Aboriginal artists in your area.
 - Victoria: <http://www.landmarkspublicart.ca>
 - Vancouver: <http://vancouver.ca/parks-recreation-culture/explore-the-public-art-registries.aspx>
 - Nanaimo: <http://www.nanaimo.ca/EN/main/departments/culture-heritage/PublicArt.html>
 - Kelowna: <http://www.kelowna.ca/CM/Page264.aspx>
 - Prince George: <http://princegeorge.ca/CityLiving/ArtsCulture/Pages/default.aspx>
 - http://princegeorge.ca/cityliving/artsculture/Documents/Public_Art_Tour_2012.pdf
4. Choose a few different art installations from the list to visit. If you are walking, you will want to choose installations that are close to each other.
5. Research the artists who created the installations. Find out where they are from and what other types of art they have created.
6. Plan a walking tour with your class.
7. Bring a camera on your walking tour to take pictures of the art installations. Later, you can add some of these pictures to your journal/blog along with a description of what you saw and what you thought about the art.