

LESSON PLAN

Lesson Title: Catawba Coil Pottery

Grade Level: Ages 5 and up

Length of Lesson: 45-90 Minutes

Task Description:

Students will create a small clay pot using the same handbuilding technique as the Catawba Native Americans.

Instructional Objectives:

Students will be able to create a clay pot using the coil handbuilding process.

Vocabulary:

Clay, Coil, Handbuilding, Score, Slip, Catawba

Florence County Museum Connections:

Pee Dee History Gallery: Catawba Pottery, Kolb Site

Materials:

Clay, Air Dry, Earthenware or Stoneware	Kraft Paper (to cover Tables)
Toothpicks	Newsprint
Craft Sticks	Water Cups

Questioning:

- Have you ever worked with clay before? What is clay?
 - Clay is a moist, sticky earth material. It is moldable when wet, hard when dry, and can be heated to make it very hard and durable. Today we will be working with a special type of clay that does not need to be heated.
- How did the Catawba use native riverbed clays in the creation of their pottery?
- Today we are going to be using the coil handbuilding technique. What is a coil? How do you think we make a coil?
 - A coil is a long snake-like piece of clay.

Instructional Procedures:

Preparation:

- Divide Clay in to 7 ounce pieces and store in a resealable plastic bag until ready for use.
- Have 1 toothpick and 1 craft stick per student.
- Prepare 1 water cup per 2 students.
- Cover tables with craft paper for easy clean up.

Process:

- Divide Clay into 2 parts:
 - Students should pull off a 1-inch ball of clay. Carefully flatten to about ¼ inch. (Should look like a small pancake. Careful not to make too thin)
 - Remaining clay will be used to roll coils of clay.
- Roll Clay Coils:
 - Students should pull off another 1-inch ball of clay. Roll clay into a long snake-like coil of clay. Begin with clay at the edge of the table, closest to the body. Roll in 1 direction, away from the body, and gradually move the hands apart from each other. Pick up the coil and move it back to the edge of the table and repeat until coil is desired width approximately ¼ to ½ inch.
- Attach Coils:
 - Stack rolled coils on base, and then on to each other using the following method:
 - Score: Use toothpick to scratch into clay wherever two pieces of clay will connect.
 - Slip: Dip finger into water, rub water on the clay in scored areas until the shine goes away.
 - Seam: Press the two pieces of wet clay together to form a secure connection.
 - Continue to add coils until the piece reaches the desired size and shape.
- Finish:
 - Students may smooth the sides of coils with the craft stick if desired or leave the coils visible.
 - Allow clay to dry completely and fire as directed on clay packaging.

Closure:

- How is working with clay different than you thought it would be?
- How did the Catawba use native riverbed clays in the creation of their pottery?
- Do you think building a pot with coils is an effective or efficient way to build a pot?
- The Catawba used a pit-firing process to make their pots hard and permanent. Why are we using a different method? How are the results different?



Florence County Museum
111 West Cheves Street
Florence, SC 29501



PEE DEE CONNECTIONS

Published by the Florence County Museum
with funding provided by the National Endowment for the Arts

Vol. 2 No. 3



ABOUT THIS POSTER

The Catawba Indians, South Carolina's only federally recognized Native American tribe, have a rich history of creating with clay. The riverbed clay, coil construction, and pit-firing methods used to create this distinct pottery have been passed down from generation to generation over thousands of years.

The double blacksnsake pot is among the most sought-after of all Catawba vessels. The blacksnsake, an ancient symbol, was used to signify positions of leadership and respect within the tribe. Catawba war captains and revered women were often tattooed with two blacksnsakes, one on each shoulder blade. Objects belonging to these respected leaders were adorned with the double blacksnsake insignia. Although the Catawba no longer have war captains, the blacksnsake has remained a symbol of leadership and respect among tribe members.

The Community Arts Program is part of an arts integration program through the Florence County Museum. Funding for this program is provided by the **National Endowment for the Arts** and the **Trustees of the Florence Museum**.



Florence County Museum | 111 West Cheves Street | Florence, South Carolina | 843.676.1200 | flocomuseum.org

Tuesday - Saturday: 10:00 am - 5:00 pm, Sunday: 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm



Blacksnake Pot
Pit-fired clay
Maude Welch
Cherokee, North Carolina
Early 20th century (after 1925)
9" h x 8.5" dia