

21st Century Learning | Links to Our Collection

THE COAST SALISH: CONNECTING ART, ENVIRONMENT AND TRADITIONS

Welcome to

21st Century Learning – Links to Our Collection.

This online module and supplemental education guide was developed to allow access to hundreds of digitized images and lesson plans from Glenbow Museum's collections.

Our hope is to extend our vision of

'More people, interacting with art, culture and ideas more often.'

Please visit and enjoy *21st Century Learning – The Coast Salish: Connecting Art, Environment and Traditions.*

This educator's package presents the traditional way of life of the Coast Salish people. The information encourages students to examine artifacts from the Glenbow Museum's collection and connects them to other cultures, communities and environments from within Canada.

Included in this guide are:

- Information on the **Coast Salish people** including high-resolution photographs artifacts, archival photographs and essays.
- **Lesson plans** including discussions for looking at primary sources, curriculum connections and lesson plans for a variety of ages and abilities.
- Detailed listing of **vocabulary and concepts**.
- Suggested **sources for further research** and other information.

HISTORY OF GLENBOW MUSEUM

Glenbow Museum began with the remarkable vision of petroleum entrepreneur and lawyer Eric Lafferty Harvie. Mr. Harvie came into his fortune when oil was discovered in 1949 on land near Leduc and Redwater, for which he held the mineral rights. With this prosperity, he decided to pursue his favourite passion — collecting — and simultaneously return some of his good fortune back to the region that had been so generous to him. Mr. Harvie's goal was to collect the objects representing the history and culture of Western Canada as well as from around the world.

Eric Harvie began collecting material relating to the history of Western Canada in the 1950s, developing an extensive collection of art, artifacts, books and archival material from North America that tell the fascinating story of Aboriginal peoples, frontier exploration, and the development of western life. He built on these North American collections with extraordinary artifacts and art from Asia, West Africa, South America, and islands in the Pacific, eventually amassing a huge museum collection. Establishing the Glenbow Foundation in 1954, Mr. Harvie's collection became an eclectic blend of western history and international art and artifacts.

In 1966, Eric Harvie and his family donated his impressive collection of art, artifacts, and historical documents to the people of Alberta. Today, Glenbow Museum is one of the largest museums in Canada, playing an essential role in defining Western Canadian culture.

PROGRAM PURPOSE

The intent of Glenbow Museum's Digitization Project is to infuse Alberta classrooms and communities with Glenbow Museum's collection of culture and art. The importance of engaging viewers in primary source investigation is essential to developing creative thinking, visual literacy and observational skills.

This program was developed by the Glenbow Museum with the support of [Alberta Government] to establish exciting curriculum connections between the Glenbow Museum and Alberta communities. This program consists of six exhibitions of digitized images from our collections, educational materials for viewers of all ages and online resources.

We encourage you to spend time with each online exhibition and use these resources.

EDUCATIONAL GUIDE PURPOSE

The purpose of this guide is to assist educators and other viewers as they incorporate the Glenbow Museum Digitization Program into the classroom or other educational site. This guide contains education philosophies for looking at and working with primary sources, vocabulary on relevant terms, curriculum connections and ways to gather meaning from the artifacts.

Also included are suggested lesson plans for a more in-depth look at the various areas of content. The lesson plans include questions to encourage discussion and deeper looking, inquiry-based activities, extensions and assessment. All of these lesson plans can be adapted to any age or ability level.

Please take time to preview the educator's guide and enjoy *The Coast Salish: Connecting Art, Environment and Traditions* from Glenbow Museum's Digitization Program.

EDUCATION MODULE



Basket, Coast Salish, mid 20th century, cedar bark, cherry bark, collection of Glenbow museum, R1216.1

CONTENTS

Education Module

Maps

Listing of Artifacts and Images

Vocabulary

Curriculum connections

Lesson Plans

Lesson One: *Connections to Environment: Traditions of the Coast Salish People*
Grades 1 – 3

Lesson Two: *Coiled, Twined and Woven: Weavings of the Coast Salish People*
Grades 4 – 12

Acknowledgements

Readings and Resources

INTRODUCTION

The term *Coast Salish* groups together people from many different communities along the coast of the Salish Sea, near present-day southern British Columbia, Washington, and northern Oregon. Traditionally, people identified themselves according to their family relationships and the villages where they lived. Language varied from place to place, although all belonged to the Salish family of languages.

During winter, many families would come together in large villages where wooden plank houses were constructed. Some of these structures were small single family dwellings. Other, very large buildings, were the site of ceremonies and community feasts.

Each spring, people left the villages for summer camps and resource sites. Sometimes they took the planks from the winter houses, lashed them across two canoes, and transported them to their summer homes. Corner posts and rafters were permanently constructed at both winter and summer villages, enabling the easy reassembly of the house.

Fish, especially the varieties of salmon, were a mainstay of the people's diet. They also hunted deer, bear and other animals. Plants were vital, both for food and as the raw material for clothing, shelter, containers, watercraft and many tools.

During the late 19th and 20th centuries the government moved people onto reserves, often merging several villages into one community. Populations declined as epidemics devastated the people. Governments and religious organizations pressured people to abandon their traditional lifestyles and beliefs and to adopt the culture of the dominant society. At the same time, it was very difficult for First Nations people to find employment or earn a good living. Many traditional crafts, such as carving, weaving and basket making, became an important source of much-needed cash income.

MAPS



LISTING OF ARTIFACTS AND IMAGES

Basket

Coast Salish

mid 20th century

cedar bark, cherry bark

R1216.1

Curtis, Edward S

Salish canoes on Shoalwater bay, British Columbia

Photograph

Collection of Glenbow Museum NA-1700-163

Engraved by Edward Whymper

Salish graves, Chapman's Bar, British Columbia

Collection of Glenbow Museum NA-843-40

Maynard, R.

Salish people camped at Hell's Gate, Fraser River, British Columbia

Photograph

Collection of Glenbow Museum NA-860-12

Salish women, British Columbia

Photograph

Collection of Glenbow Museum NA-2069-5

Basket

Coast Salish

mid 20th century

cedar root, cherry bark

AA 448

Creasers

Coast Salish

mid 20th century

cedar wood, alder wood, paint

AA 980

Coat

Musqueam First Nation (Coast Salish)

1985

Made by Robyn Sparrow

sheep wool

AA 2134

Bailer

Coast Salish

early 20th century

cedar bark, cedar wood, fish cord

AA 1317

Capilano First Nation (Coast Salish)

2003

cedar wood, bronze, abalone shell fragments

Made by "Tyee" or Floyd Joseph from the Capilano First Nation

AA 2182

Coast Salish

early 20th century

wood, paint

AA 245

Coast Salish

mid 20th century

yellow cedar, paint

AA 1131

Paddle

Coast Salish

mid 20th century

yellow cedar, paint

AA 1131

Basket

Quinalt First Nation (Coast Salish)

mid 20th century

spruce root, cherry bark, leather, cord

AA 546

Hat

Coast Salish
late 19th century
cedar bark
AA 549

Post

Coast Salish
early 20th century
cedar, paint
AA 214

Wool Beater

Coast Salish
early 20th century
wood
AA 239

Needle

Coast Salish
mid-20th century
alder wood
AA 1215

Blanket

Coast Salish
early 20th century
mountain goat wool, burlap cord
AA 703

Mat

Coast Salish
late 19th or early 20th century
wool, worsted tape
AA 361

Basket

Coast Salish
mid 20th century
spruce root, cedar root, cedar withe
AA 1817

Basket

Coast Salish (Quinault)

mid 20th century

cherry bark, spruce root

AA 547

VOCABULARY

Artifact - An object produced or shaped by humans, especially a tool, weapon or ornament of archaeological or historical interest.

Aboriginal – In addition to the definition of Aboriginal Peoples, Aboriginal refers to the first inhabitants of a given area.

Aboriginal Peoples – The descendents of the original inhabitants of North America. First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples have unique heritages, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs.

Ceremony - The formal activities conducted on some solemn or important public or state occasion; a formal religious or sacred observance.

Chevron Weave - a pattern consisting of adjoining vertical rows of slanting lines, any two contiguous lines forming either a V or an inverted V, used in masonry, textiles, embroidery, etc.

Community – A group of people with commonalities that may include culture, language, values and beliefs, interests, practices and ways of life, history and /or geographically defined shared space.

Cultural Diversity – Differences in groups having a variety of languages, ethnicities, nationalities, with in a shared space.

Cultural Heritage – The beliefs, customs, knowledge, values and historical experiences shared by a given group.

Culture – The beliefs, values, socially transmitted behaviors and traditions, language, arts and other human endeavors considered together as being characteristics of a particular community, period or people.

First Nations – Refers to the various governments of the First Nations peoples of Canada. There are over 630 First Nations across Canada with 46 in Alberta.

Group - People who are together and connected by shared interests and characteristics.

Honour - honesty, fairness, or integrity in one's beliefs and actions: a source of credit or distinction: high respect, as for worth, merit, or rank.

Imbrications – An overlapping of materials to create a decorative pattern.

Interlocking Split Stitch - A stitch used in stem work to produce a fine line, much used in old church embroidery to work the hands and faces of figures.

Natural resources – Elements of the natural environment that are of use to humans. They include nonrenewable and renewable resources.

Open Lattice-work or Weave - An open, crisscross pattern or weave.

Potlatch - A ceremonial festival given by families to mark important events and achievements. These might include the naming of a child, the death of an elder, or the installation of a new family or village chief. Gifts and food are bestowed on the guests and sometimes property is destroyed as a way of indicating that material wealth was not as important as the achievements of the people.

Selvage - the term for the self-finished edges of the fabric. In woven fabric, selvages are the edges that run parallel and are created by the weft thread looping back at the end of each row.

Symbol - A letter, figure, or other character or mark or a combination of letters or the like used to designate something.

Traditions – Beliefs, principles or ways of acting which people in a particular society or group have continued to follow for a long time, or all of the beliefs, principles or ways of acting in a particular group or society.

Traditional – Of or pertaining to traditions or characteristics of past styles, ways of life. Today, people value their cultural traditions and struggle to keep alive the practices of the past in the face of a rapidly changing society.

Tumpline - A strap slung across the forehead or the chest to support a load carried on the back.

Twining - A strong string or cord made of two or more threads twisted together.

Two-ply - Double spun yarn used for the warp as well for the weft equals a “two ply” 2×2 fabric.

Warp - The threads that run lengthwise in a woven fabric, crossed at right angles to the weft.

Weaving - To form by interlacing threads, yarns, strands, or strips of some material.

Weft - the yarn woven across the width of the fabric through the lengthwise warp yarn.

Wickerwork - Work made of interlaced plant branches or twigs.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

ART

Reflection: responses to visual forms in nature, designed objects and artworks

Depiction: development of imagery based on observations of the visual world.

Expression: use of art materials as a vehicle or medium for saying something in a meaningful way.

LANGUAGE ARTS

1.1 Discover and Explore

1.2 Clarify and Extend

2.1 Use Strategies and Cues

3.1 Plan and Focus

3.2 Select and Process

3.3 Organize, Record and Evaluate

3.4 Share and Review

4.1 Enhance and Improve

4.2 Attend to Conventions

4.3 Present and Share

5.1 Respect Others and Strengthen Community

5.2 Work within a Group

SCIENCE

Grade 1 – Topic A: Creating Colour, Topic C: Building Things, Topic E: Needs of Animals and Plants

Grade 4 – Topic A: Waste and Our World

Grade 6 – Topic E: Trees and Forests

SOCIAL STUDIES

Grade 1 – Citizenship: Belonging and Connecting

1.3 Moving Forward with the Past; My Family, My History and My Community

Grade 2 – Communities in Canada

2.1 Canada's Dynamic Communities

2.2 A Community in the Past

Grade 5 – Canada: The Land Histories and Stories

5.2 Histories and Stories of Ways of Life in Canada

5.3 Canada: Shaping an Identity

Grade 7 – Canada: Origins, Histories and Movement of Peoples

7.1 Toward Confederation

LESSON PLANS

CONNECTIONS TO ENVIRONMENT: TRADITIONS OF THE COAST SALISH PEOPLE

Recommended grades: 1 – 3

Time required: 4 – 30 minute class lessons

Materials: large paper, markers

INTRODUCTION

What is a “tradition”? How do you honour tradition in your culture or community? In this lesson, students will understand the traditions of the Coast Salish people. While exploring their own culture, students will learn about the different ways the Coast Salish people honour community, the land and story through art.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Define the term “tradition” and identify traditions in their own family as well as the tradition of the Coast Salish people.
- Understand the traditional way of life of the Coast Salish people and their connection to their environment.
- Identify natural resources common to the Coast Salish people by looking critically at artifacts.
- Create a Coast Salish-inspired work of art.

IMAGES

Please print for use in activity



Maynard, R.

Salish people camped at Hell's Gate, Fraser River, British Columbia

Photograph

Collection of Glenbow Museum NA-860-12



Salish women, British Columbia

Photograph

Collection of Glenbow Museum NA-2069-5

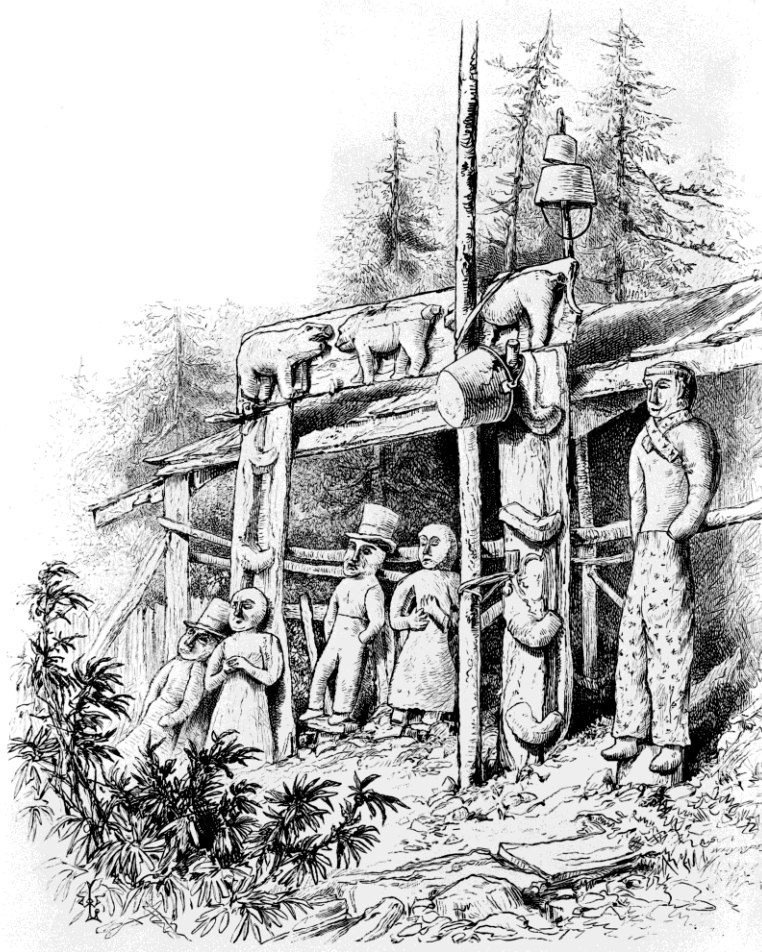


Curtis, Edward S

Salish canoes on Shoalwater bay, British Columbia

Photograph

Collection of Glenbow Museum NA-1700-163



Engraved by Edward Whymper
Salish graves, Chapman's Bar, British Columbia
Collection of Glenbow Museum NA-843-40

ACTIVITY PROCEDURES

WHAT IS OUR COMMUNITY?

Recommended grades: 1 – 3

Time required: 4 – 30 minute class lessons

Materials: large paper, markers

INSTRUCTIONS

1. As a class, discuss the term **community** using the following suggested questions:

*What is a **community**?*

What are the characteristics of your community? What jobs do people do? What types of houses do people live in? What is the landscape like where you live? (Geographic forms, historic buildings, natural resources, climate. etc.)

A community is made up of many different types of people. As a class, discuss the diversity within the classroom. What makes each of us unique? (Cultures, backgrounds, special skills, etc.) How do our differences work together to make our community unique? (Food, clothing, celebrations, holidays, etc.)

2. Introduce the term **tradition** using the following suggested questions:

*Traditions are beliefs, values and ways of acting that are a part of a community for a long time. What are examples of **traditions** in your family? School? Community? (celebrations, special events, holidays)*

3. Using a large piece of paper, create a classroom mind-map. Place your community's name in the centre circle. On one side of the paper, brainstorm characteristics of your community. On the other side, list the values, beliefs, celebrations and other characteristics that define your community's traditions.

Thinking Further

Ask students to bring in an example of a family tradition (such as a recipe) or piece of clothing. Have a show-and-tell.

Research the origins of your community. Visit a local history museum or invite a local historian to visit your class.

WHO ARE THE COAST SALISH PEOPLE?

Materials: Mind map from previous activity, Map, large paper

1. Together as a group, introduce the Coast Salish people. Look at the map of the region included with this package.
2. The Coast Salish people live in the area now known as British Columbia, Washington and Oregon. For thousands of years, the Pacific Ocean provided the Coast Salish people with food. The climate is moderate, rarely getting very warm or very cold. This area has an abundance of natural resources including fish, forests and minerals.
3. Explain that students are going to look carefully at art and other images to learn about the **traditional** Coast Salish community. Explain the term **traditional** versus tradition.

4. Tradition is a way of acting that remains the same over time.
Traditional, when describing First Nations and other indigenous groups, refers to the values and practices that developed long ago, before contact with other groups, especially Europeans.
5. Looking at the classroom mind-map created in *Part One* recap the characteristics of your community (food, clothing, houses, buildings, jobs, environment, natural resources, etc.).
6. Divide students into small groups and give each group a copy of the images. Ask the groups look critically at the images to find evidence of the Coast Salish community's characteristics. Look for evidence of food, clothing, shelter, jobs, transportation, climate and natural resources.

IMAGES

Please print in colour if possible



Basket

Coast Salish

mid 20th century

cedar root, cherry bark

AA 448

This wedge-shaped basket is made of cedar root splints wrapped in split cedar roots. Cherry bark is imbricated on the sides. The inside is blackened. What might make the inside of this basket black? This basket may have been used as a cooking basket to steam clams, to cook a fish soup or to prepare plant foods.



Creasers

Coast Salish

mid 20th century

cedar wood, alder wood, paint

AA 980

Can you see the groove along one side? Women pulled this tool across the surface of the fibrous leaves of cattail plants to crush the fibres, making the leaves more pliable. The material was then easier to weave into mats that were hung along house walls to provide insulation.

Cattails grow in marshy areas that are also home to ducks, gulls and shorebirds. When Salish women gathered and processed the plant materials, it seemed as though the birds were accompanying them. Were the birds helping the women in their work?

The entire creaser seems to be a figure. What animal does it remind you of? Could this be a bird? Creasers were often carved into bird figures.



Coat

Musqueam First Nation (Coast Salish)

1985

Made by Robyn Sparrow

sheep wool

AA 2134

This coat was woven using a twining technique. Twining is when two strips are twisted around each other between each pair of warp threads. Dark brown and grey triangles enhance the sleeves and back.

This coat is unique because it shows how men and women worked together to make it. Joe Becker made one of the looms on which the coat was woven and the buttons were carved by Jim Kew. The buttons are carved to look like two animals. One is a plumed bird in flight. The other is a wolf.

The design of this coat is based on traditional coats that can be seen in historic photographs of the Musqueam people. It was made by Robyn Sparrow and woven on an upright Salish loom. Her weaving technique is the same that was used to make the wool blankets.

7. Gather groups together to share their findings. Create another mind-map on a large piece of paper. This time, put “Coast Salish” in the centre. On one side of the mind-map, ask students to share their evidence about the Coast Salish community. Leave the other side, for traditions, blank for now.

Thinking Further

Track the weather in Victoria, BC for several days. Look at the annual precipitation and average temperatures. How is it the same or different from where you live?

Fishing provided the Coast Salish people with an abundance of food. Research the fishing industry in this area today. How has it changed? How is it still a part of today's community?

WHAT ARE THE TRADITIONS OF THE COAST SALISH?

Materials: mind maps from previous activities, Images

Among Northwest Coast people the cedar is considered sacred because it provides all the essentials for daily life. In the central coast area one of the most important dance ceremonies is centered on the Red Cedar.

Carvers like the wood because of its softness, straight grain, light weight and built in fungicide (Thujaplicin) which make it perfect for carving.

There are two types of cedar, red and yellow, both of which are aromatic woods. Of the two types, red cedar is the more popular choice because of its warm colour and rich inviting scent. Both types of cedars are long lived with the oldest ones being around a thousand years old.

For the Coast Salish peoples, red cedar is the traditional choice of wood. It is known as the “tree of life”. Historically, the Coastal Salish people of Vancouver Island make everything from the various parts of this tree. For that reason, the cedar has been of the utmost importance to the people of the Cowichan Valley.

Canoes, paddles, bailers, houses and other structures were all made of cedar. Even clothing such as hats and capes were made from the inner bark of the cedar tree. The bark of the cedar tree was also used for mats and baskets to carry many foodstuffs such as berries, dried clams or roots and tubers.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Refer back to the classroom mind-map of your community. What are traditions? What are traditions within your community? The Coast Salish people had many traditions within their community. Looking back on what students learned in the previous activity about the Coast Salish community, show the following images and discuss the questions below:

What do you see?

How would you use this?

What do you think this is made of?

Why is this object important to the Coast Salish way of life?

2. Explain that students will look closely at other Coast Salish objects using these same questions to learn about traditions within their culture. Allow time for students to look carefully at the artifacts. Ask each group to present their findings. While students are sharing the information they learned about the objects, return to mind map of the Coast Salish. On the “traditions” area, begin listing some of the findings.

**Bailer**

Coast Salish

early 20th century

cedar bark, cedar wood, fish cord

AA 1317

Canoes were used to travel along the coast, as well as up the many inlets and rivers. Water always spilled into the vessels so it was important to bail the water to keep the boat afloat and the paddlers dry.

Can you see the cord that ties the bailer together? This is the same type of cord that was woven into gill nets used in commercial fishing. There are no metal parts in this bailer.



Frog Bowl

Capilano First Nation (Coast Salish)

2003

cedar wood, bronze, abalone shell fragments

Made by "Tyee" or Floyd Joseph from the Capilano First Nation

AA 2182

The shape of this bowl is adapted from a traditional feast dish that would have held eulachon oil. Eulachon is a very fatty fish and its oil is considered a delicacy by people living in the Pacific Northwest. The oil was highly valued and traded amongst all the people living along the coast and interior. This bowl was carved for sale as a work of art, rather than as a functional utensil.

Though small and peaceful, Frog is very important. Frog's singing in the spring announces the start of a new cycle of life. Frog tells us to put aside the things of winter, such as winter dancing and potlatching, and to begin preparing for next winter's activities. Frog's job is as important as the arrival of *Centeki*, the first salmon (sockeye) or *Pekelanew*, the moon which turns the leaves white. As the keeper of the sacred seasons, Frog is often honoured in Coast Salish legends and stories, and appears in art works, totem poles and house posts.

Can you see the vibrant blues and greens in the eyes? These are made of abalone shells, which are full of vibrant colours. They make the figure come alive!

Staff

Coast Salish
early 20th century
wood, paint
AA 245

Can you see dragons, griffins, serpents that appear as salamanders and various fish on this staff? These represent the spirit protectors of a ceremonial dancer.

The dancer instructed the carver which animals were his spirit protectors. The carver often portrayed these figures in a vague, amorphous way so that they could not be readily recognized by the people watching the dance.

Look closely at the edges of the staff. Can you see some rings? This is where deer hooves were attached. As a dancer waited his turn, he would shake the staff back and forth to make the hooves rattle.

These staffs are called *quitsuline* in the Salish language.





Paddle

Coast Salish
mid 20th century
yellow cedar, paint
AA 1131

This small paddle is made from a single piece of yellow cedar. Can you see figures painted onto the surface? These represent bears and whales.

Why would these animal figures be portrayed on a paddle? They have significant meaning to Coast Salish people. These animals appear in the ancient stories of the Salish, bringing them important ceremonies, teaching them the proper ways to behave and forming kinship relationships between the humans and non-human people of the Salish world.

Small paddles such as this were probably carved by men for sale to non-Native tourists and art collectors.



Basket

Quinalt First Nation (Coast Salish)
mid 20th century
spruce root, cherry bark, leather, cord
AA 546

Can you see how three different colours have been used on this basket? To make it, the woman artist split pieces of brown cedar root and wrapped them around a splint foundation. She then coiled these strands in a concentric circle, starting at the centre of the bottom. Red and white cherry bark has been added using a technique called *imbrication* on top of the cedar root.

As a result of this process, it looks like two different coloured backgrounds were used with the red bark making a pattern. This technique required a great deal of planning and skill. The artist used both positive and negative space to create this stunning effect.

There are leather thongs and cord loops that are tied through holes along the top edge of the basket. Why would these cords be attached to a basket? They may have been used to suspend the basket for cooking. Notice how blackened the inside is. This may be a result of its use for cooking.

But how do you cook with a basket? They probably can't be held over a fire, but the very tight weave makes the vessel watertight. The basket could then be filled with liquid and/or food and heated rocks were then added to make the contents hot.



Hat

Coast Salish
late 19th century
cedar bark
AA 549

Hats made from woven cedar bark were common on the Northwest Coast of North America. The bark is closely woven, using a twined technique. Notice how a separate band has been woven and then sewn into the inner band. Can you see the reinforcing strips of bark on the crown? These hats are so skillfully woven that they are watertight.

Thinking Further

Research indigenous trees in your community. Collect leaves from different trees and identify them. Discuss ways trees are important to your community for people, animals and the environment.

ART ACTIVITY

WHAT ARE THE TRADITIONS OF THE COAST SALISH?

Recommended Grades: 1 – 3

Time Required: 3 – 30 minute classes

Materials: Newspaper, Masking tape, Paper maché (see recipes below), Trays for paper maché mixture, Paint, Brushes, Sponges for clean Up

PAPER MACHÉ RECIPES:

Recipe #1 – Flour, water

- Stir three parts water into one part flour until the mixture is smooth and creamy.
- To make the paste last longer, add a few drops of oil or Wintergreen (optional).

Recipe #2 – Wallpaper paste, water

- Mix one part wallpaper paste with three parts water (available at any hardware store).
- Stir well.

Recipe #3 – Glue, water, paper

- Mix two parts white glue with one part warm water.
- Stir well.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Reflect on the community and traditions of the Coast Salish people. As a class, discuss the connections between community and traditions. How are traditions shaped by a community's people, environment and values? How are communities known by their traditions? An example of this is shown in the following images. What do you see? How would this be used? What is this made of?
2. One tradition of the Coast Salish people is the carving of figures on house posts. Winter villages were built near the water so they would be close to the canoes. The most common winter house was a shed-roof house made of a framework of posts and beams with a removable roof and wall planks. Often, these removable pieces would be used in the summer shelters. House posts were structurally important to the houses of the Coast Salish, but they were also culturally important. House posts supported the beams that were the basic framework of the house, but they were often decorated with stories or the long-ago history of the house owners or protective "*spirit beings*" that guarded the people in that house. Show Appendix, this is a drawing of a Coast Salish home. Can you find the different carvings and house posts?
3. Discuss the designs and ask students to think about an animal that is important to them. If students had a house post in their home, what animal would be on it? Sketch the animal on a scrap piece of paper for practice. If desired, look at how the Coast Salish artists represented animals through formlines and shapes.

4. Rip newspaper into thin strips and place paper maché mixture into shallow trays (meat Styrofoam trays work well).
5. Demonstrate how to create a form from newspaper and masking tape. Once the form is complete, demonstrate how to cover the form with layers of newspaper dipped in the paper maché mixture. Make sure the paper is wet, but not dripping. Cover the entire form with several layers and allow to dry completely. Once dry (a few days), using tempera or acrylic paints, paint your paper maché animal. You could use colours and lines as in Coast Salish design.



Post

Coast Salish
early 20th century
cedar, paint
AA 214

This post portrays a moon symbol framing a human figure. It is a very unusual item. While some cultures on the Northwest Coast have stories about women who were pulled up to the moon, there is no indication that the figure on this post represents a woman.

Salish people lived in houses made of cedar planks that were attached to large house posts made of cedar tree trunks. These posts, both inside and outside the house, supported the roof beams and were often carved with figures that represented ancient stories recalling the history of the family living within the house. We do not know the story that is reflected by this figure.

ACTIVITY PROCEDURES

COILED, TWINED AND WOVEN: WEAVINGS OF THE COAST SALISH PEOPLE

Recommended grades: 4 - 12

Time required: 3 – 45 minute class sessions

Materials: Please see each individual lesson

INSTRUCTIONS

The natural environment provided everything needed for survival for the Coast Salish people. There was an abundance of food. Fish, especially salmon, contributed the greatest amount of food but the oceans and rivers also provided an abundance of clams and sea mammals. Land animals such as deer and bear could be found in the plentiful forests in the area. Plants provided edible sprouts, stems, bulbs, roots, berries and fruits. Mountain goats and a small, now extinct, domesticated dog provided wool for robes, aprons, hats and other items of clothing. Clothing could also be made of woven cedar bark or animal hides.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Look critically at artifacts to compare and contrast various ways of weaving.
- Understand that the relationship between environment, natural resources and tradition in the Coast Salish culture.
- Experiment with various materials to create a woven artwork.

TYPES OF WEAVING

There are many techniques to weaving along with variations in decoration. Here are examples of the most common techniques used in Coast Salish weavings and basketry:

*Note: The **warp** is the tightly stretched core of the fabric, usually the vertical elements of the basket. The **weft** is what is woven between the strands of the warp to create the designs and decoration.*

PLAITING



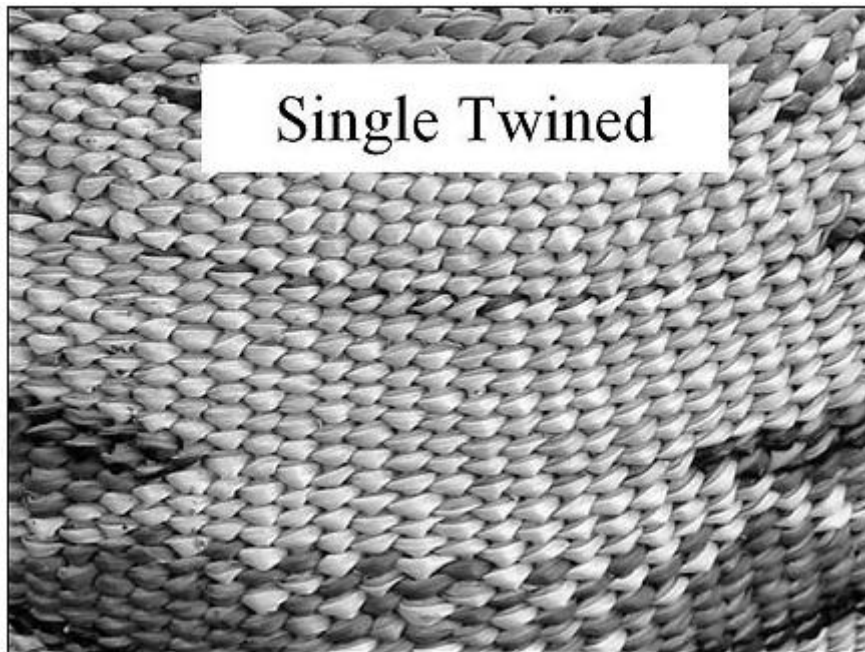
Includes checker work, twilled work and wicker work

Checker work is when the warp and weft are the same width, thickness and pliability. This is created by weaving the weft in and out, over one warp strand and under the next.

Twilled work is similar to checker work but the weft is passed over and under two or more warps strands. This creates a diagonal pattern.

Wicker work is different in that either the warp or the weft (but not both) is rigid.

TWINING



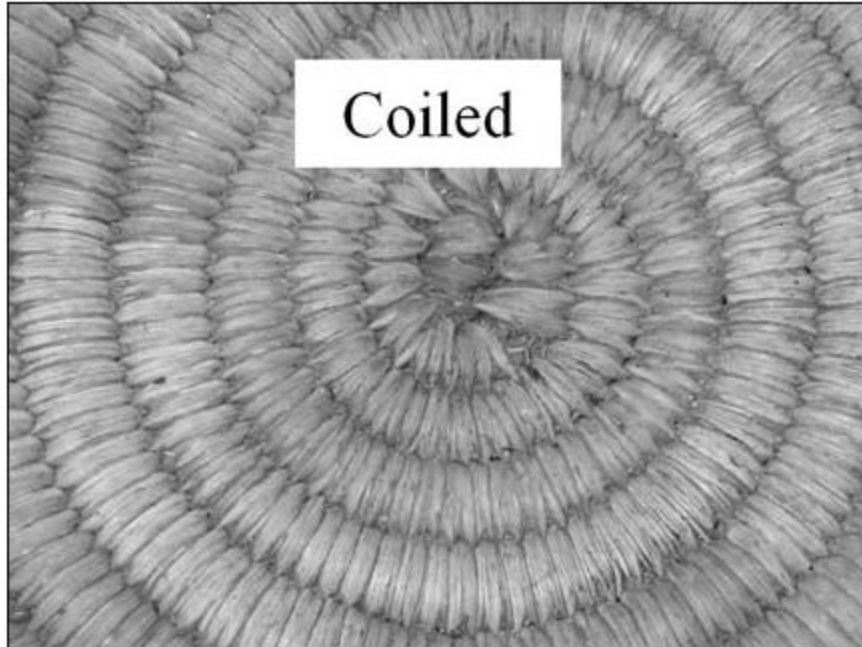
Includes open, closed, diagonal and crossed warp twining

Twining work has two or more weft strands that are twisted, or twined, on each other as they weave in and out between the warps. Twining is good for both open and closed baskets. Closed twining can be watertight and is the standard weave of many woven baskets. Open twining has open space between the rows.

Diagonal twined weaving differs from the plain closed twining in that the wefts cross over two or more warp strands so the ridges on the outside are not vertical, but diagonal.

Crossed warp twining has two different warp strands, one leans left and one leans right. The twining bind the two together to form a decorate mesh.

COILED



Coiled basketry uses a needle, such as a bone awl, and thin, flexible material (like string) to attach coils to form a basket. Beginning at the base, coils made of grasses spiral around. Stitches are used in various ways to hold the coils together.

In **wrapped crossed warp twining** style there is both a vertical and horizontal warp. The waft is then wrapped around the place where the warps intersect, forming an open, lattice weave.

IMAGES

Please print for use in activity



Wool Beater
Coast Salish
early 20th century
wood
AA 239

Although this looks like a sword, it was really used as a wool beater.

Preparing wool for weaving was a time-consuming activity. First, the wool was collected either by shearing dogs or by gathering mountain goat hair that had been snagged on bushes. If a mountain goat had been killed for food, the hide was soaked until the hair was loose and could be easily removed. Grass, twigs, coarse guard hair and other material was then carefully picked out of the wool. Then, the clean wool was placed on a mat and pounded with a beater to break down the fibres.

When moist clay is cured in a maple wood fire, it bleaches white. This clay was then mixed with the wool to whiten and clean it, and to remove some of the oil.



Creasers

Coast Salish

mid 20th century

cedar wood, alder wood, paint

AA 980

Can you see the groove along one side? Women pulled this tool across the surface of the fibrous leaves of cattail plants to crush the fibres, making the leaves more pliable. The material was then easier to weave into mats that were hung along house walls to provide insulation.

Cattails grow in marshy areas that are also home to ducks, gulls and shorebirds. When Salish women gathered and processed the plant materials, it seemed as though the birds were accompanying them. Were the birds helping the women in their work?

The entire creaser seems to be a figure. What animal does it remind you of? Could this be a bird? Creasers were often carved into bird figures.

**Needle**

Coast Salish
mid-20th century
alder wood
AA 1215

This long needle was used for making mats out of water plants (such as tule reeds), which were found in marshy areas. Once the outer leaves were removed from the plant's stem, the leaves were laid length-wise and sewn together with thread spun from nettle.

Can you see the triangular cross-section of this needle? This helped make a channel through the reeds as women wove and tied them together in mats. A mat creaser was used to press down the stalks while the needle passed through.

The reeds, used to being in water, become drier once removed from the marsh. Too much bending and pressure can cause them to split. By pushing the reeds down as the needle went through, this was less likely to happen.

WEAVINGS OF THE COAST SALISH PEOPLE

Recommended grades: 4 - 12

Time required: 3 – 45 minute class sessions

Materials: Paper, pencils, images

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Gather students together in a circle and pass around the images (needles, wool beater, creaser). Ask students to look carefully at the photographs and hypothesize what the object might be used for. Suggested questions to further inquiry include: What do you see? What makes you say that? What more can you find? Encourage students to look carefully at the objects and give clues to help them come to the conclusion.
2. Explain that these objects are all used by the Coast Salish people to create weavings. Weaving was a very important part of the Coast Salish people's traditional life. Still today, the Coast Salish people earn a living weaving extraordinary baskets, sweaters and rugs. Though both men and women knew how to weave, it was the women who were responsible for creating intricate baskets and clothing. Women made several types of containers including baskets for collecting clams, cooking baskets, pouches for gathering materials and lidded boxes. Women also collected the fur from the mountain goat and dog, twisted it into a long yarn and spun onto a spindle. This yarn was woven to create blankets, mats and items of clothing.

Ask students to look around the classroom and at each other, can you find evidence of something that has been woven? Sweaters, cloth, baskets and carpets are examples of weaving.

3. The Coast Salish used the natural resources in their environment to weave items. As a class, discuss natural resources. **Natural resources** are elements of the natural environment that are of use to humans. They include nonrenewable and renewable resources. Nonrenewable resources, such as oil, natural gas and minerals, are limited in quantity; renewable resources, such as forests, water and fish, can be regenerated and can last indefinitely if used carefully. What might be a good renewable resource to use for weaving? (grasses, roots, leaves, wool from animals)

4. Look at an example together that shows several techniques of weaving – show detailed image of **AA 547 – Basket** (below) – shows many techniques in one basket.



What do you see?

What natural resources were used to create this basket?

Ask students to figure out which technique was used?

*How has this basket been decorated? **Imbrication** is when the coil is wrapped with an extra strand of bark or fibre in a contrasting colour to create a pattern. Imbrications are what give the baskets their decorative quality. Why would the women decorate the basket? What does this pattern remind you of?*

5. Divide students into 5 groups. Explain that each group will receive a photograph of a woven object. Ask students to look carefully at the object and discuss the following questions. You can write the questions on the white board or just ask students to look carefully at the object and read the accompanying label copy to learn more.

How was this object created? What type of weaving might this be?

How would this object be used?

Is this the best design for this use? Why or why not?

Have symbols or decoration been added to this object? If so, what?

Why do you think the artist added this design?

IMAGES

Please print for use in activity



Blanket

Coast Salish

early 20th century

mountain goat wool, burlap cord

AA 703

Blanket

Coast Salish

early 20th century

mountain goat wool, burlap cord

AA 703

Coast Salish people are renowned for their weaving.

This blanket is made of mountain goat wool. Mountain goats were hunted for both food and their wool. Dogs, resembling very hairy Pomeranians, were also kept and their fur was sometimes converted to wool. (These dogs became extinct in the late 1800s.)

One edge of this blanket has been reinforced with selvage and has a looped fringe. (*Selvage* is a border made of different material than the main body of the piece and is often woven in a way that won't unravel.) If you look closely, you can see how burlap has been used as selvage along the opposite edge. This selvage also helps the blanket keep its original shape.

Look closely at the way the fibres are woven. Why would there be hoops along the top edge? Could this blanket have been hung as a curtain in a house? Or was it made to be sold and hung as a work of art?

Look closely at the yarn. It is made from two single strands of yarn spun together. This is called *two-ply*. (If only one strand was used, it would be called *one* or *single-ply*.) Can you see any difference between the way a single strand is spun and the way the two are spun together?

If you look carefully, you can see that each individual piece of yarn is twisted, or spun, in a counter-clockwise direction. This is called an "S" spin. When two strands are twisted together, they are spun in a clockwise direction. It seems that all the yarn for goat hair blankets was spun in two different directions. This may be symbolically significant for the weavers.

This style of blanket was probably used in a potlatch ceremony in the early part of the twentieth century. The wool was woven in a twilled or twined weave. Spinning the wool required the use of a spindle and whorl.



Coat

Musqueam First Nation (Coast Salish)

1985

Made by Robyn Sparrow

sheep wool

AA 2134

This coat was woven using a twining technique. Twining is when two strips are twisted around each other between each pair of warp threads. Dark brown and grey triangles enhance the sleeves and back.

This coat is unique because it shows how men and women worked together to make it. Joe Becker made one of the looms on which the coat was woven and the buttons were carved by Jim Kew. The buttons are carved to look like two animals. One is a plumed bird in flight. The other is a wolf.

The design of this coat is based on traditional coats that can be seen in historic photographs of the Musqueam people. It was made by Robyn Sparrow and woven on an upright Salish loom. Her weaving technique is the same that was used to make the wool blankets.

Weaving was traditionally the work of women and was a source of pride and prestige. Ms. Sparrow and other women weavers are concerned that the skill and knowledge of their ancestors be kept alive for future generations.



Hat

Coast Salish
late 19th century
cedar bark
AA 549

Hats made from woven cedar bark were common on the Northwest Coast of North America. The bark is closely woven, using a twined technique. Notice how a separate band has been woven and then sewn into the inner band. Can you see the reinforcing strips of bark on the crown? These hats are so skillfully woven that they are watertight.



Mat

Coast Salish

late 19th or early 20th century

wool, worsted tape

AA 361

This mat is made of commercial wool and modern chemical dyes.

Can you see the three different decorative styles or motifs? The motifs along each side resemble patterns that are most common among Salish-speaking people from the interior of British Columbia, Washington and Oregon. The central design is more similar to other Coast Salish works.

Look closely at the edges of each motif. How has this been made? It looks like these are three separate pieces that have been joined together, but it seems to be all one piece.

This mat was donated to Glenbow by a church minister. Perhaps the varied designs reminded him of the places where he had lived and worked.

**Basket**

Coast Salish

mid 20th century

spruce root, cedar root, cedar with

AA 1817

This basket has a very open weave, with spruce and cedar roots twined and woven between cedar with uprights. Can you see the loops on each outside corner? This is where a tumpline would be attached. A tumpline is used to carry a basket or pack by placing the strap over the top of the head.

What is the advantage of such an open basket? It was used to carry clams after they were dug up in the inter-tidal zone. The open basket would let water and sand drain.

6. Gather the class together and share what you learned about the weavings of the Coast Salish people. Why was weaving important? How did this technology help meet their needs? Is weaving still important today? How does traditional weaving keep contemporary artists connected to their culture?

Thinking Further

Look at the various patterns on the Coast Salish basketry. What do the symbols represent? How do these baskets show honour to the natural environment? If you could create a basket, what design would you put on it?

Try weaving your own basket using recycled materials using a paper cup and yarn. Cut an odd number of cuts, about ½" apart on the paper cup. Weave various colours of yarn, in front of and behind the paper cup. How did this exercise make you feel? What was easy? What was difficult?

ART ACTIVITY

COILED, TWINED AND WOVEN: WEAVINGS OF THE COAST SALISH PEOPLE: PATTERNS AND WEAVINGS

Recommended grades: 4 - 12

Time required: 3 – 45 minute class sessions

Materials: Wooden dowels – 12” long, coloured burlap – precut into 9” x 12” Various colours of yarn, large plastic tapestry needles, buttons, beads and other objects that can be woven onto the burlap, glue

1. Gather the class together and look at the image of the woven blanket from the image bank.

Blanket

Coast Salish, early 20th century
mountain goat wool, sheep wool
AA 1261

2. This blanket is made of mountain goat wool, but can you find the black pieces? These are probably from a Hudson’s Bay blanket. These blankets were common trade items during the fur trade and European exploration and continue to be sold by the Hudson Bay Company. Why would an artist today weave this blanket piece into a traditional style blanket? Notice the loops at one end. Why would these be added to the edge? Hand-woven blankets are often hung as works of art in homes.
3. Explain that students will be creating their own woven work of art inspired by the woven designs of the Coast Salish on baskets, clothing and blankets. Demonstrate how to create the woven art hanging.

- Begin by attaching a dowel to the top. You can also attach a piece of paper to the dowel for student names.
- Pull out a select few strands of the burlap to create aesthetic spaces.
- Demonstrate how to thread a needle and tie a knot at the end. Using the threaded needle, begin weaving designs onto the burlap. Vary the colours and technique to add interest to the work. Add buttons, beads and other materials to the composition.
- Demonstrate how to place a knot at the end of the yarn when finished weaving.
- Using a long piece of yarn (approximately 12”), attach each end to the end of the dowel using a knot. Add a dab of glue to secure the yarn to the end. Display your woven designs.

Thinking Further

Display your woven art hangings in your classroom or around your school. Share what you’ve learned about the Coast Salish with others.

When do you create art? Do you have art in your house? If so, where is it? What is it? Art, for First Nations cultures, is an integral part of their daily lives. Art is on clothing, common objects even on their houses. Is this different from your culture? If so, how?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*This project was funded in part by the
Alberta Historical Resources Foundation.*

**THE GLENBOW MUSEUM WOULD LIKE TO
THANK THEM
FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTION.**

READINGS AND RESOURCES

WEBSITES

Alberta Curriculum Standards: education.alberta.ca

Historical Artifact-Based Learning: Student Process Guide. www.glenbow.org/mavericks, Glenbow Museum, 2010.

Historical Photograph-Based Learning: Student Process Guide. www.glenbow.org/mavericks, Glenbow Museum, 2010.

Reciprocal Research Network: http://www.moa.ubc.ca/RRN/about_overview.html

“S’abadeb – The Gifts: The Pacific Coast Salish Art and Artists”, Seattle Art Museum, www.seattleartmuseum.org, 2008

PRINT

Historical Artifact-Based Learning: Student Process Guide. www.glenbow.org/mavericks, Glenbow Museum, 2010.

Historical Photograph-Based Learning: Student Process Guide. www.glenbow.org/mavericks, Glenbow Museum, 2010.

Holm, Bill. The Box of Daylight: Northwest Coast Indian Art. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press & Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre, 1983.

Holm, Bill. Northwest Coast Indian Art: An Analysis of Form. Vancouver, BC: University of Washington Press, 1965.

Holm, Bill. Spirit and Ancestor: A Century of Northwest Coast Indian Art at the Burke Museum. Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre, 1987

Kennedy, Dorothy I.D. & Randall T. Bouchard, “Northern Coast Salish” Handbook of North American Indians, Vol. 7. Ed. William C. Sturtevant. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institute, 1990

Lobb, Allan. Indian Baskets of the Northwest Coast. Portland, OR: Graphic Arts Centre Publishing Company, 1990.

Spalding, Andrea & Alfred Scow. Secret of the Dance. Victoria, BC: Orca Book Publishers, 2009.

Suttles, Wayne, "Central Coast Salish" Handbook of North American Indians, Vol 7. Ed. William C. Sturtevant. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institute, 1990

Suttles, Wayne. Coast Salish Essays. Vancouver, BC: Talonbooks: 1987

Suttles, Wayne & Barbara Lane, "Southern Coast Salish" Handbook of North American Indians, Vol 7. Ed. William C. Sturtevant. Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institute, 1990

LINKS TO COLLECTIONS

To locate the remainder of the collections not provided in this package, please use the following link:

http://ww2.glenbow.org/search/collectionsResults.aspx?XC=/search/collectionsResults.aspx&TN=OBJECTS&AC=QBE_QUERY&RF=WebResults&DF=WebResultsDetails&DL=0&RL=0&NP=255&MR=10&QB0=AND&QF0=Audience-mediator2&QI0=Main21cCoast

The story below is connected to an artifact in our collection. Please use the '[Link to Collections](#)' hyperlink to find the artifact photo and information.

Rattle

Coast Salish

early 20th century

pecten shell, bark, cord

R1108.10

Pecten, along with clams, scallops, abalone and mussels, are shellfish commonly found in the tidal flats of the Coast Salish territory. Their shells were perforated and grouped together on a thong to make rattles. These rattles are usually associated with the *sxwayxwey* mask dance of the Coast Salish people.

Does the shape of this shell look familiar? It was used as the model for the logo of Shell Oil Company and can be seen on their gas station signs.

The Origin of the *Sxwayxwey*, Narrated by Chief Richard Malloway

The *Sxwayxwey* was picked up by two young girls. They lived at Harrison Mills, and where they picked it up was at the mouth of the Chehalis and Fraser rivers, where it comes together there. And these girls happened to be - I know they called them - old maids. I don't know how old they were, but they weren't married you see - they were single, and their brother was single too. Seems to me there was three in the family.

These girls were out fishing, and while they were fishing they caught something very heavy on their fishing line, so they pulled it in -- they didn't get scared and let it go -- they pulled it in. When it came out of the water there came those spinners we use now in the spiritual dance. There were four spinners, and they were spinning as they came out of the water. As it came out of the water, whatever was in it slipped away, so they pulled the mask and spinners out of the water, and took it home.

The spinners were fixed to a band at the top of the mask, and they gave this to their brother, who used it just around the river. At that time, there was a lot of fighting among the Indians and when he was down the river one time he was cornered by the enemy. He had no way to get away, so he jumped in the river. When he went in the water, the band came off his head and started floating down the river, and the people who were after him shot at it, and he got away. So the feathers and band saved his life,

and that's why we came to treasure these feathers, and when we started using feathers on our spiritual uniforms we used one on each uniform.

So that's how we came to use feathers, although they don't really belong to the Fraser Valley, but they belong to the Eastern people. We treasure them because they saved a life.

When you see a *Sxwayxwey* dance today it's all girls who sing the song, for the simple reason that it was girls who picked it up.

Later on those two girls got married and left home. One of the girls got married in Sumas (Kilgard). One of them got married there, and then the other got married down at Musqueam, and she went down there. From there her daughter went across to Duncan, and that's how the *Sxwayxwey* went from Harrison to Musqueam and then to Duncan.