



Textile Museum of Canada

CANADIAN TAPESTRY
THE FABRIC OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Online Exhibition

Textile Activities for Students Grades 5 to 8

- Make an Arrow Braid Bracelet and an Eight Strand *Ceinture Flechée*
 - Make a Basket
- Print a Symmetry Design

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Make an Arrow Braid Bracelet

Integrated curricula: Social Studies and Visual Art

Summary:

After looking at the *ceinture flechée* arrow pattern sash (T89.0158) in the Canadian Tapestry “Places” theme, students can try their hand at making a four-strand, and then an eight-strand braid in the same technique.

Social Studies Expectations

- (Heritage and Citizenship) learn about the fur trade in early North American history
- Learn about the First Nations peoples of Canada

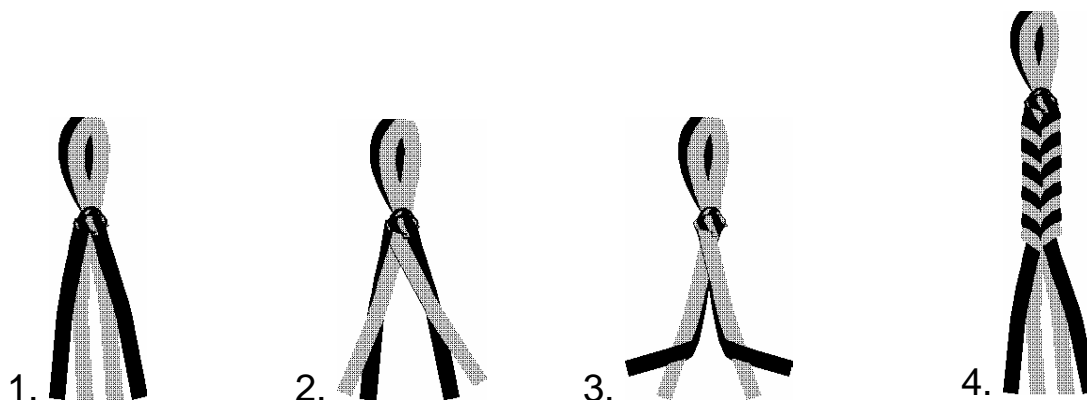
Visual Art Expectations

- (Knowledge of elements) identify, extend and create patterns in a variety of contexts
- (Creative work) identify problems and proposed solutions in artistic work, create three-dimensional works that communicate a range of ideas for specific purposes

Materials: two 1-metre lengths of wool yarn in two colours, a safety pin.

Description:

1. Fold the yarns in half and tie to form a loop as shown. Pin the loop to your pants leg or to a pillow in your lap. Hold the yarns as shown (grey is inside).



2. Cross the two grey yarns and move them to the outside of the braid. Black is now inside.

3. Cross the two black yarns and move them to the outside of the braid. Grey is inside again.

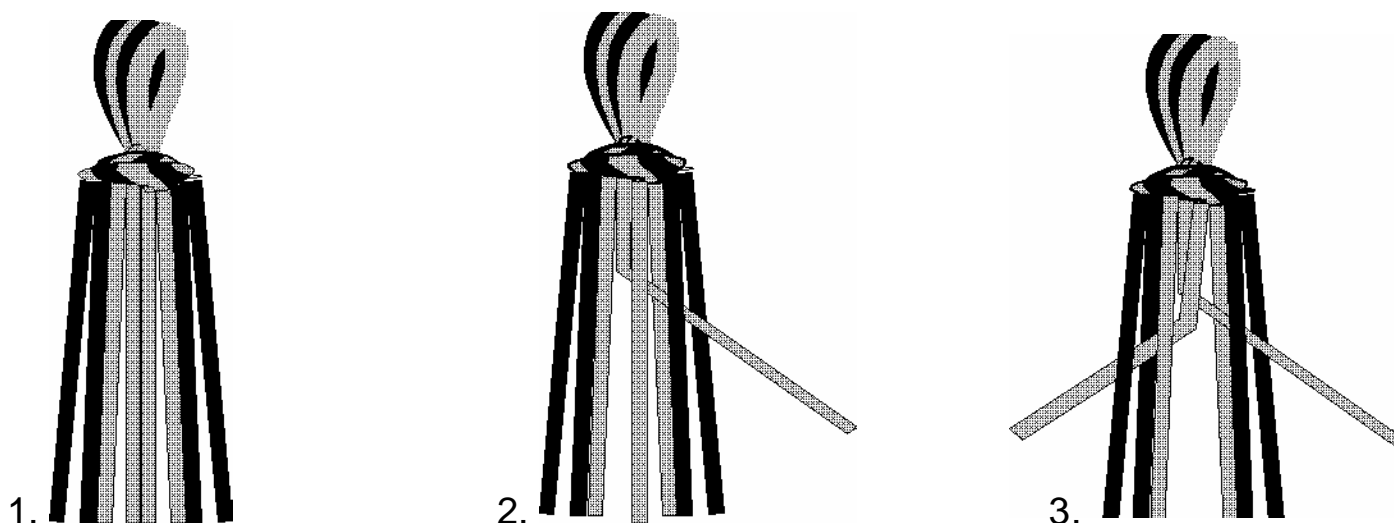
4. Keep crossing and moving the pair of yarns. Your braid will form in an arrow, or chevron pattern.

5. When you have a length of braid for a bracelet, tie two ends together. Pull through the loop to tie the bracelet on to your wrist.

Extensions:

Students who have mastered the four-strand bracelet can make an eight-strand flat braid; instructions and diagrams are on the next page.

Instructions for an Eight-Strand Braid



2. This flat braid is worked from the centre out. Strand 4 is on the edge; Strand 1 is in the centre. The two centre strands, L1 and R1, cross each other and travel out to the edges in an under/over pattern that resembles plain or tabby weave.

With your right hand, lift up strands R1 and R3. With your left hand, pass L1 under R1, over R2, under R3, over R4 and leave it on the edge of the strands.

3. With your left hand pick up L2 and L4. With your right hand pass R1 under L2, over L3, under L4 and leave it on the edge of the strands.

4. All the strands have changed places; the two centre strands are now L1 and R1, the original L1 and R1 have become L4 and R4.

Repeat steps 2 and 3, flattening the strands out so you can see the pattern as you work. Notice that L1 always goes over R4, and R1 always goes under L4.

5. When you have a length of braid long enough to go around your wrist, braid four strands together to make two ties. Pull them through the loop to tie the *ceinture* on to your wrist if you like, or your ankle.

Make a Basket

Integrated Curricula: Social Studies and Visual Art

Summary:

After looking in the “Workings” theme at the Basket (T92.0261) from Borneo, and at the Plaited Basket (T88.0727) in the search results for “See more baskets,” students can weave a basket with strips of card that they have painted with designs.

Social Studies Expectations

- (Canada and World Connections) investigate the beliefs and practices of other cultures in the world through their art works

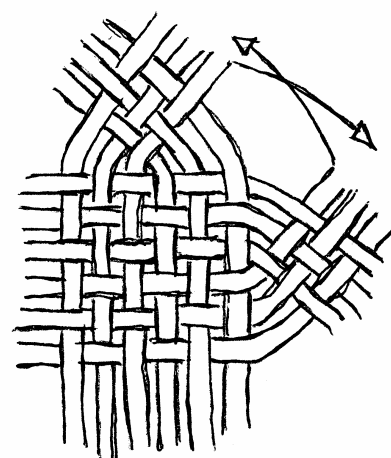
Visual Art Expectations

- (Knowledge of elements) demonstrate an understanding of elements and principles of design
- (Creative work) produce three-dimensional works of art that communicate a range of ideas for specific purposes
- (Critical thinking) Compare works from various cultures and understand how the artists used the elements and principles of design

Materials: 72 x 80-cm sheets of thin corrugated cardboard or thin card, acrylic paints, acrylic medium, brushes, scissors (mat knives for older students).

Description:

1. Each student works with a 36 x 60-cm piece of card and cuts it in half.
2. Paint each half with acrylic paints mixed with an equal amount of acrylic medium, in a design of your choice.
3. When the card is dry, cut each piece into 3-cm strips, lengthwise, giving you six 3 x 60-cm strips of each design.
4. Lay the six strips of one design side by side on a flat surface. Weave the other six strips at right angles, over-one, under-one, to make a mat.
5. When the strips are all woven together, turn the corners of the mat at right angles as shown in the diagram at right, and weave the strips together, again in over-one, under-one order, so the basket shape is formed.
6. When the sides of the basket are finished, turn the edges inside to finish the basket. Notice what has happened to the designs on the strips, and how they have changed from the bottom to the sides of the basket.



Print a Symmetry Design

Integrated Curricula: Mathematics and Visual Arts

Summary:

Students look at the *adinkra* printed cloth (T04.34.17) from Ghana in the Canadian Tapestry “Workings” theme. They can also look at other examples of printed textiles like the shirt

(T94.0176) from the Congo and the *adire* cloth (T94.2095) from Nigeria, both in the “Bridges” theme. The students then make sets of stamps and use them to print designs on cloth.

Mathematics Expectations

- construct and analyze tiling patterns with congruent tiles
- (Patterning and algebra) identify and extend patterns to solve problems in meaningful contexts

Visual Art Expectations

- (Creative work) produce two- and three-dimensional works of art using rhythm and harmony principles
- (Knowledge of elements) identify negative and positive shapes in a work of art

Materials: Shirt cardboard or tag board, fun foam sheets, paper and pencil, scissors, tape, white glue, acrylic paints or fabric paints, styrofoam meat trays, foam brushes, 46-cm cotton muslin or sheeting squares.

Description:

1. Draw a 7.6 cm-square on paper and draw a simple motif within the square (sample motif at right). This motif follows three rules: 1) it must be asymmetrical, i.e., featuring no symmetrical relationships like reflection; the more dynamic the motif, the more interesting will be the patterns it creates; 2) it must fill most of the space in the square; 3) it must be made of shapes, not lines. Mathematically speaking, a line has one dimension and a shape is a two-dimensional object. Therefore, a shape can be cut out in fun foam and glued to the stamp, whereas a line cannot.



2. Carefully cut the shapes out of the paper to make a template for your stamp, and trace the negative template two times on to fun foam sheets, including the outside 7.6-cm square. Also cut four 7.6-cm squares out of the shirt cardboard or tag board and trace the negative template on them.

3. Now you are ready to make the stamps: with scissors, cut around the 7.6-cm square of one of the fun foam shapes and then cut out the shapes within the square. Glue the inside shapes on to one piece of the cardboard and the outside shape on to another piece, making a positive and a negative stamp. Take the second fun foam square with the motif traced on it and flip it over, then cut and glue it as above. You now have a positive and negative stamp, and a positive and negative mirror stamp, making four stamps of the same motif.

4. Use a foam brush to apply a thin coat of paint and print the stamp on to fabric. This stamp tessellates simply, like a tile floor; each motif should touch the others on all sides.
5. Print the negative stamps first and then the positive stamps within them to make a two-colour print. Print a checkerboard design in two colours and then fill in with other colours; there are many colour possibilities with the four stamps.

Extensions:

Students can print designs and then join them together to make a class quilt or banner. Each square can be hand sewn to padding and backing to make a flat pillow, and then each of these can be joined at the corners to make an impressive padded hanging.