

Chilkat Weaving: How Material Culture Connects us to History

Lesson Plan for grades 9-12 History (can be adapted for grades 6-8)

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Overview

This lesson, intended for a 75 minute block period, will serve as an introduction to material culture and its importance in understanding history. Students will connect material objects to their uses and value for individuals and cultures through small group exploration, discussion, and a reading on renowned Chilkat weaver Lily Hope.

This lesson relies on Alaska State History Standard A 4: understand that history relies on the interpretation of evidence and Standard D 1: understand that the student is important in history

Essential Question

How does material culture influence our connections to culture and history?

Objectives

Students will be able to explain how objects, and our knowledge of creating and using them, are an important way of understanding history.

Formative Assessment

By the end of the lesson, students should be able to complete an exit ticket responding to the prompt: "Explain why objects and our knowledge around them (how to make objects, and how to use objects) are an important way of understanding history." They will be able to share at least two examples from the class including the text, their start-of-class fast write, or a classmate's material culture object.

Spark

Students will begin with the following fast write prompt: Write about an object, a tradition, or a skill you value that was passed down to you from a family member, or someone in your community? Why was it important for that person to pass this object or knowledge to you? Will you pass it on one day?

If you're stuck trying to think of something, think about: a toy or a tool you were given, a recipe someone taught you, a song or story you were taught, learning to catch a fish, etc.

Culturally Responsive/Best Practices:

Students will utilize constructivism to understand material culture and connect it to their lives and understanding of history. Basha Krasnoff emphasizes that constructivism "requires building scaffolding between what students already know through their own experiences and what they need to learn. Constructivist teaching promotes critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration,

and the recognition of multiple perspectives.”

Taken from Krasnoff, Basha. *Culturally Responsive Teaching: A Guide to Evidence-Based Practices for Teaching All Students Equitably*. Portland, OR: Region X Equity Assistance Center Education Northwest, 2016.

Adaptations

While this lesson has a computer slideshow component, it can easily be adapted to work with just a white/chalk board and physical items rather than images for students to construct a definition of material culture. For younger students, a shorter lesson, or students who struggle with prolonged reading, I have also provided an excerpted version of the Lily Hope profile.

Activities

The day before the lesson: For homework, ask students to bring in an object that has meaning for them (nothing too monetarily valuable or fragile). Ask students not to tell friends what they will be bringing or show other students before class. The teacher will bring in a few extra objects (in case students forget objects, or are unable to retrieve them) and may ask other teachers to loan objects to increase variety for students.

Time	What will the teacher be doing during this lesson?	What will the students be doing during this lesson?
5 minutes	Teacher projects (or writes) the fast write prompt for students to see when they come in (slide 1), greets students and ensures they drop off their objects on a common table before beginning the fast write. If students are stuck, the teacher might give them an example of an object, tradition, or skill to write about beyond the suggestions given.	When students have dropped off their objects, they will have the first five minutes of class to complete a fast write in response to the prompt: Write about an object, a tradition, or a skill you value that was passed down to you from a family member, or someone in your community? Why was it important for that person to pass this object or knowledge to you? Will you pass it on one day?
10 Min	The teacher will present a mini-lesson on material culture (slides 2-4 in the slide show). The first point, creating a definition and understanding of material culture is dependent on student construction from given examples. The teacher might say: “these images are all examples of material culture,	Students are responsible for constructing their own definition of material culture and checking their understanding against a definition and non-examples from the teacher. (Slides 2-3) On slide 4, students are responsible for thinking about and writing down questions to ask when they investigate historical objects.

	<p>how might you define material culture?" (Slide 2)</p> <p>When students have constructed a definition, the teacher will move on to slide 3 for students to check their understanding against a definition of material culture. As a check for understanding, the teacher might ask why the non-examples are not considered material culture. A teacher might also ask if students can think of any other non-examples.</p> <p>On slide 4, the teacher will ask students to think of questions they might ask about an object to understand its history (the object's) and how it might be important to the humans who created and used it. The teacher may choose to write these down on the board, or let students just say them aloud. When students have had a chance to brainstorm, the teacher may click forward in the slideshow to show some possible questions historians ask.</p>	
<p>20 minutes</p>	<p>The teacher will transition students to working with the historical objects students brought in. Before students get up, the teacher should offer some brief ground rules on how to treat objects.</p> <p>If the language of claim/support/question is unfamiliar for students, briefly introduce this exercise (slide 5) for students before they take an object. For more information</p>	<p>Students will get a few minutes to stand up and look around the objects. Students will then get a chance to gently take one object (not their own) back to their seat. In table groups (or other small groups) students will do an oral claim/support/question exercise. Their claim can either be which student they believe the object belongs to, or what they believe the significance of the object is. The emphasis for students is supporting their claim with evidence and identifying the information they still need to strengthen their claim.</p>

	<p>about the exercise, consult Project Zero’s Artful Thinking Palette: Thinking Palette : Artful Thinking (pzartfulthinking.org)</p> <p>When students are working in small groups, the teacher will circulate through the room to support students. The teacher may help prompt students who need help getting started, or give them examples of claims or supporting evidence.</p>	
5-10 minutes	<p>Teacher will bring students back to the whole group and ask for any volunteers to share their claim/support/question with the whole group.</p>	<p>Students will share and the student whose object it was will then get the chance to identify themselves and share the significance of the object.</p>
15 minutes	<p>The teacher will circulate <i>Weaving History with Integrity</i>, by Rachel Bishop. The teacher will help with student questions and facilitate reading as needed.</p>	<p>Students get a copy of <i>Weaving History with Integrity</i>, by Rachel Bishop. They are asked to read and make notes in the margin of the text as they read, paying particular attention to the meaning of objects and how objects can connect us with history.</p>
5 min	<p>The teacher will project the image of Hope’s <i>Double Raven</i> robe (slide 6) and bring students back together. The teacher will ask students what Chilkat robes and the weaving process means to Lily Hope. It might help if the teacher wrote student answers on the board as a mind map (a mapping of ideas on a board that links how different ideas fit together) to show connections and breadth of student ideas.</p>	<p>Students share ideas.</p>
10 minutes	<p>Teacher puts up the exit ticket (slide 7) for students, and circulates to help them as needed. If students need help</p>	<p>Students have the last 10 minutes of class to write a brief reflection as an exit ticket. Exit Ticket: Explain why objects and our knowledge around them (how to make</p>

	<p>understanding knowledge around objects, the teacher might give the example of the Chilkat blanket. The blanket is the object, the knowledge of how to make it is the weaving, and the knowledge of how to use it is the dancing and the traditions that are part of wearing the robe.</p>	<p>objects, and how to use objects) are an important way of understanding history. Please include at least two examples from the text, your fast write, or a classmate's object share.</p>
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Materials Needed

1. *Weaving History with Integrity*, by Rachel Bishop.
2. [Lily Hope Chilkat Robe Lesson Slides](#)
3. Computer and projector (optional)
4. Valuable student objects
5. Student notebooks/paper and pencils