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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1980 Volume II: Art, Artifacts, and Material Culture

The Native American: Through the Eyes of His Mask with a Special Focus on the Indians of Connecticut

Guide for Curriculum Unit 80.02.02
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The contribution of the Native American to art revolves around many themes: resourcefulness; a high regard of nature; a vibrant visual imagery; a belief in the spiritual nature of all things and a secure knowledge of one's place in the world. These themes are emphasized by a discussion/investigation of artifacts of the Connecticut Indian as well as masks of the Northwest Coast and Iroquois Indians. Hands on activities are described which include mask making and the manipulation of materials found in and outside the classroom. Other themes are brought to light through the use of a slide collection connected with this unit. The major portion of the slides deal with the masks of the Iroquois and Northwest Coast Indians. Some show artifacts of the Woodland Indians including a long-house, beaded objects and carved wooden utensils. The unit is meant to give the student a meaningful experience in art with plenty of opportunities for creative problem solving and examination of personal feelings in order to express ideas uniquely and creatively. Other teachers may find this unit helpful as a springboard for lessons in geography, social studies and creative writing.

(Recommended for 5th through 8th grade Art.)

Key Words

Native American Masks Art

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