

**Contemporary Native American Art in the Elementary Art Classroom**

**By**

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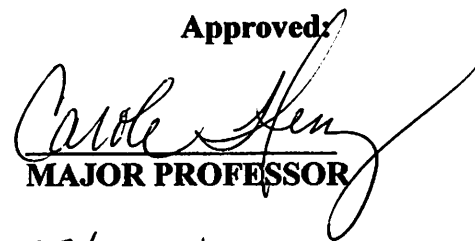
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**Approved:**



**MAJOR PROFESSOR**

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## Table of Contents

<b>List of Figures.....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>Chapter 1- Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Statement of the Problem.....	2
Outline of Applied Project.....	4
<b>Chapter 2- Literature Review.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Multicultural Education: History and Issues.....	6
Approaches to Multicultural Education.....	7
The Contributions Approach.....	9
The Additive Approach.....	10
The Transformative Approach.....	10
The Social Action Approach.....	11
Previous Analysis of Native American Themed Articles.....	12
<b>Chapter 3-</b>	
<b>Analysis of Native American Themed Articles in <i>School Arts Magazine</i>.....</b>	<b>15</b>
Methodology.....	15
Types of Native American Themed Lessons in <i>School Arts</i> .....	16
Evaluation of Native American Themed Articles in <i>School Arts</i> .....	18
Criteria #1: Does the Article Include Accurate Cultural and Historical Information?.....	19
Criteria #2: Does the Article Include Contemporary Native American Artists? .....	21
Criteria #3: Is the Studio Project a Copy of an Interpretation of Native American Artwork?.....	21

Criteria #4: Do the Authors Advocate Ethnic Tourism or the Contributions Approach to Multicultural Education?.....	23
Conclusions of my Review of Native American Themed Articles in <i>School Arts</i> (1985-2004).....	24
<b>Chapter 4- Contemporary Native American Art.....</b>	<b>26</b>
Image Selection.....	26
<b>Chapter Five- Contemporary Native American Art Lesson Plans for Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grades.....</b>	<b>33</b>
Mary Longman Inspired Family Trees (Third Grade).....	34
Tom Haukaas and Teri Greeves Inspired Beadwork (Fourth Grade).....	41
Allan Houser Inspired Clay Sculptures (Fifth Grade).....	47
<b>Chapter 6- Reflections on Teaching Contemporary Native American Art Lesson Plans.....</b>	<b>51</b>
Mary Longman Inspired Family Trees.....	52
Tom Haukaas and Teri Greeves Inspired Beadwork.....	58
<b>Chapter 7- Summary, Recommendations, and Conclusions.....</b>	<b>63</b>
Summary.....	63
Recommendations for Designing Lessons on Native American Art.....	66
Conclusion.....	68
<b>References.....</b>	<b>69</b>

## List of Figures

Figure 2.1- Native American Art Lessons in School Arts (1985-2004).....	16
Figure 4.1- <i>The Young Potter</i> .....	28
Figure 4.2- <i>Pleasant Memories</i> .....	28
Figure 4.3- <i>Dineh</i> .....	28
Figure 4.4- <i>Strata and Routes</i> .....	29
Figure 4.5- Detail of <i>Strata and Routes</i> .....	29
Figure 4.6- <i>Special Boy's Shirt</i> .....	30
Figure 4.7- <i>Beaded Sneakers</i> .....	30
Figure 4.8- <i>Beaded Sneakers</i> .....	30
Figure 4.9- Detail of <i>Beaded Sneaker</i> (Figure 4.8) .....	30
Figure 5.1- <i>Gerard's Family Tree</i> .....	38
Figure 5.2- <i>Natalia's Family Tree</i> .....	38
Figure 5.3- <i>Melissa's Family Tree</i> .....	38
Figure 5.4- <i>Madison's Family Tree</i> .....	38
Figure 5.5- <i>The Little Duck</i> cover art and illustrations by Mary Longman.....	39
Figure 5.6- <i>Sam's Beadwork Pouch</i> .....	45
Figure 5.7- <i>Corey's Beadwork Pouch</i> .....	45
Figure 5.8- <i>Vanessa's Beadwork Pouch</i> .....	46

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

My motivation for conducting this applied project was to gain a better understanding of how to create lessons and teach my students about Native American art. I was also seeking to better understand how other art teachers in Georgia and across the nation dealt with this topic in their own classrooms. My idea for this research project began in my own elementary art classroom. I was teaching a unit on Native American art, and I felt that my lessons needed improvement. However, I really did not know where to begin to improve them. I struggled with how I should teach my students about Native American art. What artists should I discuss, what types of projects should students create, and what topics should I address in the classroom? I wondered if other art teachers struggled when creating multicultural lessons. Did they also worry about being politically correct and creating lessons that gave students more than just a superficial understanding of another culture? I wanted to find a way to improve my own teaching and improve my ability to create multicultural lessons.

I began my research with four basic questions. How should elementary art educators teach their students about Native American art in order to promote understanding and appreciation of another culture? What topics within Native American art are appropriate for elementary art teachers to address in their classrooms? Are there topics or artwork that should be avoided, and if so what are they and why? Finally, what types of Native American art lessons will be the most rewarding for students, and have a firm foundation in multicultural educational theory? This last question was extremely

important to me because I truly wanted to create in-depth, culturally sensitive lessons on this topic, yet I also wanted to make sure that the lessons were engaging and exciting for my students. If I lost sight of the audience for my lessons, the lessons would fail no matter how well-researched or well-planned they were.

My research had three different aspects: a traditional review of literature on multicultural educational theory, a thorough examination of Native American art lessons published in 19 years (1985-2004) of *School Arts* magazine, and the creation and implementation of new lessons on Native American art in my classroom. By examining these different areas, I hoped to draw my own conclusions about what art teachers have done and what art teachers can do to improve their lessons on Native American art.

### **Statement of the Problem**

During my initial review of the literature on this topic, I came across several authors who helped me solidify my reasoning for researching this topic, and confirmed some of my own beliefs about the power of multicultural art education. These authors form the basis of my theoretical framework. When I first became interested in the topic of multicultural education I struggled with the question: Why is multicultural education an important topic for me to research? I felt passionately that it was an important topic to understand for the benefit of myself, my students, and for the larger educational world. However, I wasn't sure how to explain or rationalize my interest in this topic. After reading various authors on this topic, I felt that Christine Ballengee-Morris and Patricia Stuhr (2001) best encapsulated why I feel multicultural education is important. They

clearly and confidently explained the necessity of multicultural education in our society in the following quote:

Culture confines our possibilities for understanding and action. This is one reason it is so important to learn about the culture and values of others. In this way we see broader possibilities for ways of thinking about life and death and the choices for action available to us. (p. 7)

Multicultural education is one way that we can help our students grasp the global society in which we live. Ballengee- Morris and Stuhr pointedly state the role of education is not passive, but to actively help our students adjust to life in our ever-changing world:

For this reason it is important to understand culture and cultural diversity because culture provides beliefs, values, and the patterns that give meaning and structure to life. It enables individuals within multiple social groups of which they are a part to function effectively in their social and cultural environments, which are constantly changing. Education is part of cultural experience; therefore, it cannot be reduced to disciplinary parameters but should include issues of power, history, and self-identity. (p. 6)

In this quote, Ballengee-Morris and Stuhr make it clear that excellent multicultural education cannot be limited to learning just one aspect of a culture. Multicultural education must address historical, social, and personal issues in order to provide students with more than just a superficial understanding of a culture.

After establishing the necessity of multicultural education, I felt the need to justify the need for multicultural *art* education. What makes art the best way to convey the ideas of culture, identity, and acceptance to students? I found the answer to my

question in the writings of anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1995). In the following quote, Geertz stated the importance of art in understanding culture: “. . .art is more than a means of symbolizing and communicating meaning, it is primarily a means of knowing. This knowing of artists in terms of their culture is what is communicated” (Geertz in McFee, 1995, p. 180). If art, as Geertz viewed it, is a primary means of understanding culture then it would be impossible to thoroughly study another culture without learning about their art. Multicultural education is necessary, and art can be a primary vehicle for multicultural education. I feel that Geertz’s research completed the link and justification necessary to move forward in my own research in multicultural art education.

### **Outline of Applied Project**

This chapter provides an introduction to my interest in Native American art and my desire to improve my own teaching practices. It also outlines my research questions, and creates a foundation for my literature review. In Chapter Two of this applied project, I discuss more in depth the historical and current literature on multicultural education. My review of the literature on this topic helped to inform the types of lessons that I created on contemporary Native American art for use in my own classroom.

Another source of information that helped inform my lessons was my analysis of 19 years of Native American themed articles published in *School Arts* magazine. In Chapter Three, I categorize and evaluate all of the Native American themed articles I found in *School Arts* from 1985 to 2004, in order to gain a better understanding of how art teachers have taught about Native American art. My literature review and my analysis of *School Arts* magazine articles led me to the decision that I should focus on

contemporary Native American artists in my classroom. I discuss my rationale for this decision and the artists that I chose to focus on in Chapter Four.

After selecting four contemporary Native American artists: Allan Houser, Teri Greeves, Tom Haukaas, and Mary Longman, I developed art lessons based on their work. The detailed unit lessons that I created are all in Chapter Five of this applied project. In Chapter Six, I reflect on teaching these units in my elementary art classroom. Finally, in Chapter Seven, I summarize my findings from the previous chapters, and include recommendations for other art teachers hoping to create sensitive and effective multicultural curricula on contemporary Native American art.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

#### **Multicultural Education: History and Issues**

Multicultural education first began in the 1960s as a result of the Civil Rights Movement. Advocates of multicultural education felt that all groups of people who were historically left out of school curricula because of ethnicity, gender, or disabilities should be represented (Lei & Grant, 2001). Multicultural education began as a way to combat racism and to provide equal representation for all groups in curricula. Lei and Grant discussed early attempts at multicultural education in the following quote:

By framing multicultural education in terms of equal representation, the goal seemed clear: to “add” in images of and knowledge about traditionally underrepresented groups. Textbook publishers began to include more pictures of people of color, females, and maybe a picture of a person in a wheelchair in their textbooks and “multicultural” curricula became popularized as a convenient and efficient way to achieve multicultural education. (p. 219)

These early steps towards equal opportunity and equal representation laid the foundations for future researchers of multicultural education. The growing cultural diversity of the United States led to a renewed interest in multicultural education in the 1980s and 1990s. With renewed interest came renewed debate over what exactly constituted multicultural education, and why it should be included in school curricula. One of the main rationales for multicultural education in the 80s and 90s was the desire for students to learn about their cultural heritage, and that of their classmates in order to promote understanding and

acceptance. Blocker (2004) described the specific need for multicultural art education in America:

And this brings us to the question, why then *multicultural* art education? Because our (North American) culture *is* multicultural, meaning that it cannot be narrowly specified religiously or ethnically or racially. . . . And this is for two reasons: The first is that our culture is the product of many different ethnic groups settling in North America over several centuries, and the second is due to the amazing “shrinking world” phenomenon. Every child needs to have a sense of Arabic, Japanese, Chinese, and African contemporary cultures as part of the world with which they, as Americans, must interact. (p. 188)

The need for multicultural education in America seems clear. The question then becomes what exactly is multicultural education and how does one begin to teach art within a multicultural framework.

### **Approaches to Multicultural Education**

There are many different approaches to multicultural education. Many of these approaches share commonalities such as the need for students to see the world through multiple perspectives. By learning about different perspectives, the hope is that students will have a better understanding and appreciation for all of the different cultures that are part of their community (Armstrong, 1990). Another goal of multicultural education is that students from cultural groups that have been historically left out or misrepresented in mainstream curricula will feel validated and empowered by learning about their culture’s importance in history, art and other subjects (Mariahazy, 1990). Advocates of

multicultural education believe that by seeing the important achievements made by people of their own cultural group, students will feel that they too can achieve great things (Mariahazy, 1990).

Multicultural education is a movement to correct inequalities and stereotypes in our educational system. Armstrong (1990) gave the example of the stereotypes of American Indians promoted in schools up through the 1970s. “. . . through art American Indians have been depicted as lazy, drunken, and vicious violators” (p. 116). Not only were these stereotypes promoted, but many times American history has been told through the eyes of white pioneers, not from the point of view of the Native Americans. To correct this type of inequality, Mariahazy suggested that students should also learn history from the Native American perspective. Along with historical examples of Native American art, students should also learn about contemporary Native American artists. Mariahazy felt that learning about contemporary artists was an important component of multicultural art education as she states in the following quote: “If their self esteem is to be maximized, Native American students must be able to relate to successful adults of their own ethnic group” (p. 195).

There are multiple interpretations of multicultural education. Countless authors have created categories of multicultural education, levels of multicultural education, and strategies for multicultural education. I have chosen to focus on the categories created by Banks (2001) because Bank’s approaches to multicultural education provide a good framework for teachers who want to create multicultural curriculum. His work has influenced educators in all fields including art education. Banks theorized that there are four approaches that teachers can use when creating multicultural curricula: contribution,

additive, transformative, and social action. Sinagatullin (2003) summarized the four approaches:

(1) the contribution approach, in which the content of ethnic and cultural groups is linked mostly to celebrations and holidays; (2) the additive approach, presupposing an addition of cultural content and concepts to the curriculum without changing its basic purposes and structures; (3) the transformative approach, entailing changes in the curriculum to enable students to view concepts, events and problems from different ethnic and cultural perspectives; and (4) the social action approach which enables learners to pursue activities and take civic action related to the concepts and issues they have studied. (p. 93)

### **The Contributions Approach**

The contributions approach and the additive approach provide a more superficial understanding of other cultures. Educators who use the contributions approach generally focus on teaching about the celebrations and holidays of other cultures. Many times, this sort of approach is referred to as ethnic tourism because it just provides a snapshot of the more unusual stereotypical aspects of another culture (Lei & Grant, 2001). An example of the contributions approach would be the holiday musical that third graders at my school performed in December of 2005. The musical included songs about Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and Las Posadas. Students enjoyed learning songs about these holidays as evidenced by their enthusiasm and level of participation in the musical. However, they may not have gained a well-rounded understanding of the cultures associated with these holidays. The classroom lessons taught in connection with the

musical focused mainly on the traditional decorations and activities associated with each holiday. Students were given very little information about other aspects of each culture.

### **The Additive Approach**

The additive approach allows for more information about other cultures to be “added” onto the regular curriculum. The majority of the curriculum, however, remains told from the traditional point of view. According to Dilger (2004), the contributive and additive approaches to multicultural education simply do not make significant enough reform to traditional education:

Multicultural education should not be additive, but integral to the curriculum. It is not the study of strange and exotic customs and behaviors or the celebration of ethnic holidays or birthdays. It is not specialized days, international festivals, or cultural fairs. Focusing on these activities is likely to reinforce stereotypes and misconceptions, teaching and learning that is counterproductive. (p. 51)

For students to truly have a well-rounded understanding of another culture, they should not just study holidays and celebrations, but the fine arts of that culture, contributions made by the members of that culture, and history from the point of view of members of that culture (Dilger, 1994). Recreating curricula to expose students to multiple perspectives and to multiple aspects of another culture is a key component of Bank’s transformative approach to multicultural education.

### **The Transformative Approach**

Whitehead (2004) identified the following three characteristics of transformative teaching practices: “(a) restructuring of a curriculum that allows previously mentioned

concepts and events to be viewed from different ethnic and cultural perspectives; (b) the organization of content around universal ideas; and (c) demonstration of diversity and unity among people”(p. 1). One example of transformative teaching would be teaching a unit on westward expansion in the United States not just from the point of view of white settlers and soldiers, but also from the point of view of the Native Americans that were being displaced and driven from their homeland (Sinagatullin, 2003). Whitehead (2004) advocated teachers use the transformative approach when planning multicultural curricula because it is effective and responsible while also being “applicable to the art of teaching” (p. 1). Teachers can create and master this sort of curricula on a daily basis in their classrooms.

### **The Social Action Approach**

Other researchers such as Ballengee-Morris and Stuhr (2001) have concluded that the social action or a social reconstruction approach is the most socially responsible and effective form of multicultural education. The social reconstruction approach requires that the community be involved and benefit from the multicultural education of students as Ballengee- Morris and Stuhr explained in the following excerpt: “. . . in the social reconstruction approach, teachers, students, staff members, and communities are all enabled and expected to practice democratic action for the benefit of disenfranchised social and cultural groups identified and investigated as a result of enlightened curriculum” (p. 8).

After learning about these various approaches, as a teacher, I felt that the transformative approach appeared to be a meaningful non-superficial approach to

multicultural education that is still attainable by the classroom teacher on a daily basis. The socially reconstructive approach is a goal to strive toward when planning curricula. During the course of a school year, some units should reach the level of community involvement advocated by Ballengee-Morris and Stuhr. On a daily basis, however, a more realistic goal is that by exposing students to transformative multicultural education, they will be more accepting of people in their community that may be of a different culture, gender, or simply have different opinions than themselves which is in and of itself socially reconstructive.

#### **Previous Analysis of Native American Themed Articles**

*School Arts* is a widely circulated magazine for teachers focusing on practical art ideas for use in the classroom. The authors of *School Arts* articles are typically art educators from all levels of education pre-kindergarten through college. Over the years, various researchers have examined the artwork and articles in *School Arts* magazine and other educational resources in order to see trends in art educational practice. One of the first to do so was former *School Arts* editor Eldon Katter (1985) who examined art instructional materials such as textbooks and workbooks from 1889-1985. One of his observations of these materials was that they contained “amusing and trite cultural stereotyping that has been perpetuated by publishers over the years” (p. 295). Katter listed tepees, feathered headbands, and masks as a few examples of the Native American stereotypes he found.

Henry and Nyman (1997) reviewed instructional materials from ten years (1985-1995) of *School Arts*, *Art Education*, and *Scholastic Arts*. They looked for images

created by multicultural artists in the instructional materials these magazines provided for teachers. Through their research, Henry and Nyman found that in the Looking and Learning section of *School Arts* the number of images created by multicultural artists has increased over the years:

Approximately one third of the images featured during the last ten years have been created by artists of cultural origins other than Euro- American. The selection of works by artists of multicultural heritage is roughly evenly representative of artists of African, Asian, Hispanic, and Native American descent. The frequency of inclusion has increased substantially since 1985 when only one Native American mask was featured. (pp. 91-92)

Over the course of the time period they studied, the article accompanying each image began to include more information about each multicultural artist, and many of the suggested activities were designed to help students relate the image to their own lives. Another author who used *School Arts* to gain a better understanding of art educational practice and perceptions was John Howell White.

White (1997) looked specifically at the presence of Native American themed articles in *School Arts* focusing on the articles written during the tenure of editor Pedro deLemos (1919-1949). He summed up his analysis of articles published from 1903 to 1916 under the editor Henry Bailey in the following quote: “None of these articles include authentic Native American practices, nor do they include Native American voices as authors, students, educators, or artists. They were often placed in association with holiday art and Thanksgiving” (p. 96). Later, in the years under the editor Pedro deLemos, the frequency of Native American themed articles increased in *School Arts*.

Several articles were published featuring specific Native American artists such as Maria Martinez and Kenneth Chapman. While White felt that the articles published under deLamos frequently had a patronizing tone, he also recognized that the relatively large number of Native American themed articles published under deLemos signified his fascination and interest in Native American culture. These authors set the precedent for my research in *School Arts* magazine. Over the years *School Arts* has reflected our educational systems' varying views on culture, and how we teach about other cultures.

## Chapter 3

### **Analysis of Native American Themed Articles in *School Arts Magazine* (1985-2004)**

#### **Methodology**

To begin my research, I searched through 19 years of *School Arts* magazine. I chose to look at the past 19 years in order to see how the renewed interest in multicultural education that occurred in the 1980s and 1990s affected the way art educators taught about Native American art. I hoped to gain insight and effective teaching strategies by examining these articles. Also, I felt that 19 years of *School Arts* would give me a large number of articles to analyze making it easier for me to identify trends and draw conclusions about the types of articles that were published.

I narrowed my focus to include only full length articles and lesson plans on Native American art. Full length articles and lesson plans gave me the most information to review, and therefore I could gain a better understanding of how art educators were approaching the topic of Native American art. After locating and reading all of the Native American themed articles in *School Arts* from 1985 to 2004, I divided the lessons into groups based on their topics. By dividing the articles into groups, I was able to see which topics were addressed most frequently in the magazine, and which topics were overlooked.

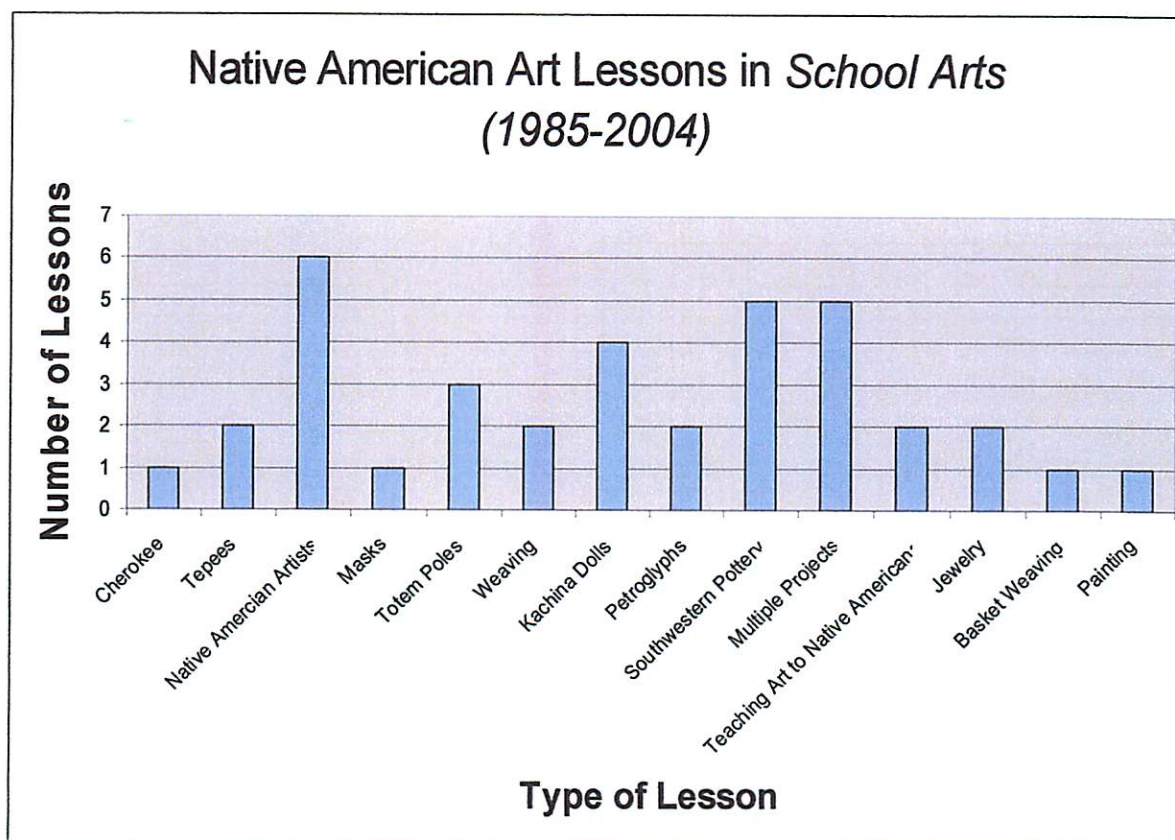
After categorizing the articles, I developed a rubric to determine if each article was an effective, transformative example of multicultural teaching practices. My rubric was based on my review of literature about multicultural education which I wrote about in Chapter two. After applying the rubric to each article, it became obvious which articles were examples of excellent multicultural teaching practices. The information

gained from these articles and my review of the literature on multicultural education helped to inspire my own lessons on contemporary Native American art which I developed and implemented in my classroom.

### Types of Native American Themed Lessons in *School Arts*

All total, I found 37 different articles about Native American art. I was surprised that there were not more lessons addressing Native American art over a period of 19 years. I was also concerned by the number of projects that were repeated over the years. The frequency of specific types of lessons found in *School Arts* is shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1



The most frequently occurring articles were about contemporary Native American artists (six all total). This fact was very encouraging considering the research by Mariahazy

(1990) that suggests it is beneficial for students to see modern multicultural artists.

Students can see how members of their own culture and other cultures can be successful artists. Contemporary artists Shonto Begay, Elmer Yazzi, Helen Hardin and Jaune Quick-to-See-Smith all had articles written about them in *School Arts*; however, the problem is again repetition. Three of the six articles on contemporary Native American artists were on Jaune Quick-to-See-Smith, a well known Native American artist who uses her artwork to address current political issues. Stewart summarized Quick-to-See's artwork in the following quote: "In her work as an artist and political activist, Smith confronts stereotypes and tries to dispel cultural myths popularized by Hollywood, poorly-written textbooks, sports, tourist shops and media" (1997, p.31). Quick-to-See-Smith is an excellent artist to include in a multicultural curriculum. It is still surprising that the editors of *School Arts* have not sought out additional contemporary Native American artists to include in their magazine.

Another trend throughout the last 19 years of *School Arts* was the tendency to include many stereotypical Native American arts and activities. Kachina dolls, totem poles, and Southwestern pottery were all recurring topics. Surprisingly, as late as 2001 there were articles in *School Arts* that described how to create totem poles and other sacred objects out of cardboard scraps and other recyclable materials (Mollhagen, 2001). Ballengee-Morris and Stuhr (2001) warn against this practice:

Forms of cultural re-representation become especially problematic and conflictive when the images and objects have significant, sacred, spiritual, or religious meanings for the social group from which they were appropriated or when they are used in a fashion that misrepresents and maligns that social group. An

example is making Kachina dolls or totem poles out of discarded toilet paper cardboard tubes. (p. 9)

This becomes a very touchy subject when teachers would like to use multicultural lesson plans, but find their budgets limiting. Many times, they use materials that might be considered offensive to members of the culture they are teaching about. This brings into question whether or not some religious artwork such as Kachina dolls should be re-created at all.

Another example of repetition in the *School Arts* articles was that certain Native American groups were more represented than others. Seventeen of the 37 articles found were on Southwestern Native Americans including the Navajo, Hopi, and Zuni. The other 20 articles were on various Native American groups from the United States and Canada. I found one article on the Cherokee who are indigenous to the Southeast. The article on the Cherokee was an excellent example of viewing art and history through more than one perspective. It is unfortunate that some Native American groups are not represented at all while others and certain works of art are represented year after year.

### **Evaluation of Native American Themed Articles in *School Arts***

After graphing the frequency of various types of lessons that appeared in *School Arts* over the 19 year span that I examined, I began to create a rubric for evaluating the effectiveness of these lessons based on the knowledge I had gained researching multicultural education. Other art education graduate students at the University of Georgia reviewed my rubric during a class presentation, and provided feedback which helped to inform the final rubric included in this paper.

I divided the articles I had found into three levels: Level One being the least effective lessons, Level Two being moderately effective, and Level Three being the most effective. Out of thirty seven articles, according to my rubric, sixteen were Level One, twelve were Level Two, and nine were Level Three examples of multicultural teaching practices. Table 2.1 lists the criteria for each level.

**Table 2.1**

Level One -16	Little or no historical and cultural background information provided No references to contemporary Native American artists Lesson were stylistic copies of Native American art Lessons promoted stereotypes and ethnic tourism
Level Two – 12	Some historical and cultural information provided Some references to modern Native American artists Projects were mainly stylistic copies of Native American artwork
Level Three- 9	In-depth historical and cultural information provided Frequently referenced contemporary Native American artists Projects were thoughtful interpretations of Native American artwork instead of copies

**Criteria #1: Does the Article Include Accurate Cultural and Historical Information?**

The first criteria I established was that an article or lesson plan should include accurate and thorough cultural and or historical information about the project, the artist, or the Native American tribe discussed. *School Arts* articles are generally one to three pages long which does not allow much space for in-depth cultural information. However, to create transformative units of instruction it is necessary to have historical/ cultural information (Sinagatullin, 2003). Such information would hopefully provide a research starting point for teachers who are interested in recreating the unit described. A Level 3 article that provided excellent cultural and or historical information was Scott's (2000)

article entitled *Remembering the Cherokee*. In this article, Beverly Scott provided a detailed account of the Cherokee Trail of Tears from the point of view of the Cherokee as is evident in this quote: “The Trail of Tears is certainly a heart rending saga of ruthless uprooting of a people shoved aside to make room for land hungry settlers and farmers. It is undoubtedly one of the blackest periods in American history laden with agony, suffering, and cruelty” (2000, p. 32).

Twelve articles qualified for the Level Two category. The authors of those articles provided some historical and or cultural information, but not enough for truly transformative teaching. The sixteen articles grouped into the Level One category provided little or no cultural information. If anything, many of the articles in the Level One category downplayed the Native American history of the lesson by limiting it to one or two sentences. One author, Schonauer (1991), even dismissed the need for knowledge about the Native American culture on which her lesson was based. Her opinion was that it was not necessary to understand the culture in order to appreciate and copy artwork from that culture as she stated in the following quote: “To understand the mystery of the fetish, one must understand the Zuni Indians and their way of life. But to appreciate the form and image of the fetish, one needs only to see some of the fetish carvings and intricate fetish necklaces to be drawn in as an enchanted observer” (p. 44). Schonauer had her students create artwork based on their observations of Zuni jewelry without discussing any of the spiritual significance of the objects. Another lesson from 1985 was titled *Indian Jewelry*, and did not include any references to specific types of jewelry or to specific Native Americans (Pollard, 1985). It is important to give specific details about the art work and the artist that students are studying because they should understand that

there are many different Native Americans with their own unique cultures and contributions to our modern society (Ballengee-Morris & Stuhr, 2001).

**Criteria #2: Does the Article Include Contemporary Native American Artists?**

The second point that I evaluated was to what extent the articles discussed contemporary Native American artists (Mariahazy, 1990). Six articles contained extensive information on contemporary Native American artists, and I placed them all in the Level Three category. The other Level Three articles referenced multiple contemporary Native American artists. In the Level Two articles, several authors cited contemporary Native American artists such as Maria Martinez and Helen Hardin (Beck, 1995), but gave only limited information about the artists. The Level One articles did not provide any examples of contemporary Native American artists or their artwork.

**Criteria #3: Is the Studio Project a Copy or an Interpretation of Native American Artwork?**

The next criteria I used was whether or not the project was simply a copy of Native American artwork, or did it allow for student interpretation. An effective multicultural teaching strategy would be using Native American art as a springboard for projects where students create their own interpretive artwork instead of having students copy Native American artwork without really understanding its meaning. Mariahazy (1990) warns that such “copy cat” lessons can promote stereotypes: “The study of and appreciation for the art of ethnic minorities should not consist of schoolchildren copying these art forms but permit the interpretation by students through their own creativity” (p.

196). Most of the lessons in the Level One categories were copies of totem poles, Kachina dolls, Southwestern pottery, and many other types of traditional Native American art. Many of the articles in the Level Two category were on these same types of artwork, but the authors pushed a little beyond copying to allow for student interpretation.

For example, in Herzog's (1989) article on Kachina dolls, she suggested teachers should focus on the Hopi clown characters along with Kachina dolls because the clown figures were less spiritually significant to the Hopi, and therefore she felt it was more appropriate for students to create artwork about the clown characters rather than religious Kachina dolls. For elementary age students, Herzog suggested having students create their own clown characters using clay or papier-mâché based on modern comic figures. The articles in the Level Three category not only suggested lessons that allowed for student interpretation, but they also used artwork to address social and historical issues. In the article written by Scott (2000), students created artwork in response to learning about the Trail of Tears. After learning about the Trail of Tears, students created their own clay figures which represented the Cherokee on their march to Oklahoma. The clay figures were displayed together at a local art show as a tribute to the thousands of Cherokee who lost their lives on the Trail of Tears.

#### **Criteria #4: Do the Authors Advocate Ethnic Tourism or the Contributions**

##### **Approach to Multicultural Education?**

The last issue that I addressed with my evaluation rubric was ethnic tourism. Ethnic Tourism is a term that describes when students are taught a few bits and pieces of information about various cultures. Typically, this means that students are taught about popular holidays and celebrations. They are taking a “tour” of the world gaining only a superficial knowledge of how people around the world actually live. There were several articles that dealt with culture in a very brief and cursory way relegating tepees, jewelry or totem pole to a few sentences promoting the contributions approach to multicultural education. I considered all of these articles unsatisfactory, and placed them in Level One of my rubric system.

There were five articles that dealt with multiple Native American projects in which the authors took a “tour around the world” or “tour around the tribes” approach to multicultural education. In one such article by Harwell-Adams (1996), students created projects based on the artwork of different Native American groups around North America such as: Pacific Coast totems, Inuit printmaking, and Southwestern pottery. Harwell-Adams made broad generalizations about these Native American groups, and their artwork. Students then produced copies of these Native American works of art. The article promoted a contributive approach to multicultural education which provided students with little or no in-depth understanding of the cultures they were emulating.

One article out of the five dealing with multiple multicultural projects used a transformative approach. Marilyn Pass’s (1993) article, entitled *Interdisciplinary Multicultural Education: A Unique Approach*, included lessons on art and artists from

several different continents, including one on the Shoshone of Idaho. What made Pass's article different was the thorough cultural and historical information she provided her students, and the interdisciplinary approach of her curricula. Pass collaborated with several colleagues, and team taught her art classes with a history and music teacher at her middle school. Team teaching allowed students to receive a more well-rounded view of each culture they studied. Also, Pass made an effort to bring real artisans into her classroom to inspire students. During her unit on the Shoshone, a local Shoshone storyteller spoke to her class and brought in Native American art and artifacts (Pass, 1993).

### **Conclusions of the Review of Native American Themed Articles in**

#### ***School Arts* (1985-2004)**

When I first began my research, I assumed that the more recent *School Arts* articles would have the best examples of Native American lessons. I soon realized that this was not the case. I evaluated 19 years of *School Arts* Native American lessons, and I found excellent and unsatisfactory lessons scattered over all those years. However, 19 of the articles I found came from the years 1995 to 1999, more than from any other time period I researched. Out of those 19, five received a Level Three rating, seven received a Level Two rating, and eight received a Level One rating. The relatively large number of lessons in this time period shows a surge of interest in Native American art in the late 1990s, but it does not prove that lessons created during this time period are any more effective than those created in earlier years. I did not find any relationship between the quality of the articles and the year in which they were written.

Overall, examining the various Native American art lesson plans in *School Arts* gave me a much better understanding of what multicultural education should be. I was able to apply theoretical information about multicultural education to the actual practice of art teachers around the country. The most significant qualities that a lesson on Native American art should have are historical/cultural information, information about contemporary Native American artists, and thoughtful, interpretive activities. From this research I have learned what qualities I value in multicultural lessons, and what qualities I will try to include in my own lessons in the future.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Contemporary Native American Art**

After researching multicultural educational theory and examining 19 years of Native American articles in *School Arts*, I decided that my own lesson plans should focus on the work of contemporary Native American artists. Mariahazy (1990) stressed the importance of showing students the work of successful adults from various cultural groups. By my teaching lessons about contemporary Native American artists, my students of Native American heritage will have successful artists with a similar cultural heritage to inspire them. At the same time, students with other cultural backgrounds will have a new perspective on what it means to be a Native American.

By exposing my students to the artwork of contemporary Native American artists, I hoped to bring Native American culture alive for them. Instead of thinking of Native Americans as frozen in time, living in tepees, and hunting buffalo, students would see modern Native Americans creating artwork sensitive to their cultural heritage. I decided to focus on the artwork of four contemporary Native American artists: Allan Houser, Mary Longman, Teri Greeves, and Tom Haukaas. These artists blend traditional and modern art making techniques, while addressing societal issues.

#### **Image Selection**

My goal for this project was to gather information on these artists and create transformative multicultural lessons on contemporary Native American art. When selecting images for my applied project, I kept in mind Yenawine's (2003) guidelines for

choosing art for beginning viewers. Yenawine suggested that you should search for works of art that your audience would find accessible, images that people can relate to, and make connections with. According to Yenawine, “Accessible imagery allows viewers to discover intended meanings on their own. Each encounter leads to successful interpretation, without expert intervention” (2003, p. 8).

Yenawine (2003) also stressed the importance of selecting works of art that have a narrative quality when choosing work for novice viewers. Many novice viewers look for a narrative quality in a work of art. If they are shown artwork that has those qualities, it can boost their interest and their feeling of competency when looking at art. Therefore, when choosing examples of contemporary Native American art for my lessons, I tried to choose artwork that I felt elementary age students could relate to and artwork that told a story.

I began my search for images by looking up recent contemporary Native American art exhibition catalogs. I chose artwork from three recent exhibitions to include in my applied project. The first exhibition from which I selected pieces was the 2004 show entitled *Native Modernism*. *Native Modernism* was the inaugural exhibition at the recently opened Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian (West, 2004). The exhibit was a retrospective of the careers of two prominent Native American artists, George Morrison and Allan Houser. I selected several mother and child sculptures by Allan Houser to use in my classroom (See Figures 4.1-4.3 for examples). Houser’s mother and child sculptures are beautiful and poignant. I felt that my elementary students would be able to easily relate to the nurturing images in these sculptures.



Figure 4.1  
*The Young Potter*



Figure 4.2  
*Pleasant Memories*



Figure 4.3  
*Dineh*

The mother and child sculptures by Allan Houser fit Yenawine's criteria of accessibility and narration as did the artwork by the three other Native American artists that are represented in my applied project. The second artist I chose was Mary Longman. Her sculpture *Strata and Routes* was part of the exhibit *Reservation X: The Power of Place in Aboriginal Contemporary Art* developed by the Canadian Museum of Civilization (McMaster, 1998). *Strata and Routes* is an installation sculpture depicting Longman's version of a family tree (See Figure 4.4). Two tree trunks are held together by bands of mortar and pebbles. Tucked away in the center of the uppermost trunk is a large flat river rock with a photograph of her family printed on it (See Figure 4.5). I felt that elementary age students would be able to relate to the idea of a family tree. I also felt that they would enjoy the challenge of creating their own unique family tree in class. *Strata and Routes* is rich in narrative and rich in symbolism. My hope was that it would provide students with inspiration for their own artwork.



Figure 4.4 *Strata and Routes*

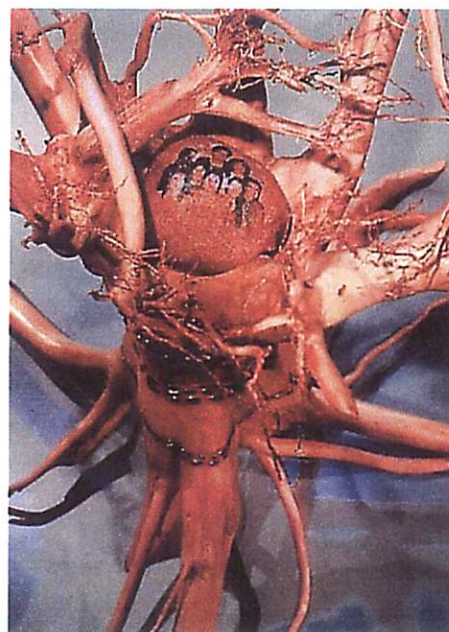


Figure 4.5 *Strata and Routes*  
A photograph of Mary Longman's family is printed on the river rock at the center of the sculpture.

The last two works that I used for my lessons are of intricate beadwork by two artists, Tom Haukaas and Teri Greeves. These artists are part of the *Changing Hands: Art Without Reservation 2* exhibit which is currently touring the United States and Canada. The artwork from the *Changing Hands* exhibit focuses on contemporary Native North American art from the West, Northwest, and Pacific. I choose to group Tom Haukaas and Teri Greeves together because they work in the same medium, and because both of the works included in this exhibit are of clothing covered with symbolic bead designs. Haukaas created two ceremonial shirts showing the Lakota creation myth (See Figure 4.6 *Special Boy's Shirt*). Greeves beaded Converse sneakers with symbolic designs (See Figures 4.7, 4.8, 4.9) representing cultural and feminist issues (Haukaas, 2005). I felt that both of these works of art would be intriguing to students. The narrative quality of the creation myth would immediately capture their attention while Greeves' choice of Converse sneakers would pique their interest.



Figure 4.6 *Special Boy's Shirt*



Figure 4.7 *Beaded Sneakers*



Figure 4.8 *Beaded Sneakers*



Figure 4.9 (detail of Figure 4.8)

I developed lesson plans about the artwork of these contemporary Native American artists for use in my own elementary art classroom, and hopefully for other teachers to use as well. Along with background information on each artist and detailed lessons, I have also included discussion prompts. The discussion questions are meant to be a starting point for teachers to use in their classrooms. The questions were inspired by the Feldman (1983) method, but they do not strictly follow that format. Many of the discussion questions require students to describe, analyze, interpret, or evaluate a work of art. Barrett (2003) theorized that many times there is an overlap between these steps, and

separating out each individual process can be an oversimplification of a complex cognitive process.

The questions that accompany each lesson are not in any strict order, and many of the questions ask students to examine specific attributes of a particular work. I wanted these questions to spark discussion and conversation about each work of art. Feldman (1983) described the importance of this type of dialogue in the following quote:

The error most teachers, professors, and docents make is telling students what they are looking at. It is better to ask them what they see. We have to develop an active, not passive, attitude toward the tasks of visual criticism and inquiry. This calls for a strategy of questioning to force observation, to elicit facts, to get everyone to participate, and to connect the everyday language of the viewer with the artistic language of the image. (p. 49)

I chose to make my discussion questions more specific to each individual work of art because Native American art is so deeply entrenched in cultural meaning. If students did a straightforward version of the Feldman method, they could miss important aspects of the work. I believe that it is also necessary for discussion facilitators to provide students with background information on the artwork and the artist in order for students to understand the symbolism in each piece and its origin.

The studio assignments were created to help students reflect on their own experiences as they created their art. The works of art that students will examine all have very deep meanings for their creators. My goal was to have students reflect on their lives and their families as they come up with ideas for their artwork. For example, after studying the mother and child sculptures of Allan Houser, I plan for students to draw

pictures of themselves with someone who nurtures them, and then create a subtractive clay sculpture from their sketches. They will also write about their artwork explaining why they chose the person in their drawing. Students can draw inspiration for their artwork from the art and artists in these units, and from their own experiences.

As a final component of my instructional units, I have included additional websites that teachers can go to for further information on the artists and their artwork. I have also provided specific third through fifth grade Georgia Quality Core Curriculum standards in the visual arts as an example of the criteria that the art history, discussion, and studio components of each lesson would fulfill. However, the information and activities included in each unit could be modified for any elementary grade level. My hope is that these units will make the world of contemporary Native American art more accessible to elementary art teachers and their students.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Contemporary Native American Art Lesson Plans for Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grades**

This chapter contains three lesson plans designed for third through fifth grades on contemporary Native American artists. Each lesson contains biographical information about the artist, and information about the artwork that inspired each studio assignment. This background information is meant to help teachers give their students a better understanding of each artist, and how they create their artwork. To aide in this effort, I have included discussion starters to be used during each art class.

Each lesson also includes objectives, and the Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards that each lesson meets. I have labeled each lesson as third, fourth, or fifth grade; however, I feel that any of the lessons could be modified to accommodate other grade levels. The studio component of each lesson is broken down into day by day instructions. In Chapter Six, I describe in detail how I taught each daily lesson of the family tree project and the beadwork project along with my student's responses to each of those daily lessons. To accompany each studio lesson, there is a list of needed materials and a list of website resources. Since it may be difficult to find prints of some of the images used in these lessons, websites are a valuable resource for images. Finally, the last component of each lesson plan is a section titled "Other Studio Ideas". This section was designed to provide teachers with limited time or budget ideas for incorporating contemporary Native American art into their classrooms.

### **Mary Longman Inspired Family Trees (Third Grade)**

**Information about the Artist:** Mary Longman was born on the Gordon Indian Reserve in Saskatchewan, Canada. She grew up in foster care. Eventually, she returned to live with her biological family at age 15 (McCaster, 1998). Longman has studied art at various colleges and universities throughout Canada.

Much of Longman's work is inspired by her close connections to her family and to her community. Longman made this statement about the importance of those connections, "You can't really separate yourself from your roots. It's important for everyone to go back to where they are from. I spend every summer on both the reserve and in the city, because my family lives in both places" (McCaster, 1998, p.71).

**Information about the Artwork:** The focus of this unit is Longman's installation sculpture, *Strata and Routes*. She created the sculpture by joining two tree trunks together with layers of mortar and pebbles. At the top of the sculpture underneath the many layers of branches, Longman placed a giant smooth river rock. On the rock, she printed a picture of her family. Longman described the process of creating the sculpture in this way, "On one of my walks on Shackan [an Indian Reserve in Canada], I saw an overturned tree with a large rock embedded in the roots. They lived together, grew together, and shaped each other. For some Native people, to look at a tree is to see the tree of life. They see the leaves as the individuals, the roots as a lineage. I thought about this relationship and the connections of the roots" (McCaster, 1998, p. 73). Longman's strong connection to her family is at the heart of this sculpture.

**Discussion Starters:** Describe Longman's sculpture, *Strata and Routes*. Identify the materials used to create this sculpture. How do you think she built this sculpture?

Longman has described this sculpture as a family tree. How does the sculpture *Strata and Routes* represent her family? What is a traditional family tree? Who is represented in a family tree? Who are your ancestors? Where are your ancestors from? How do you know about your ancestors? Why is it important that we know who our ancestors were? Why do you think Longman chose these materials for her family tree? What things do you think are important to her? How is this sculpture different from other family trees you have seen? If you could create your own family tree what would it look like and why? What would you use to make it and why?

**Objectives:**

1. Students will create a family tree inspired by nature and the artwork of Mary Longman.
2. Students will use drawings or magazine pictures to represent family members on their tree.
3. Students will discuss Mary Longman's artwork *Strata and Routes* and compare it to their ideas of family and family trees.

**3<sup>rd</sup> grade Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards:**

**Topic:** Artistic Skills and Knowledge: Creating, Performing, Producing

**Standard:** Produces art in each of the following art areas: drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, and crafts

**Topic:** Critical Analysis and Aesthetic Understanding

**Standard:** Discusses the purposes and functions of art in today's world.

**Topic:** Critical Analysis and Aesthetic Understanding

**Standard:** Examines other individuals' reasons for preferences in artworks.

**Topic:** Historical and Cultural Context

**Standard:** Associates artworks of a particular style with the culture from which the work was produced.

**Vocabulary:**

**Ancestors** – All of the people who have been part of your family for generations and generations.

**Native American** – People that are native to North America. Their ancestors were the first people to live in this country.

**Family Tree** – A way to represent members of your family through words, drawings or other art forms.

**Studio Activity:**

**Day 1**- Begin class with a brief discussion of nature drawing. Explain that students will not be drawing cartoon trees or making up their own trees. Instead, students will be looking closely at actual trees and drawing what they see. The teacher should draw examples of cartoon trees on the board, and then draw an example of a realistic tree from either a photograph or a tree that can be seen out the window. Next, give each student pencil, paper, and a book to serve as their drawing board. I take extra pencils and a small sharpener with me in case someone loses or breaks a pencil. Now, the class is ready to go outside to create realistic sketches of trees and other things in nature. Usually, we go to three places around the school grounds, stopping five to ten minutes to sketch at each place.

**Day 2** – Begin class with a discussion of the life and artwork of Mary Longman using the discussion starter questions. As a class, discuss and define the terms Native American

and family tree. It may be necessary to draw an example of a traditional family tree on the board in order to compare and contrast it with Mary Longman's family tree sculpture *Strata and Routes*. After the class discussion, students will draw large realistic trees on 18"x 24" butcher block paper with black or white oil pastels. Encourage students to think about the realistic sketches they made during the previous class as they draw their large trees.

**Day 3-** Students will paint leaves on their tree drawings with warm and cool colors of tempera paint. After painting, students will make a list of five or six family member that they want to be included on their family tree along with three things each family member likes.

**Day 4** –Students will begin cutting out magazine pictures in the shape of leaves that represent each family member. They should consult their list during this process.

**Day 5** – Students will continue cutting out pictures and begin gluing pictures onto their trees. As they glue down their leaf pictures, students should write the name of each family member beside the picture that represents them.

**Day 6-** Allow students a few minutes at the beginning of class to finish cutting and gluing, then students will paint the background of their trees with watercolors (See Figures 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 for finished examples).

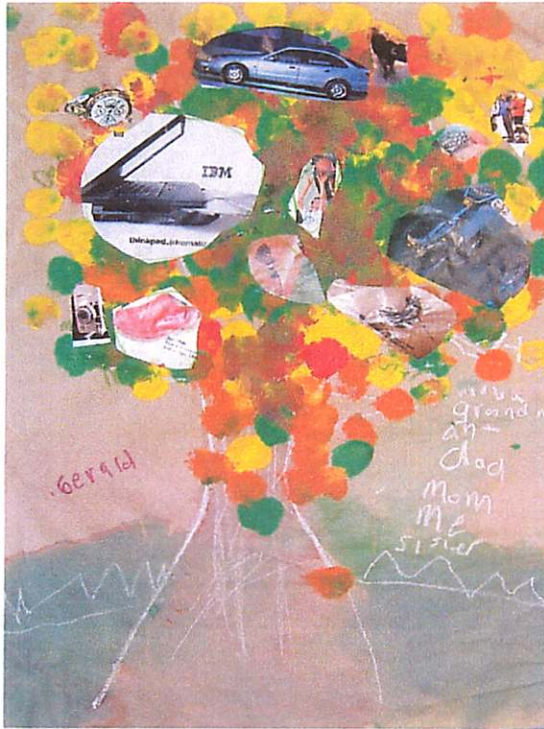


Figure 5.1 Gerard's Family Tree

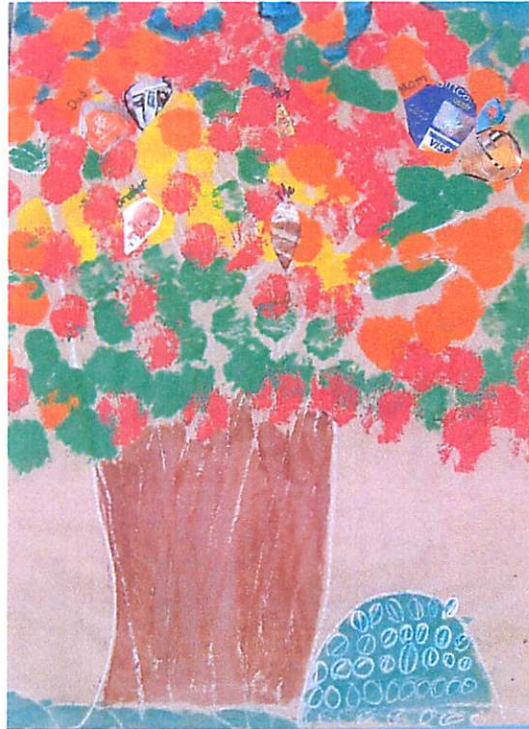


Figure 5.2 Natalia's Family Tree

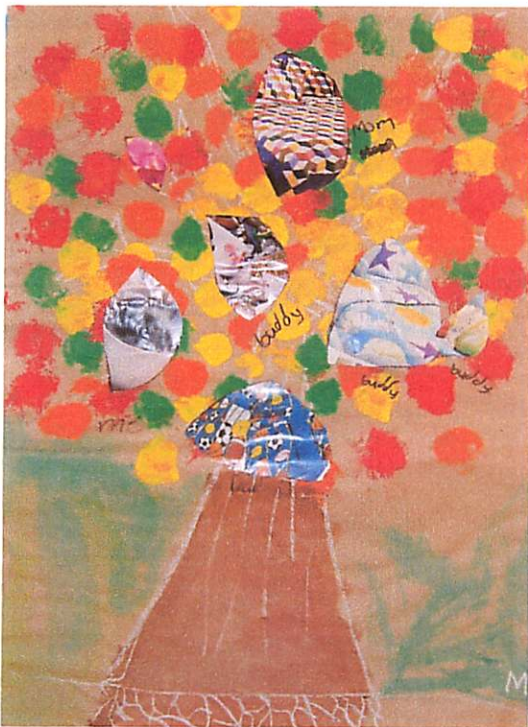


Figure 5.3 Melissa's Family Tree

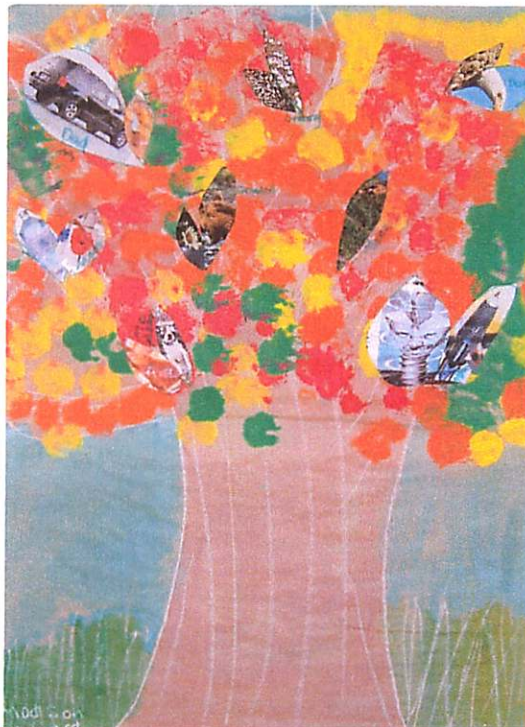


Figure 5.4 Madison's Family Tree

Day 7- Allow a few minutes at the beginning of class for students to finish their projects, and then read the story *The Little Duck* (See Figure 5.5 for cover art) which was illustrated by Mary Longman. *The Little Duck* is a Cree folktale. Review with students that folktales are traditional stories passed down from generation to generation which often contain a lesson or moral. At the conclusion of the story, ask students what they think the moral of this story might be. Most of my students responded that the moral of the story *Little Duck* was “be yourself”. Ask students how “being yourself” relates to Mary Longman’s family tree sculpture and the family trees they just completed. After the story, the teacher can lead a class discussion about the family tree project. Some questions to include in this discussion would be: What have you learned about Native Americans during this project? What is your opinion of Mary Longman’s artwork either her family tree or illustrations and why? What did you like or dislike about creating your own family tree?

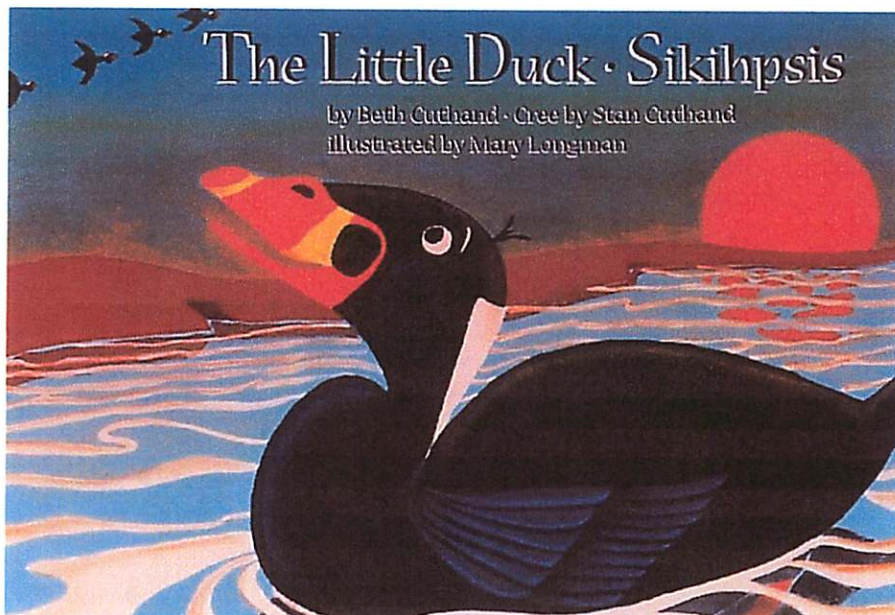


Figure 5.5 *The Little Duck* cover art and illustrations by Mary Longman

**Materials:** drawing paper, pencils, oil pastels, butcher block paper, watercolors, tempera paint, paintbrushes, magazines, scissors, and glue

**Resources:** [www.marylongman.com](http://www.marylongman.com)

**Other Studio Ideas:** An alternative to the nature drawing lesson would be to have students sketch a tree from their imaginations. Students could even choose to draw another object instead of a tree to represent their family. For example a garden, a bridge, or a building could be used instead of a tree as long as the student can explain why it would better represent his or her family.

Once the tree or other object is drawn, students should then design a color scheme for their drawing. They should also decide how to represent their families in their artwork. Let students decide if they want to represent their family with photographs from home, drawings, or with words. Encourage students to really consider the placement of their families in the artwork. The design of their trees should be a representation of their connection to their families. Many of my students decided to include friends and pets in their family trees along with their family members. It is important to make that an option for students whose families might be very small, or for students whose home lives may be very difficult. These family tree project ideas are meant to include all students, and encourage them to reflect on people who they care about and who are important to them, not to be a historically accurate family tree.

### **Tom Haukaas and Teri Greeves Inspired Beadwork (Fourth Grade)**

**Information about the Artists:** Both Tom Haukaas and Teri Greeves are contemporary Native American artists who have chosen to work in the traditional Native American medium of beadwork. Teri Greeves was born on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming, and now lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Much of her artwork is inspired by Pop Art. She takes everyday objects and reinterprets them with traditional Native American art forms and themes. Tom Haukaas was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico and now lives in Florida (McFadden & Taubman, 2004). He is a member of the Lakota Nation, and he learned traditional beadwork methods from his Lakota grandmother as a young boy (Haukaas, 2004).

Beadwork is one of the oldest Native American art forms dating back thousands of years to the first shell and bone beads. Thousands of years later, artists also began working with glass beads after contact with European settlers (Haukaas, 2004). Haukaas and Greeves use this ancient art form to address important personal and community issues.

**Information about the Artwork:** The Tom Haukaas print used in this lesson is of two beaded ceremonial shirts. Haukaas created *Special Boy's Shirt* and *Special Girl's Dress* in memory of his two teenage nieces who died tragically (Haukaas, 2004). The design on the clothing is the Lakota creation myth. According to Haukaas, he wanted the shirt to be a message of hope. He made this statement about the shirt: "It is filled with the hope that

we will all turn around the violence that is so prevalent among young people growing up in today's world" (Haukaas, 2004, p. 142).

Terri Greeves has also used her artwork to address personal and social issues. The Teri Greeves print used in this lesson is of two Converse sneakers covered in tiny glass beads. She has taken modern everyday objects and turned them into beautiful works of art using traditional Native American techniques. The shoes are bright and fun to look at, but they also contain a symbolic message. The shoes represent women's fight for equality. On one shoe, Greeves created intricately detailed women wearing traditional Native American clothing. On the second shoe, she beaded a bright red handprint. A red handprint is a traditional symbol of battle to many of the Plains Indians (Haukass, 2004).

**Discussion Starters:** Describe the clothing that you see. What types of designs do you notice? Are they modern or traditional or both? Who would wear these pieces of clothing? Are they meant to be worn at all? Would you wear them? If you would not wear them, what would you do with them? Do you think these pieces of clothing are works of art? Explain your response to the previous question. What is the difference between clothing and art? What are the artists trying to tell us with these pieces of clothing? Why are they choosing to communicate their ideas through clothing? Why do you think Haukaas and Greeves decided to create artwork using beads? How would this artwork be different if they had used something else like pencils or paint? Do you think of your clothing as a work of art?

**Objectives:**

1. Students will discuss the symbolism in the beadwork of Tom Haukaas and Teri Greeves. In art, symbolism is the use of pictures to represent ideas. Tom Haukaas uses symbols to tell traditional Native American legends and folktales while Teri Greeves uses symbols to make statements about issues such as gender roles.
2. Students will discuss symbolism on their own clothing and in their environment. They will incorporate modern or traditional symbols into their own beadwork designs.
3. Students will create a burlap pouch decorated with their own beadwork designs.

**4<sup>th</sup> grade Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards:**

**Topic:** Artistic Skills and Knowledge: Creating, Performing, Producing

**Standard:** Produces artworks in a variety of subject matter and in the areas of drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, pottery, fiber arts, and mixed media.

**Topic:** Critical Analysis and Aesthetic Understanding

**Standard:** Develops and applies criteria for judging personal decisions about artworks.

**Topic:** Historical and Cultural Context

**Standard:** Generates accurate statements about the functions (purposes) of particular artworks and the culture that produced them

**Topic:** Historical and Cultural Context

**Standard:** Explains how art reflects the relationship between artists and their culture (e.g., geographic, political, religious, and economic).

**Vocabulary**

**Symbolism** – An artist’s use of pictures to represent ideas.

**Symbol** – A picture that represents an idea.

**Beadwork** – The use of beads to create artwork traditionally on clothing or other useful objects.

**Studio Activity:**

**Day 1**- Discuss the life and artwork of Teri Greeves and Tom Haukaas. Discuss the symbols used by both artists, and symbols present in the classroom. Be sure to discuss symbols on clothing, symbols around the school, and other well-known symbols such as the peace sign. After class discussion, students will sketch out several possible symbolic beadwork designs on paper. Once they have chosen their favorite design, students will draw their design on a 6”x18” of burlap (which has been folded in half to create a pouch).

**Day 2** – Review the artwork of Tom Haukaas, Teri Greeves and Native American beadwork. Today, students will begin sewing beads onto their pouches. Before they begin, the teacher should go over sewing basics. Demonstrate how to thread the embroidery needle with yarn. Also, demonstrate how to tie knots in the end of the thread, and finally how to sew beads onto the burlap. Pass out needles, yarn, beads, and their burlap squares. When students begin running out of thread, demonstrate how they can cut their thread, tie a knot, and put new thread on their needles to continue sewing,

**Day 3** – Students will continue sewing beads onto their burlap designs.

**Day 4** – Students will begin sewing up the sides of their burlap pouches, and creating straps for the pouches. Review all sewing procedures, and demonstrate how students are

to sew up the sides of their pouches using a looping stitch, and how they can securely attach the straps.

**Day 5** – Students will finish sewing the sides and straps for their pouches (See Figures 5.6, 5.7, 5.8 for examples of finished pouches). The class will conclude with a sharing and critique time. The teacher should set aside ten to fifteen minutes at the end of class to allow students to look at each other's pouches. I have students lay their pouches on the art tables, and then slowly circulate around the room looking at each one. After looking at each pouch, students are encouraged to make positive comments about each other's work. Students should focus on discussing the symbols their classmates chose, color choices, and sewing skills. At this time, also encourage students to reflect on the project as a whole. What aspects did they like or dislike? What was the most challenging aspect of the project? Would they choose to create other artwork using this method?



Figure 5.6 *Sam's Beadwork Pouch*



Figure 5.7 *Corey's Beadwork Pouch*



Figure 5.8 *Vanessa's Beadwork Pouch*

**Materials:** paper, pencil, permanent markers, burlap, thread, pony beads, and embroidery needles

**Resources:** [www.nativeart.net](http://www.nativeart.net)

**Other Studio Ideas:** Students can draw a picture of their favorite piece of clothing, then create a symbolic design for that piece of clothing. The design should be symbolic of the student, including things they like and things that are important to them. The designs could also tell a story of something important that occurred in a student's life such as the birth of a sibling or their first day at school. After drawing their design, students can color the designs with markers or color pencils, and then cut out their piece of clothing. Clothing could be mounted to construction paper for display.

### **Allan Houser Inspired Clay Sculptures (Fifth Grade)**

**Information about the Artist:** Allan Houser was born a member of the Warm Springs band of the Chiricahua Apache (Momaday, 2004). He grew up on a farm in Fort Still, Oklahoma. Many years before Allan was born, his father fought alongside Geronimo, and eventually became his English translator. Houser first studied art in Dorothy Dunn's Painting Studio of the Santa Fe Indian School in New Mexico. He began creating sculptures at the suggestion of one of his teachers, and he received his first commission to create a sculpture in 1947. He was commissioned to create a sculpture honoring Native American soldiers who died in World War II. The sculpture was a success, and Houser began to receive more commissions and more recognition for his work (Tremblay, 2004).

**Information about the Artwork:** Many of Houser's sculptures were inspired by family scenes, especially those showing mothers and children. The three reproductions of Houser's work that I used in my lessons *Reverie*, *Earth Mother*, and *Resting at the Spring* show mothers nurturing small children. In many of his mother and child sculptures, the figures are connected or even blended together to show the bond between mother and child. Often times, Houser used his own wife and children as models for his sculptures. Through these strong, bold sculptures, Houser showed the importance of family and of nurturing future generations of his people (Tremblay, 2004).

**Discussion Starters:** Compare the reproductions of three sculptures by Allan Houser. What similarities do you notice? What differences? Compare the texture of the stone in each of the sculptures. Which one is smooth? Which one is rough? Why are some parts

smooth and some parts rough? What are these sculptures about? Who are the people in these sculptures? Why did Allan Houser choose to make a sculpture of these people? What are they doing? How do they feel, and how can you tell? How do you feel when you look at these sculptures and why? What do they make you think about? Who are the care givers in your family? How do they take care of you?

**Objectives:**

1. Students will compare and contrast the sculptures of Allan Houser.
2. Students will design a sculpture based on a friend or family member who cares for them.
3. Students will create a subtractive clay sculpture.

**5<sup>th</sup> grade Georgia Quality Core Curriculum Standards:**

**Topic:** Artistic Skills and Knowledge: Creating, Performing, Producing

**Standard:** Produces artworks and graphic designs that use selected subject matter, including symbols and ideas, to communicate a message.

**Topic:** Artistic Skills and Knowledge: Creating, Performing, Producing

**Standard:** Creates artworks in the areas of drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, pottery, fiber arts, mixed media, and digital images.

**Topic:** Critical Analysis and Aesthetic Understanding

**Standard:** Identifies specific media and techniques used to produce selected artworks.

**Topic:** Critical Analysis and Aesthetic Understanding

**Standard:** Recognizes how artists use selected subject matter, including symbols and ideas, to communicate a message.

**Topic:** Critical Analysis and Aesthetic Understanding

**Standard:** Critiques artworks in sequence of: description, analysis of design or a composition, interpretation of meaning, and judgment based on evidence/clues observed in artworks.

### **Vocabulary**

**Subtractive Sculpture** – Creating sculpture by removing material instead of adding it.

**Organic Forms** – Fluid forms inspired by nature.

### **Studio Activity:**

**Day 1** – Students will have a class discussion about the life and artwork of Allan Houser.

After the class discussion, students will sketch out a design for their own sculpture of a friend or family member who cares for them. The teacher should encourage students to keep their designs simple and organic (provide examples of Allan Houser's work for inspiration). Students should not worry about making their sketches realistic. They should sketch simple body shapes. They should also think about how the body will be positioned, and how stable their sculpture will be when finished.

**Day 2** – Class will begin with a review of Allan Houser, stressing themes in his artwork such as family and unity, and the organic simplified forms of his sculptures. Then the teacher, will demonstrate different techniques and clay tools that can be used to create subtractive sculpture. Students will be given a small block of clay to practice.

**Day 3 and Day 4** – Students will work on their subtractive clay sculpture. Teacher should encourage students to keep their sculptures simple and organic. Students should not stress over small details such as facial features that are hard to achieve with clay.

**Day 5**- After the sculptures have been dried and bisque fired, students will write a letter to the person who inspired their sculpture. The letter should explain why they chose to create the sculpture about that particular person, and what that friend or family member means to them.

**Materials:** paper, pencils, red clay, and clay tools

**Resources:** [www.allanouser.com](http://www.allanouser.com), [www.artcyclopedia.com](http://www.artcyclopedia.com)

**Other Studio Ideas:** After comparing and contrasting Houser's mother and child sculptures, ask students to think of someone who is very important to them such as a sibling, a parent, a grandparent, or a friend, someone who takes care of them, nurtures them, or encourages them. Have students share their important people, and the reasons why they value their relationship with that person. Using pencil, have students draw a picture of themselves with the person who is important to them. Encourage students to draw something they enjoy doing with their important person. After the drawings are complete, have students add color with their choice of media paint, crayons, etc. After the studio projects are complete, have students write a paragraph explaining why they chose the person in their drawing.

## Chapter 6

### Reflections on Teaching Contemporary Native American Art Lesson Plans

After developing three unit lessons on contemporary Native American artists, I began to implement those lessons in my classroom. I started in the fall of 2006 with my third grade unit on Mary Longman. If we began in the fall, my students would have their family trees completed in time for their February art show. Each of my classes came to art once every nine days so, in order to have projects completed by a deadline, we had to begin well in advance. I planned to teach each of my contemporary Native American art units at different points during the school year: my third grade unit in the fall, my fourth grade unit in winter, and my fifth grade unit in spring. I wanted to space out each unit so that I would have time to reflect on each one individually. Also, I hoped to improve my teaching and build upon things I learned with each unit.

My plan worked well for my third and fourth grade units. However, I was unable to teach my fifth grade unit on Allan Houser because of time constraints. This year because of the large number of students at my school requiring small group testing, I helped give the CRCT standardized test for almost three weeks. In previous years, I had helped with testing for two or three days and therefore had not factored in this three week testing period when planning out my lessons for the year. I decided to spend the remaining classes of the school year focusing on artwork for the fifth grade art show. It was disappointing to be unable to teach my fifth graders the Allan Houser clay unit, but I plan to teach it in the coming school year. All of the knowledge I gained in teaching my

third and fourth grade units will help me next year when I teach these lessons again, and when I teach about Allan Houser.

While teaching my units on contemporary Native American art, I kept a journal on my computer about the progress of each lesson. I would jot down notes about class discussions, improvements I could make in each lesson, and student responses to the lessons. During the 2006-2007 school year, I saw ten third grade classes and nine fourth grade classes. Keeping a journal helped me keep track of what was working and what was not each time I taught a lesson. By the tenth time I taught a lesson I knew what adjustments to make to improve class discussion, and how to make my expectations for the studio assignments as clear as possible. Also, my time management improved as I noted when I needed to stretch out discussion time, or when I needed to have other related activities planned because some students would finish early. I wrote most of the reflections contained in this chapter shortly after completing each unit. I drew largely on my notes and my memories of teaching each lesson.

### **Mary Longman Inspired Family Trees**

In October of 2006, I began teaching my unit on Mary Longman and her family tree sculpture, *Strata and Routes*, to my third grade students. Mary Longman created her sculpture from fallen tree branches that she found on the Indian Reserve where she and her family live. I wanted my students to make a similar connection to their natural world as they created their own family trees. Therefore, prior to introducing my students to the work of Mary Longman, I took all ten of my third grade classes to my school's outdoor classroom. At the beginning of each class, I encouraged students to draw trees how they

saw them, and not make up cartoon trees. On the board, I drew an example of a cartoon tree with a rectangular trunk and a circle on top for leaves and branches. Students laughed at my silly drawing. I explained that drawing cartoons can be a fun way to make art; however, today we would be drawing realistic trees. At that point, I drew a tree by looking out the window of my classroom at a specific tree. As I drew the tree, I talked with my classes about each part of the tree, and what I was looking at as I drew. After sketching out the realistic tree, I added texture to the bark and a background to my picture. Once students understood our goal for the class, we passed out drawing paper, pencils, and a textbook to serve as a drawing board. I went over behavior expectations for outdoor drawing, and then we were ready.

We spent the rest of art class drawing realistic trees around our school's outdoor classroom. Throughout our school's shady outdoor classroom, there are benches set up for student groups. We stopped at three different spots with benches. At each spot, students selected a tree and began sketching. Going to three different locations gave students a variety of trees and backgrounds to sketch. Our first stop was at the entrance to the outdoor classroom. At this point, the grassy playground stops and the trees begin. Most of the trees are tall straight pines. Our second stop is farther along the trail into the outdoor classroom. There, the trees are older with tangled roots. Other classes have added bird houses and bird feeders to the trees. Students were eager to add these details to their sketches. Our final stop was at the end of the trail near a small creek. Along the bank of the stream, little caves had been created as clay washed away from tree roots. Some of my students commented that this part of the trail was creepy. They drew lots of tangled tree branches and creepy caves. At this point in the lesson, I let them add a few

imaginary details to their caves if they were interested. As a result, a few of the caves had eerie eyes peeking out of the darkness. This outdoor excursion put my students in contact with the natural environment around their school. I wanted to help students see the connection between the tree drawings they would create in the following class and the natural world. Mary Longman drew inspiration for her family tree sculpture from long walks she would take around her home in Canada (McMaster, 1998). I wanted to draw a parallel between Mary Longman's artistic process, and the process my students would go through to create their own family trees.

In the following art class, we discussed the artwork of Mary Longman. I used the following prompts and others to initiate conversation about Mary Longman's sculptures: Longman has described this sculpture as a family tree. What is a traditional family tree? Why do you think she chose these materials for her family tree? What things do you think are important to Longman and how can you tell? How is this sculpture different from other family trees you have seen and why? Along with these discussion questions, I also provided students with some biographical information about Mary Longman. I explained that she was a Native American artist from Canada. I also told students that Mary Longman was an art teacher and an artist who created sculptures and illustrated children's books. We spent a lot of time defining the term Native American. Most of my classes came up with the definition that Native Americans were the first people to live in North America. We also discussed the term ancestor. It was important to me that students understand that Mary Longman herself was not the first person to live in North America, but her ancestors were. The discussion of ancestors was a great addition to this unit. We spent a few minutes in each class naming states and countries where our

ancestors were from. Students named countries and places such as: Vietnam, Nigeria, Atlanta, Columbia, Bosnia, and North Carolina.

Another point of discussion in most of my classes was the term “family tree”. Some students had seen their family trees, and other students had no concept as to what family tree meant. As a result in each class, I drew an example of a family tree on the board. When I do this project in the future, I plan to have a typical family tree as an example.

After our class discussion, each student drew their own realistic tree which would later become the basis for their family tree. Each student used oil pastels to draw their family tree on a large (18X24 inch) piece of butcher block paper. When they finished their drawing each student made a list of the people in their family on the back of their tree. I had them make the list so that they would begin making the connection between their tree and their family.

During the third art class, we reviewed Mary Longman, and then students painted the leaves on their family trees. Before painting, we discussed warm colors and cool colors. Students were given three warm colors: red, yellow, and orange, and one cool color green to create the leaves on their trees. Because each class only came to art once every nine days, it was very important to me to make the most of each opportunity to incorporate color theory and artistic technique into my lessons. After painting the leaves, students made a second list of their family members, this time on a separate piece of paper. Students were asked to narrow their list down to five or six family members including themselves. Beside each family member they had to list three things that that person cared about.

For the fourth lesson in this unit, I reviewed Mary Longman with my students, and showed them her website: [www.maryloman.com](http://www.maryloman.com). They enjoyed seeing pictures of her and of her other artwork. Many students commented that they like the bright illustrations she had made for children's books. On the website, there are photographs of Mary Longman riding horses and walking around her home in Canada. Seeing these pictures helped students realize that Mary Longman was a real person instead of just a name they talked about in art class. Students spent the rest of art class looking through magazines trying to find all the things on the list they made in the previous art class. When students found a picture they were instructed to cut it out in the shape of a leaf. I gave each student a paper bag to put their leaves in so they would not lose them. Students referred back to their lists to make sure that they had something for everyone in their family.

On the fifth day of the Mary Longman unit, students began gluing their leaves to their tree drawings. Many students also had to continue cutting pictures out of the magazines. As students glued down their pictures, they wrote the name of the family member that each picture represented. On the sixth day, when all the pictures were glued in place, students then used watercolors to add a background to their family trees. I encouraged students to add grass, sky, clouds, and other natural things to their artwork. The watercolors added the finishing touch to the project.

For the seventh day, I gave students the first ten to fifteen minutes of class to finish up their family trees if they had any cutting, gluing, or painting left to do. After that I read my classes a Native American folk tale called *The Little Duck* which was illustrated by Mary Longman. This tied in nicely with a literature unit on folktales that

all of my third grade classes were completing. I knew that learning about folktales and legends was a third grade language arts QCC standard when I planned the unit, but I had no idea the timing would work out so perfectly. Students were eager to share what they knew about folktales. At the end of the story, students were able to explain the moral of the story, and how they could apply it in their lives. We had just enough time after the story to talk about the family tree project. We discussed what students liked and disliked about the project. Many students enjoyed the nature walk and searching for pictures in the magazines. Some students complained that it was really hot the day we went for the nature walk, and they would have preferred to draw indoors. A few students felt frustrated that they couldn't find specific things that they wanted a picture of in the magazines such as a Corvette or a specific television character. Along with discussing the project as a whole, we also discussed their favorite part about their own family tree. Students took turns talking about specific pictures they chose for each family member. One student's father worked for a paint company, and she was very proud that she found that company's logo to put on her tree. Another student found pictures of hands writing for her tree. The hands represented her mother who wants to be a writer.

In February of 2007, all of the family trees were put on display in the school cafeteria along with a bulletin board about Mary Longman for the third grade art show. Students shared their artwork with their families. I had several parents comment that they were impressed by the thought their child had put into their family trees. Many students could remember exactly why they chose specific images to represent specific individuals.

Overall, I feel that my unit on Mary Longman was a success with my students. They showed an interest in her artwork and in creating their own family trees. Students actively participated in discussions about their families and ancestors which were sparked by our discussion of Mary Longman's family tree. During our review sessions at the beginning of each art class, students remembered details about Mary Longman's artwork such as how she built her sculptures and what inspired her artwork. They made connections between their family trees and hers. Multiple students commented on the fact that Mary Longman placed a picture of her family on her tree sculpture, and we were looking for pictures to represent family members on our tree collage. I feel that I succeeded in my goal of teaching a thoughtful and respectful unit on contemporary Native American art. My students learned about a contemporary Native American artist who gave them a real person with which to identify, breaking many of their stereotypical views of Native Americans as living in tepees and wearing feathers.

### **Tom Haukaas and Teri Greeves Inspired Beadwork**

I completed a unit on Contemporary Native American beadwork with all nine of my fourth grade classes in the Spring of 2007. I began the unit with a lesson on the artists Tom Haukaas and Teri Greeves. Both artists create innovative contemporary artwork while using the traditional art form of beadwork. During the first lesson, students looked at artwork by both artists. We discussed possible interpretations of the symbolism in each work of art using the discussion prompts from my unit lesson. We also discussed what it means to be Native American. Many students, even in the fourth grade, still have the vision of Native Americans as frozen in the past. We discussed

modern Native Americans: where they live, how they live, and also how many choose to keep their Native American traditions alive through their artwork.

After our discussion, I showed students an example of the beadwork project that we would be working on, a burlap pouch. I chose to have students create a pouch because it is something functional that they could easily create. Both Teri Greeves and Tom Haukaas took functional items such as shirts and shoes and added their unique beadwork designs to those items. Also, traditionally beadwork has been a way to embellish functional items. It seemed more appropriate to have students create something useful rather than just sew a design onto a flat piece of fabric.

Students would be sewing beads onto burlap to create a simple design. After completing the design, students would fold the burlap and sew the edges, completing a small pouch. I explained to each class that they needed to come up with a simple, yet meaningful design. This proved to be a tricky assignment. If students chose something too complicated, they would not be able to sew it with the large pony beads we would be using. If students chose something too simple, it would not be meaningful to them, and it would not be challenging to sew. I drew the students' suggestions on the board as we discussed symbols and their meanings. Many students wanted to create elaborate designs. As a compromise, the students suggested that they be able to draw on their burlap with permanent markers allowing them to add more details and words to their artwork. They would just use beads to decorate the main symbol in the center of their burlap. After brainstorming ideas on the board, students went to their tables and sketched out several designs on paper. When they had selected one design for their project, they

sketched it onto a folded 6”X18” piece of burlap with permanent markers. They wrote their name on their artwork, and then cleaned up the art room.

On day two of the beadwork unit, we began class with a review of the artwork and artists that we had discussed in the class before. Because I only see my fourth grade classes once every nine days, it is very important to refresh their memories at the beginning of each art class. After our review, we jumped right into sewing! I led students step-by-step through the sewing process, showing them how to thread their embroidery needles with yarn, tie knots in their yarn, and sew beads one at a time onto their burlap. As we worked, I asked students to think about the time and effort it would take to make some of the very intricate beadwork we had been looking at during class. My students were making designs using 20 or 30 beads while Teri Greeves and Tom Haukaas might use 1,000 times that number.

The students appeared enthusiastic about their designs and the sewing process. They were engaged in the assignment, and concerned about their artwork. Students asked many process questions such as: How do I make my beads lay flat? How do I work on a different section of my design? By the end of the second lesson, the majority of all my classes had completed sewing at least half of their designs.

The next three art classes were devoted to sewing on the beadwork designs and completing the pouches. My students began to see the effort and concentration required to make this type of artwork. As they finished sewing on beads, I demonstrated how they could sew up the sides of their fabric to make their pouch. Students then had to decide what type of strap or handle to place on their pouch. Some students turned their pouches

into mini book bags, others chose to make long straps, and others chose not to add a strap at all.

At the completion of the project, the majority of my students seemed very proud of their work. They wore their pouches around the classroom as we cleaned up, and shared their designs with their friends. On the final day of the project, students spent the first part of class finishing any last minute details on their projects. Then we moved on to a class critique of the assignment. Every student laid his or her pouch on a table. Before the critique began, we had a class discussion about appropriate comments during a critique. I asked students to comment on what they liked about each project, and make encouraging statements as they looked at the artwork. My students walked slowly and calmly around the room looking at everyone's artwork. Once students had toured the room they sat at their assigned tables, and we shared as a class some of the things they noticed such as interesting designs, neat sewing, and color scheme choices. At the end of class that day, students took their pouches home with them.

I was very proud of their work on the beadwork project. The students worked hard and did not give up even when the sewing aspect of the project was challenging. When planning this project, I worried that sewing on all of the beads might be so time consuming that students would lose interest. However, students did not lose interest. Several aspects of the project seemed to particularly hold their attention. First of all, they were very engaged in choosing their design for their pouch. The majority of students chose to use symbols that were meaningful to them such as religious symbols, initials of family members, or symbols from sports or activities in which they participate. This personal investment in the design helped to draw them into the project.

The second aspect of this project that helped to engage students was that they were designing a pouch. They liked the idea of creating something they could actually use. Some students were planning on using their pouches to store school supplies. Others were going to use theirs as purses or book bags. After the pouches were finished, I saw several students walking around school wearing their pouches. The final factor that helped maintain student engagement was also the most challenging for me as a teacher. . . sewing. The majority of my fourth graders had never threaded a needle before. We spent the beginning of every class reviewing the Native American artists they were learning about, and reviewing basic sewing skills such as threading needles and tying knots. Sewing became a classroom effort. Since I could not help everyone at once, students who were proficient at sewing had to help others near them who were not. Students also had to learn how to undo their mistakes, and be persistent.

One of my goals for this unit was that students would understand that many Native American artists choose to use traditional methods of making art such as beadwork in a nontraditional way. My students emulated this idea by creating beadwork pouches decorated with their own contemporary designs. They were fascinated by the beadwork sneakers of Teri Greeves and amazed at the intricate detail of Tom Haukaas's beadwork shirts. These artists helped inspire my students, and also give them a new perspective on who Native American artists are and what they create.

## Chapter Seven

### Summary, Recommendations, and Conclusion

#### Summary

This project began as a way for me to learn more about multicultural education, and develop better lessons on Native American art. My research not only helped in those areas, but it changed the way I approach planning and implementing all of the lessons in my classroom. I feel that now I see the whole picture. When developing a lesson about any artist, I consider how their culture and their personal history influenced their artwork. My students have become more engaged in classroom discussions when they have this sort of information. They are able to make a connection with the artist and the artwork instead of just thinking of it as simply a picture on a poster.

The focus of my research was on four questions: How should elementary art educators teach their students about Native American art in order to promote understanding and appreciation of another culture? What topics within Native American art are appropriate for elementary art teachers to address in their classrooms? Are there topics or artwork that should be avoided, and if so what are they and why? Finally, what types of Native American art lessons will be the most rewarding for students, and have a firm foundation in multicultural educational theory? The next few paragraphs will report my findings on these questions.

**How should elementary art educators teach their students about Native American art in order to promote understanding and appreciation of another culture?**

Through my research, I learned that in order to promote understanding of another culture, teachers must provide adequate cultural and historical information about the art and artist being studied. It is best to have information from multiple points of view. In the case of Native Americans that might mean historical information from the point of view of Native Americans, artist's statements, and art criticism in order to provide students with the most complete understanding of the artwork.

**What topics within Native American art are appropriate for elementary art teachers to address in their classrooms?**

At the beginning of my research, I was very concerned with what types of Native American artwork would be appropriate to study in the elementary art classroom. It seemed that often sacred Native American art was being used by art educators carelessly and without respect to its meaning. It became apparent that with thoughtful preparation, research, and consideration of audience almost all Native American artwork would be appropriate for study. Sacred art is acceptable to use; however, care must be taken to guard against careless recreation of religious objects.

**Are there topics or artwork that should be avoided, and if so what are they and why?**

Through my review of the literature on multicultural education and my research of Native American lessons in *School Arts*, it became apparent that the problem was not

in using sacred artifacts like Kachina dolls, sand paintings, and totem poles in lessons.

The problem was with the careless recreation of those sacred works of art. Lei and Grant (2001) refer to this approach to multicultural education as “ethnic tourism” (p. 220).

When sacred artwork is recreated in this way, it is disrespectful to the culture being studied. Students cannot fully comprehend the religious meaning of the objects they are recreating when the subject is glossed over so lightly, and often they are creating copies of the artwork out of recycled materials. Therefore, it is acceptable to use all topics that are age appropriate, but special care must be exercised when dealing with sacred items.

**What types of Native American art lessons will be the most rewarding for students, and have a firm foundation in multicultural educational theory?**

In order to avoid treating sacred items too lightly and to fully engage students in Native American art using multicultural educational theory, the best lessons would use an interpretive studio assignment. Students would not just recreate a style of art. They would discuss and learn about a work of art. Afterwards, they would create their own work inspired by the original. This idea stems from Bank’s (2001) transformative approach to multicultural education in which students are helped to see the world from a point of view other than their own instead of being given a more superficial view of another culture. The transformative approach also encourages students to see commonalities between groups of people instead of just differences (Whitehead, 2004). An example of the transformative approach to multicultural education would be my unit on Mary Longman. After viewing her sculpture *Strata and Routes*, students did not try to replicate her artwork by creating a tree sculpture. Instead, we discussed how she got

inspiration for her sculpture from her natural environment, from her family, and from her heritage. Then, my students went on a nature walk in their own natural environment and thought about how various drawings and magazine pictures could represent their own families.

I also began to focus on contemporary Native American artists. That choice played a major role in the level of engagement in my classroom and the quality of my lessons. Just knowing that an artist made a particular work of art two or three years ago helped my students see that Native Americans are modern people. It helped to change my students' perceptions of Native Americans. These realizations led to excellent class discussions about ancestors, cultural traditions, and our preconceived ideas about others.

### **Recommendations for Designing Lessons on Native American Art**

In order to help art teachers who are interested in designing lessons on Native American art, or other multicultural lessons, I have created a list of recommendations. Through my review of current literature on Native American art, and my analysis of Native American themed articles in *School Arts*, I came across several ideas that guided my research. These ideas were also key in the development of my lessons on contemporary Native American art. I believe that they will also be useful to other art educators:

- 1. When developing lessons, on Native American art it is important to have cultural and historical information to share with your students about the artwork or artist being**

studied. Students' understanding of an artist and his or her inspiration for a work of art can be greatly enhanced by having this type of information.

2. It is important to include contemporary artists in multicultural curriculum. Studying contemporary artists help students understand that members of a specific cultural group such as Native American are not frozen in time. They are vibrant working artists living in a modern world. Contemporary artists can also serve as positive role models to all students especially those who share a similar cultural heritage.

3. Studio assignments should not be copies of Native American artwork. Much of traditional Native American artwork is religious in nature, and copying that artwork using paper scraps and cardboard is disrespectful to an ancient culture. Teachers should design studio assignments that gain inspiration from Native American artwork, but do not copy. Studio assignments can be designed to interpret traditional or contemporary Native American art without directly copying it.

4. Educators should strive to use Bank's (2001) transformative approach to multicultural education. The transformative approach encourages teachers to develop lessons that address cultural and historical issues from the point of view of the culture being studied. Discussing popular international holidays, or teaching one multicultural unit a year is not enough to be considered transformative. According to Banks (2001), all curriculum should be designed to teach from multiple perspectives and include the voices of many cultures.

## **Conclusion**

The class discussions and the studio work of my students far exceeded my expectations for this applied project. Their level of engagement and interest has made me eager to continue developing lessons and teaching in this way. My review of the literature on multicultural education and analysis of articles on Native American art in *School Arts* magazine has helped me understand the broader picture of how others in the world of education deal with this sensitive topic. From my research and the work that I have done in my classroom, I feel well prepared to address the topic of Native American art as well as any other diverse topics with my students.

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