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## **Totem Poles of the North American Northwest Coast Indians**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 85.06.01  
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This unit is designed to teach students about another culture through the different approach of object analysis. The object analyzed is the totem pole; the culture introduced is that of the Northwest Coast Indian. As a first step in the life-long process of making meaning out of objects, students can relate easily to the totem pole because it is a concrete historical system in which each part clearly represents a specific, culturally well-known event. The main focus of this unit is to blend successfully material object study and analysis with the application of these techniques to our own culture. Employing the totem pole as a model, the students will use symbols they developed from their own culture to create “city” totem poles. The objective is to have them experience the pride in creation arising out of seeing their own ideas, thoughts, and efforts come together in the form of a substantial piece of art work.

(Recommended for Art classes, grades 6 through 12)

### **Key Words**

*Totem Poles Northwest Coast Indian West African Art Mythology*

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