

Enduring Patterns: Pre-Columbian Ecuadorean Textile Designs

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Grade Level 4 - 12

Duration 3-4 class periods

National Geography Standards

Element Two: Places and Regions

4 The Physical and Human Characteristics of Places

6 How Culture and Experience Influence People's Perceptions of Places and Regions

Element Four: Human Systems

9 The Characteristics, Distribution, and Migration of Human Population on Earth's Surface

Arizona State Standards

ESSENTIALS 3SS-E5

Describe natural and human characteristics of places and use this knowledge to define regions, their relationships with other regions, and their patterns of change, with emphasis on: PO 5 how culture and economics give a place identity and meaning and affect the perception of places and regions, including the role of media images

PROFICIENCY 3SS-P2

Analyze natural and human characteristics of places in the world studied to define regions, their relationships, and their pattern of change, with emphasis on: PO 4 how the character and meaning of a place is related to its economic, social, and cultural characteristics and why different groups in society view places and region differently

Other Standards

Arts

Adapted or Modified

The lesson is inspired by the Pre-Columbian textile printing artifacts found in the Oswaldo Guayasamin Museum, Quito, Ecuador.

Overview

Students will replicate Pre-Columbian Ecuadorean designs on modern fabric using authentic methods.

Purpose

Students will appreciate Pre-Columbian Ecuadorean design motifs and traditional textile decorative techniques.

Materials

1. Downloadable examples of Pre-Columbian Ecuadorean designs that you can access by scrolling down to the supplemental files
2. Clay, sculpting tools for incising the clay, a rolling pin, and access to a kiln.
3. Fabric ink and fabric. For student use, water-based ink is recommended.
4. Optional: Dowels if rolling fabric printers are desired.

Objectives

The student will be able to mention at least 2 artistic themes common in Pre-Columbian Ecuadorean art and be able to speculate on why those themes were important to these peoples.

Procedures

1. Share the downloadable designs with students, who will select a favorite design for their project.
2. Roll out slabs of clay 2" by 6" and 1/2" thick with rolling pins.
3. Use a pencil to gently transfer the design from the paper to the clay slab by tracing the design and making a faint impression in the clay.
4. Use sculpting tools to remove between 1/8" and 1/4" of the "white areas" (what won't print) and leaving the raised "black areas" (what will print).
5. Make sure the clay is still a uniform thickness by running over it gently with a rolling pin.
 - 6a. The finished flat stamp can be fired in a kiln and used "as-is" to stamp fabric with fabric ink. Ensure that the slab remains flat until it's fired if you want it to stamp fabric well.
 - 6b. Alternatively (and probably truer to the artifacts found in the Guayasamin Museum), the slab can be rolled into a 2" high tube and fired. The resulting tube can be used to roll on the fabric ink or a

dowel can be inserted in the tube and it can be used like a rolling pin to apply the ink.

Student Assessment

Students can be assessed by visually inspecting either their clay stamp or their stamped fabric. Depending on the teacher, his/her lesson goals, and the age of the students, these points could be assessed:

1. Is it true to the spirit of the Pre-Columbian design?
2. Or, does it show original artistic flair and creativity?
3. Does the stamp actually work well to transfer ink to fabric?

Extensions

1. Research can be done on other techniques of fabric stamping in other cultures around the world.
2. The downloadable designs in this lesson could be enlarged and larger stamps created. Older students could use geometry skills and formulas to calculate the diameter of the dowels to be used for a given sized clay slab.

Sources

"Indian Designs From Ancient Ecuador" by Frederick W. Shaffer. Dover Publications, Inc., 1979.