

Totem Pole Lesson

Outcomes

2.2 - The students will be expected to examine and describe contemporary culture in Atlantic Canadian context and its connections to other global cultures.

2.2.3 - The students will be expected to identify current family/community practices that are based on long-standing cultural traditions.

2.2.4 - The students will be expected to identify through interviewing, research, or personal experience, appreciate the value and significance of local and regional cultural traditions.

2.2.9 - The students will be expected to identify ways in which the culture of a region is expressed through its arts community.

Pre-Activity

- **Definition:** A totem is a physical representation of a person's / tribe culture and history. One type of totem pole created by Native Canadian uses people and animals to describe family history.
- In this lesson, students will research their own family history and create a totem pole to describe that history.
- Students will create totem poles that represent their family histories.
- Students will use symbols to represent historic events.

Activity

Students will learn about Native Canadian totem poles.

1. Discuss with your students about symbols and how they can represent ideas and events. Find out what the students know about Totem poles. View pictures of totem poles and read about them on the internet.

Totem poles: An exploration

<http://users.imag.net/~sry.jkramer/nativetotems/default.html>

Student Directions

1. Talk with your parents and find out as much as you can about your family history. Take notes on interesting elements of your family history.
2. Decide which symbols you are going to use to represent parts of your family history. Include symbols other than people and animals. Select at least 5 symbols.
3. Draw a totem pole using each symbol as a section.
4. You must color your drawing.
5. Label each section and then write a paragraph describing how each section reflects your family history.

Evaluation:

Making A Totem Pole

Student Name _____

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Required Elements	The poster includes all required elements.	All but 1 required element is included on the poster.	All but 2 of the required elements are included on the poster.	Several required elements were missing.
Labels	All items of importance on the poster are clearly labeled with labels.	Almost all items of importance on the poster are clearly labeled.	Less than half of the items on the poster are clearly labeled.	Labels are too small to view or no important items were labeled.
Graphics - Relevance	All the graphics are related to the topic and make it easier to understand.	Almost all of the graphics are related to the topic.	Half of the graphics relate to the topic.	Graphics do not relate to the topic.
Attractiveness	The poster is exceptionally attractive in terms of design, layout, and neatness.	The poster is attractive in terms of design, layout and neatness.	The poster is acceptably attractive though it may be a bit messy.	The poster is distractingly messy or very poorly designed. It is not attractive.
Grammar	There are no grammatical/mechanical mistakes on the poster.	There are 1-2 grammatical/mechanical mistakes on the poster.	There are 3-4 grammatical/mechanical mistakes on the poster.	There are more than 4 grammatical/mechanical mistakes on the poster.