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Wheeler, E. H. & Bobick, B. (2011). Native
American lesson plans in school arts: A
content Analysis. *Journal of Art for Life*,
2(1), 19-35.

Native American Art Lesson Plans in *School Arts*: A Content Analysis

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Abstract

This article presents an examination of two studies which explored and examined multicultural art education. A content analysis of Native American themed articles in *School Arts* magazine from 1985-2004 was conducted to understand how art educators addressed this issue in their curriculum and to identify sound criteria by which to develop art education curriculum. Once the criteria for best practices in multicultural art education was identified, an action research design was used to investigate the impact of Native American themed art lessons on student learning and on multicultural awareness. The overarching aim of both studies was to uncover best practices for creating and teaching elementary art curriculum on Native American art and contemporary Native American artists.

Keywords: Multicultural education, elementary art education, contemporary Native American art 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.

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Journal of Art for Life 2(1)

Excellent multicultural education cannot be limited to learning one aspect of a culture . . .

Teaching art lessons about a culture outside one's own is a challenge. After teaching a unit on Native American art it was clear that our lessons needed improvement. As we grappled to revise these learning experiences, we wondered if other art teachers struggled with the development of multicultural lessons. Did they worry about the thorny issues that could emerge when discussing other cultures such as presenting information sensitively and accurately? Did they worry about being politically correct? These issues and questions were the motivation for conducting research on how to develop lessons and teach students about Native American art using socially and politically sensitive methods. We also sought information on how other art teachers across the nation dealt with these issues. The research was guided by four basic questions:

1. How should elementary art educators teach their students about Native American art in order to promote understanding and appreciation of another culture?
2. What topics within Native American art are appropriate for elementary art teachers to address in their classrooms?
3. Are there topics or artworks that should be avoided, and if so what are they and why?
4. Finally, what types of Native American

art lessons have both high reward for students and a firm foundation in multicultural educational theory?

This last question was of utmost importance because we wanted to create in-depth, culturally sensitive lessons on this topic, yet we also wanted to insure that the lessons were engaging and exciting for students.

To answer these questions, two studies were conducted. The first was a content analysis of the published articles on teaching Native American art that were available through the journal, *School Arts*. Secondly, based on the results of the content analysis, we conducted an action research study where we developed and implemented, and critically evaluated art lessons for an elementary classroom. The results of these two studies are reported herein.

Development of the Thesis

When we first became interested in the topic of multicultural education we struggled with the question: Why is multicultural education an important topic for us to research? Blocker (2005), Delacruz (1996), and Desai (2000) solidified our reasoning for researching this topic, and confirmed some of our beliefs about the power of multicultural art education. We believed that it was an important topic to understand for our benefit, as

Wheeler & Bobick/Content Analysis of Native American Art Lesson Plans

well as our students, and for the larger educational world. However, we weren't sure how to explain or rationalize our interest in this topic. After in-depth study, we found that Christine Ballengee-Morris and Patricia Stuhr (2001) best encapsulated the importance of multicultural education. They explained the necessity of multicultural education in our society:

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)

Using a multicultural education perspective is one way that teachers can help students grasp the global society in which we live. According to Ballengee-Morris and Stuhr (2000), multicultural education not only broadens a person's cultural awareness, but is a model that pushes for active rather than passive learning. They emphasized the implementation of this educational philosophy should include issues of power, history, and self-identify (p.6). Ballengee-Morris and Stuhr clarified that excellent multicultural education cannot be limited to learning one aspect of a culture; it must address historical, social, and personal issues in order to provide students with more than just a superficial understanding of a culture.

As art educators who found multiculturalism a worthy educational goal, we felt the need to justify the need for multicultural *art* education. What makes art an

important vehicle to convey the ideas of culture, identity, and acceptance to students? To answer this question, we turned to the writings of anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1995). He underscored 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 as cited 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 its art. Multicultural education is necessary and art can be a significant vehicle for multicultural education.

Approaches to Multicultural Education

There are many different approaches to multicultural education. They include Nieto's (2002) approach that multicultural education is a way at looking at the world, not just a program or aspect of a school's curriculum. Lemmar and Squelch (1993) focused on multiculturalism as recognizing all cultural groups and is a part of the changing nature of teaching and learning. These approaches share commonalities such as the need for students to see the world through multiple perspectives. By learning about various perspectives, 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).

There are numerous ways to approach multicultural education. Although numerous authors developed various types of multicultural education, levels of multicultural education, and strategies for multicultural education, we focused on the categories identified by Banks (2001). His approach to multicultural education provides a solid framework for teachers who want to generate multicultural curriculum and offers ways for K-12 teachers to successfully implement multicultural education practices in the classroom. Through 30 years of research and writing he has influenced educators in all fields, including art educators. His commitment to increasing education equality for all students in the United States is evident in this body of work. Banks theorized that there are four approaches that teachers use when creating multicultural curricula: contribution, additive, transformative, and social action. Sinagatullin (2003) summarized his 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 structure;

- (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 actions related to the concepts and issues they have studied. (p. 93)

Content Analysis of Native American Themed Articles

A content analysis of articles on Native American art education over 19 years of *School Arts* magazine (1985–2004) was conducted to inform the development of art education lesson plans. The examination began with 1985 to capture the years when a renewal of interest in multicultural education emerged and to analyze how this renewal affected the way art educators taught Native American art. *School Arts* was selected for examination as opposed to other art education periodicals because it is a national art education magazine in existence since 1901 (Davis Arts, 2010) and because this is the journal where practicing art teachers publish their lessons.

Only full-length articles and lesson plans on Native American art were included; these articles and lesson plans provided the most information to review. After locat-

Wheeler & Bobick/Content Analysis of Native American Art Lesson Plans

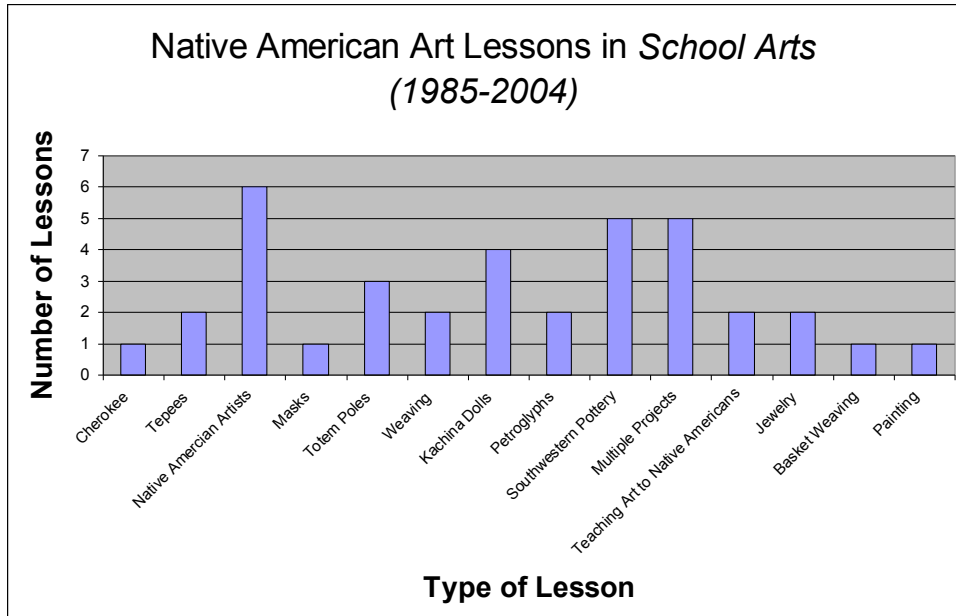


Figure 1. *Native American Art Lessons in School Arts(1985-2004).*

ing and reading all of the Native American articles, the lessons were categorized into topics. After categorizing the articles, a rubric was developed to determine if each article was an effective, transformative example of multicultural teaching practices.

Results

All total, 37 articles about Native American art were found. The frequency of specific types of lessons found in *School Arts* is shown in Figure 1. The most frequently occurring articles (six) were about contemporary Native American artists. This fact was encouraging considering the research by Mariahazy (1990) which suggests it is beneficial for students to learn about modern multicultural artists. Contemporary artists, such as Shonto Be-

gay, Elmer Yazzi, Helen Hardin and Jaune Quick-to-See-Smith were featured in this cohort of articles. 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.

Much of Quick-to-See Smith’s artwork deals with Native American stereotypes. In her painting, *Cowboys and Indians*, she draws attention to the Hollywood stereotypes of gun fighting cowboys and Indians. According to Stewart (1996), who stated, “Smith wants us to think about the harsh reality hidden behind what appears to be a simple childhood game” (p. 24).

Studying Quick-to-See Smith’s artwork could provide students with an opportunity to think about their own ideas about Na-

tive Americans, and Native American stereotypes they have seen in T.V. and movies.

Another trend in *School Arts* was that a large number of articles written about traditional Native American artwork from the southwestern United States. Topics such as kachina dolls, petroglyphs, Southwestern pottery, and Navajo weaving were covered in 13 out of the 37 articles reviewed. There was one article about Native Americans from the southeastern United States, which was an article on the Cherokee Nation by Beverly Scott (2000).

Evaluation of Native American Themed Articles

After graphing the frequency of various types of lessons that appeared in *School Arts* over the 19 year span examined, a rubric for evaluating the effectiveness of these lessons based on the knowledge we gained researching multicultural education was developed. One standard of an effective multicultural education lesson was one which included both accurate cultural and historical information. Information about contemporary Native American artists was found to be a second standard of effective multicultural education. Finally, an effective article was one that included studio lesson(s) which provided students with thoughtful interpretations of Native American artwork as opposed to copying artwork being studied or without providing awareness of the cultural or religious significance behind the artwork.

Using these three criteria in the previous paragraph as a guide, an evaluation of each article was conducted.

Articles that met all three criteria received a *Level Three* rating. Articles that met two out of three criteria received a *Level Two* and articles that met one criterion or partially met two received a *Level One*. Out of 37 articles, 16 were rated as Level One, 12 were Level Two, and nine were Level Three examples of multicultural teaching practices (see Appendix A).

Criteria 1: Does the article include accurate cultural and historical information? The first criterion 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 Americans discussed. An example of a Level Two article that provided excellent cultural and or historical information was Scott's (2000) article entitled Remembering the Cherokee. In this article, a detailed account of the Cherokee Trail of Tears was provided from the viewpoint 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. (p. 32)

All nine Level Three articles included in-depth historical and cultural information. Seven out of the 12 Level Two articles provided in-depth cultural and historical information while only two Level One articles provided such information.

Wheeler & Bobick/Content Analysis of Native American Art Lesson Plans

Criteria 2: Does the article include contemporary native american artists?

The second criterion 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 all were rated as Level Three articles. The other three Level Three articles provided minimal information about contemporary Native American artists. Of the Level Two articles, several authors cited contemporary Native American artists such as Maria Martinez (Beck, 1995) but gave only limited information about these artists. The authors of 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 third criterion was whether or not the project was simply a copy of Native American artwork, or did it allow for student interpretation. If no studio lesson was included, was enough information about the culture and artists provided so that teachers could develop their own culturally sensitive studio lessons. An effective multicultural teaching strategy might be the use of 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) warned that such “copy cat” lessons promoted stereotypes and stated, “The study of and appreciation for the art of ethnic

minorities should not consist of school-children 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 the article *Personal Shields* by Passmore (1995) the author introduced her students to traditional Native American symbols, and then asked students to design a shield incorporating both traditional symbols and symbols from their own lives.

The articles in the Level Three category not only suggested lessons that allowed for student interpretation, but frequently used artwork to address social and historical issues. An example of this type of lesson can be found in the article *A Contemporary Kachina* by Herzog (1989). Herzog suggested teachers consider the following discussion starters when teaching about Hopi culture:

Discuss with students the role of the clown in Hopi kachina ceremonies, and in the students own culture. Have students look for images of clowns from other cultures, and develop a cross-cultural comparison of clowning. Who are the clowns of contemporary culture in the United States? Have students draw, paint, or make sculptural images of their own cultural clowns. (p. 34)

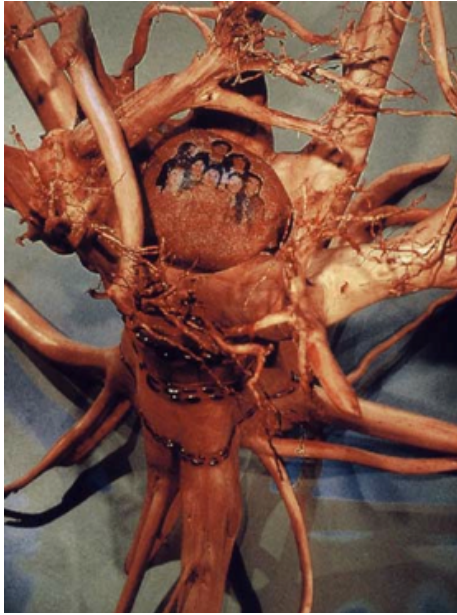


Figure 2. "Strata and Routes" by Mary Longman. A photograph of Longman's family is printed on the river rock at the center of the sculpture.

For this assignment students had to compare and contrast clowns from different cultures. They had to think about what each culture found humorous and the role of clowns in each society before creating their own artwork inspired by clowns.

Summary

Nineteen years of School Arts Native American articles were evaluated. Eighteen of the articles found were from the years 1995-1999, more than from any other time period researched. Out of those 18 articles, six received a Level Three rating, six received a Level Two rating, and six 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.

Overall, examining the various Native American art lesson plans in *School Arts* gave us a much better understanding of stellar multicultural art education lessons. We were able to apply theoretical information about multicultural education to the actual practice of art education. The three most significant qualities that a lesson on Native American art should have are: (1) historical/cultural information, (2) information about contemporary Native American artists, and (3) thoughtful, interpretive activities.

Action Research

In addition to the content analysis, an action research project was conducted in the first author's art classroom at the elementary school. The inquiry was conducted to inform us about how to transform the Native American lessons included in elementary art curricula.

After researching multicultural educational theory and examining articles on Native American lessons in *School Arts*, we decided that lesson plans should focus on the work of contemporary Native American artists. This conclusion was supported by Mariahazy (1990) who stressed the importance of showing students the work of successful adults from various cultural groups. Art education lessons about contemporary Native American artists exposed students of Native American heritage to successful artists with a similar cultural heritage. Students from other cultural backgrounds had a

new experience on what it means to be a Native American. Presenting artwork of contemporary Native American artists brought Native American culture alive. Instead of thinking of Native Americans as frozen in time, living in tepees, and hunting buffalo, students experienced contemporary Native Americans creating artwork sensitive to their cultural heritage.

When selecting images for the project, we used Yenawine's (2003) guidelines for choosing art for beginning viewers. Yenawine suggested searching for works of art that the audience would find accessible, that people might 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" (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 heighten their interest and their feeling of competency when looking at art. Therefore, when choosing examples of contemporary Native American art lessons, narrative artwork was selected that was accessible for elementary students. Works by three contemporary Native American artists were selected: Mary Longman, Teri Greeves, and Tom Haukaas. These artists blend traditional and modern art making techniques and also address societal issues.

Images were found by researching

recent contemporary Native American art exhibition catalogs. Artwork from two exhibitions was selected to include in the action research project. The first was Mary Longman's sculpture, *Strata and Routes*, and was part of the exhibit *Reservation X: The Power of Place in Aboriginal Contemporary Art* developed by the Canadian Museum of Civilization (McMaster, 1998; see Figure 2). *Strata and Routes* is an installation sculpture depicting Longman's version of a family tree and is rich in narrative and symbolism. 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. It was hypothesized that elementary school students would be able to use this piece as a touchstone for understanding the concept of a family tree. We also felt that they would enjoy the challenge of creating their own family tree in class (see Figure 3a & 3b).

The other art works were beadwork creations by two artists, Tom Haukaas and Teri Greeves. These artists were part of the *Changing Hands: Art without Reservation 2* exhibit. The artwork from the *Changing Hands* exhibit focused on contemporary Native North American art from the West, Northwest, and Pacific regions. Haukaas' and Greeves' art works were grouped together because they used the same medium and both created clothing with symbolic bead designs. Haukaas created two ceremonial shirts showing the Lakota creation myth. Greeves beaded Converse sneakers with symbolic designs

representing cultural and feminist issues (Haukaas, 2005). We felt that both of these works of art would be intriguing to students. The narrative quality of the creation myth would capture their attention while Greeves' choice of Converse sneakers would pique their interest.

Wheeler developed lesson plans about the artwork of these contemporary Native American artists for use in her elementary art classroom (see Appendix B for a sample lesson plan). Along with background information on each artist, discussion prompts were included. The discussion questions were a starting point for teachers to use in their classrooms to spark discussion and conversation about each work of art. We chose to form discussion questions specific to each individual work of art because Native American art is so deeply rooted in cultural meaning. We believed that it was 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 (see Appendix C).

The studio assignments helped students reflect on their own cultural experiences; the goal was to have students reflect on their lives and their families as they formulated ideas for their artwork. As seen in Figures 3 and 4, students drew inspiration for their artwork from the art and artists in these curricular units, as well as their own experiences.

One observation made during the research study was that the students were observed as being engaged learners who



Figure 3a. Student art example, Mary Longman *Inspired Family Tree*.

developed their own personal works of arts based on a contemporary Native American artist. As part of the study, lessons plans were continuously modified to fit the individual learning styles of each group of students. Some classes needed a greater amount of time for the discussion questions, while other classes spent more time on the studio aspect of the project.

Recommendations for Designing Lessons on Native American Art

In order to help art teachers interested in designing lessons on Native American art, or other multicultural lessons, recommendations were crafted. Through a review of literature on Native



Figure 3b. Student art example, Mary Longman *Inspired Family Tree*.

American art and the content analysis of Native American themed articles in School Arts, several ideas that guided this research emerged which were important in the development of the lessons on contemporary Native American art:

1. When developing lessons on Native American art it is important to have cultural and historical information to impart to 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 curricu-

lum. Studying contemporary artists enhance student understanding that specific groups such as Native Americans are alive and vital cultures. They are vibrant working artists living in a modern world. These artists serve as positive role models to all students especially those who share a similar cultural heritage or who are from non-dominant cultures.

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 may be 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 lesson falls short of transformative education. According to Banks, all curricula should be designed to teach from multiple perspectives and include the voices of many cultures.

Conclusion

The analysis of articles on Native American art in *School Arts* magazine helped us understand the development of lesson plans for teaching Native American art and culture. The content analysis broadened our understanding of how others in art education deal with this sensitive topic. The class discussions and the studio work of the students far exceeded our expectations. Their level of engagement and interest has made us eager to continue developing multicultural art lessons and teaching from a culturally-sensitive perspective. From both the content analysis research and the action research work conducted in the classroom, we are now prepared to address the topic of Native American art as well as any other diverse topics with our students.

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Wheeler & Bobick/Content Analysis of Native American Art Lesson Plans

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Appendix A

School Arts Articles Reviewed

Author	Date	Title	Description	Level
Adams, Laurie Stone	1997, October	<i>Petroglyphs: Ancient Rock Art</i>	Students create clay slabs inspired by petroglyphs in Texas.	1
Beck, Barbara	1995, December	<i>Pueblo Pottery</i>	Students create coil pottery and decorate it with Southwestern designs.	2
Carroll, Karen	1986, January	<i>Northwest Coast Masks</i>	Discussion of Northwest Coast transformation masks and suggested mask activities for elementary and secondary students.	2
Clover, Faith and Jim, Alan	1997, October	<i>Shonto Begay Talks About His Art</i>	An interview with Navajo artist Shonto Begay and a lesson plan inspired by his paintings.	3
Gaposchkin, Ann	1988, January	<i>Totem Poles with a Purpose</i>	Students work in groups to create their own Totem Poles from recyclable materials.	1
Gammons, Betsy	1994, November	<i>Designing in the Navajo Tradition</i>	Students create blanket designs inspired by Navajo weaving.	1
Gregory, Anne	1989, February	<i>Basketry from Native Materials</i>	Students weave baskets from natural materials.	1
Hanson, Kate and Zidonik, Linda	1996, May/June	<i>Paper Bag Tepee</i>	Students create a life size tepee.	1
Harewell-Amos, Janneth	1996, September	<i>Animal Treks through Time and Space</i>	Students create a variety of artwork based on traditional Native American art.	1
Harrington, Kelly	1997, October	<i>Interpretation of Pueblo Pottery Making</i>	Elementary students create a variety of pottery inspired by Pueblo artists.	2
Henn, Cynthia A.	2004, January	<i>Rock Art</i>	Students learn about pictographs and petroglyphs while designing symbols.	2
Herzog, Melanie	1989, February	<i>A Contemporary Kachina</i>	Discussion of traditional and contemporary Kachina dolls.	3
Herzog, Melanie	1992, October	<i>Building Bridges Across Cultures</i>	An in depth discussion of Jaune Quick-to-see Smith and her artwork.	3
LiPira, Michael	1997, October	<i>A Journey into Native American Painting</i>	An art instructor at a Navajo boarding school uses contemporary Native American artists as a springboard for a unit on painting.	3
Mollhagen, Nancy	2001, March	<i>Welcome Totems</i>	Students design totem poles for their high school lobby.	1
Morgan, Leah and Bex, Annie	1996, May/June	<i>Not a Plain(s) Tepee</i>	Students design a tepee and learn about Native American culture.	1
Niceley, H. T.	1992, November	<i>Mimbres Bowls of the American Southwest</i>	Information on Mimbres pottery and creating a coil bowl.	1
Ogren, Eileen	1995, November	<i>Hide and Seek</i>	Students create symmetrical designs inspired by Native American artwork.	1
Pass, Marilyn	1993, April	<i>Interdisciplinary Multicultural Education: A Unique Approach</i>	Students learn about Native American culture through an interdisciplinary art/music/history class.	3
Passmore, Kay	1995, April	<i>Personal Shields</i>	Students create personal shields inspired by Native American designs.	2
Patterson, Berniece	1996, November	<i>Woven Necklaces</i>	Students weave necklaces and learn about the history of Native American weaving.	2
Pollard, Patricia	1985, December	<i>Indian Jewelry</i>	Students create clay beads after looking at traditional Native American jewelry.	1
Rapp, Susan	1985, November	<i>Try Totem Sculpture</i>	Students practice wood carving after studying totem poles.	2
Sasser, Eliz. & Sasser, Thomas	1985, January	<i>Motivating Forms</i>	Examples of various kachina projects.	1
Schonauer, Kathleen	1991, April	<i>After the Zuni: Fetish Necklaces</i>	Students create clay fetish necklaces.	1
Scott, Beverly	2000, April	<i>Remembering the Trail of Tears</i>	Students learn about the Trail of Tears and create artwork in honor of the Cherokee who suffered during that time.	2
Stern, Debbie	1992, November	<i>The Pueblo Storyteller</i>	Students create clay dolls.	1
Stewart, Marilyn	1996, May/June	<i>Jaune Quick-to-See Smith: Emphasizing the Connections Among all Things</i>	A discussion of Quick-to-See Smith's life and artwork focusing on the stereotypes addressed in her painting Cowboys and Indians.	3
Stockrocki, Mary	1998, October	<i>Art in Hopiland</i>	Stockrocki observes lessons on Egyptian art at Hopi Junior- Senior High.	3
Stockrocki, Mary	1995, April	<i>Changing traditions and the search for innovation: Helen Hardin</i>	A discussion of the life and artwork of artist Helen Hardin.	3
Stockrocki, Mary	1995, April	<i>Navajo Tradition and Change: Love of the Land</i>	Stockrocki observes a 5th grade drawing lesson taught by a Navajo art teacher.	2
Stockrocki, Mary	1993, April	<i>The Navajo Way</i>	A description of a Navajo third grade art lesson on three dimensional insects.	2
Valentine, Ticia	2001, March	<i>All Fired Up!</i>	Students participate in the pit firing process.	2
Vining, Patricia	1995, April	<i>Kachina Dolls</i>	Third graders create their own kachina dolls	1
Wallach, Nancy	1995, April	<i>Helen Hardin: Seeing with a Multicultural Perspective</i>	After looking at the artwork of Helen Hardin and traditional kachinas, students create drawings based on kachina images.	2
Warren, Shelia	1989, February	<i>Investigating Cultures</i>	Students create beads, baskets, weaving and masks based on Native American artwork.	1
White, John Howell	1997, October	<i>Jaune Quick-to-See Smith</i>	Discussion of the painting Tonges Trade Canoe and related art lessons.	3

Wheeler & Bobick/Content Analysis of Native American Art Lesson Plans

Appendix B

Lesson Plan Example: Mary Longman Inspired Family Trees (First Grade)

Information about the Artist

Mary Longman was born in Fort Qu'Appelle Valley, in Saskatchewan, Canada in 1964. She is a member of the Gordon First Nation (McCaster, 1998). Longman has studied art at various colleges and universities throughout Canada including the Emily Carr College of Art of Design. She received her Master's degree in Fine Arts at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax and her PhD in art education the University of Victoria (Longman, 2008). Longman's drawings and sculptures have been displayed in museums across North America including The Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian and The Museum of Modern Art.

Mary Longman was unjustly taken away from her family and placed in foster care at a young age by Canadian Social Services. During the 1960's and 1970's, this was a frequent occurrence in Aboriginal families in order to separate children from their cultural heritage. Eventually, she returned to live with her biological family at age 16 (Longman, 2008). Much of Longman's work has been influenced by her time spent in the foster care system and the close connections she formed with her family and her First Nations community after the experience. Longman made this statement about her artwork:

My art is a reflection of my life, of being in place and time, just as art production is essentially a mirror of the self and the self in life. My visual narrative is influenced by my current realities such as significant events, challenges and milestones in my life, that are specific to the Aboriginal experience, both on a personal and national, political scale. I tell these stories through my art to raise public awareness about issues, and to bridge the human connection. Ultimately, they become historical markers of a point of being in place and time. (p.1)

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 said this artwork is about her family and the places she has lived. How does the sculpture *Strata and Routes* represent her family? How does it represent where she has lived? What is a traditional family tree? Who is represented in a family tree? Who are the members of your family? 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 are? 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 discuss Mary Longman's artwork *Strata and Routes* and compare it to their ideas of family and family trees.

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.

First Nations - Name used in Canada for the people that are native to Canada. Their ancestors were the first people to live in Canada.

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

Suggested Materials

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

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. 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.

Wheeler & Bobick/Content Analysis of Native American Art Lesson Plans

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 or 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: After reviewing Mary Longman and her artwork, students will cut out magazine pictures in the shape of leaves that represent each family member. Students should look for pictures of something that each family member likes. The teacher should demonstrate this process for the class. If there is time left over after cutting and gluing, students can add a background to their artwork with oil pastels.

Day 5: Allow a few minutes at the beginning of class for students to finish their projects, and then read the story *The Little Duck*, 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. 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 is your opinion of Mary Longman’s artwork either her family tree or illustrations and why?

Resource

www.marylongman.com

Appendix C

Background information on the Artwork and the Artist

Artist	Type of Project	Examples of Questions
Mary Longman	Sculpture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the sculpture <i>Strata and Routes</i> represent her family? • What is a traditional family tree? • How is this sculpture different from other family trees you have seen?
Tom Haukaas and Teri Greeves	Beadwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the clothing you see. • What type of designs do you notice? • Are they modern or traditional or both?