

Northwest Coast Painted Designs

Welcome! This educational resource focuses on northern Northwest Coast painted designs. It is the Bill Reid Gallery in Vancouver, British Columbia between March 27th and September 15th, 2013. These materials will provide you with an introduction to the artist, his community, and his art. They will also provide information about oral histories and their link to imagery in Northwest Coast First Nation society, the basic elements of northern Northwest Coast design, and traditional painting techniques.

Students Will be Able To:

- Understand that artists may get inspiration from stories to create works of art
- Observe and create their own images that use techniques of simplification, abstraction, and symmetry
- Describe the colour, lines, and shapes used in northern Northwest Coast design
- Develop hand, eye, arm, and body coordination
- Use shape, form and colour to express themselves
- Experiment with colour and texture

A Note on Resource Layout:

Each lesson contains an in quotations ; directions for the teacher are in (brackets). Each lesson also contains an activity,

Introduction to Lessons: About the Artist, Lyle Wilson

Digital copy of [First Nations Map of British Columbia](#) by Lyle Wilson.

[of British Columbia](#) Kitimaat. If you look at the [First Nations Map](#) additional territories of the First Nations people of BC. Point to Haisla territory. That is where the artist and his ancestors are

Here is some background of this detailed work of art:

UBC Museum of Anthropology (MOA), visitors would often approach him and say that they were familiar with the work of the Haida. While he tried to correct them, it was difficult to do without a map to show their separate

territories so he created the one you see before you! So here on Haida Gwaii is where the Haida live. And here, across from Haida Gwaii on the mainland, is where Lyle and his people, the Haisla, are from. Now, these borders outline language groups the territories

Morse code for SOS.

Who knows what SOS means?

Design. He is a skilled carver, he makes jewelry, writes, and paints. His work shows his interest and commitment to recycling and reusing materials, education, and preserving the Haisla language. We will be studying his painted works.

Lesson 1: Story and Imagery in Northwest Coast Art

Materials :

[*Kitimaat Clans*](#) [Painting], Lyle Wilson
[*Raven and the Fisherman*](#)

Designs like these, that are owned by a family, are called crests. A family group might own several crests. These crests can include birds (eagle, raven), land animals (bears, wolves), sea animals (killer whales, halibut, salmon), natural features (sun, moon, mountains), or even supernatural creatures (thunderbird, double headed sea-serpent). The stories and crests were very important and might be placed on many objects like spoons, boxes, hats, and much more. the students the pictures of painted belongings histories and crests are still very important and tell about a . Often, they tell about the common ancestor, how the ancestor came to earth at the beginning of time, and a place where the ancestor came to e gives them ownership of

are

[Kitimaat Clans](#). This picture shows a modern example of Haisla family crests all in one painting. The Haisla social system is based on clans; membership in a clan almon, raven, frog, wolf, killer whale, crow, and beaver. Northwest Coast First Nations art is done in a stylized way. Stylized means it is not meant to look exactly like the thing it represents; it is not

the main points and ask students what they imagine is happening. Encourage them to think about what the characters look like and what the setting might look like. Encourage students to simply sketch out the main characters loosely and then come back at the end to add details and colour).

The Raven and the Fisherman

One day, Wigit heard about a fellow called Kwaganoo. Now Kwaganoo owned a special hook that he never let anybody see, let alone use. This hook was used to catch a very tasty fish called the mumugazu. (pause). Being constantly hungry and so lazy, Wigit always tried to find food with the least amount of effort so he decided to trick Kwaganoo out of his special hook (pause). At first, he succeeded in getting it, but when Wigit tried to use the hook to catch his own mumugazu, Kwaganoo retaliated by swimming underwater and yanking Wigit into the sea (pause). Kwaganoo then proceeded to try to drown poor Wigit (pause).

evenge but only barely (pause)! The Haisla people learned to fish for mumugazu because Wigit remembered how the hook was made and gave it to them to use. But Wigit himself never used it again because he was

in the story. Ask them if they can name any of the other animals in the picture.

Invite students to pick their favorite part of the story and add some detail and colour it. Circulate to provide encouragement and praise.

Lesson Closure:

Invite students to share which part of the story they chose to illustrate and why. Consider displaying the work.

Lesson 2: Exploring Shapes in Northern Northwest Coast Art

Materials:

[Origins/Coalition](#) [Painting], by Lyle Wilson
[Evolution of the Ovoid Shape](#) [Drawing] by Lyle Wilson
(If available) Orca toy, skate fish picture, skull model
Paper, pencils
Coloring materials
[Ovoid symmetry activity](#)
[Haisla Mee-Yuh](#) Tracing Sheet

Lesson Introduction (Teacher Monologue and Questions):

Northern
and thin in places. This is called a

is a rounded, curvy rectangle. **U-forms** look like a wide, filled

Lesson 3: How the Art Is Made

:
[Photo of traditional paint and paintbrush](#)

[Photos of painted belongings](#)

Small bowls for mixing containers

Newspaper for covering desks

Oil

Charcoal

Rocks for grinding charcoal

Saliva

Brushes for painting (fine Chinese paint brushes are excellent, if you can find them)

Lesson Introduction: Teacher Monologue and Questions

Northwest Coast First Peoples paint designs on many items. Who can remember some of the things Northwest Coast Peoples

[Photos of painted belongings](#)).

Brushes used in the past were black and red. Black was the main color, used for the outline, or **formline**. Red was used for the inner shapes. Green-blue was also common. White, and yellow are seen in use as well. Paint was made by mixing ground up colourful materials with salmon egg oil and saliva. Black was made by mixing in charcoal dust. Red was made using red ochre, a clay like material. Green, or green-blue was

[Photo of traditional paint and paintbrush](#) Show picture).
n
artist got their paint brushes from in the past? The store? What do you think artists would have to do to make p
wood. Brush tips were made of hair, usually porcupine hair, and they were tied to the handle of the brush using cedar twine (string made from the roots of the cedar tree). The brushes were also

and hunt a porcupine, cut

to do an activity that gives us a small idea of what it might have been like to make and use paint before you could buy it at a store. Imagine you have chopped down a tree that you used for many things, but also you used a tiny bit to carve your brush handle. Imagine you harvested cedar root, and made twine from it, and wrapped it around porcupine hairs from a porcupine your family member hunted. Imagine you have taken charcoals from the fire, and crushed salmon eggs to get the oil. Now you have your paintbrush, oil, and charcoal. You are going to mix it all together with

Activity:

Take time to explain that this is an activity that must be executed respectfully, and that spitting be done carefully and with consideration for others- that it be done only into their

to survive? How does the coast provide that? What can we do to keep our Coast clean and healthy for all these animals?

Credits:

This resource was created for the Bill Reid Centre by Desiree Danielson with the help of Bill Reid Centre staff, Bryan Myles, Bill Reid Gallery co-curator Kwiaawah Jones, and UBC Faculty Advisor Alison Diesvelt. Information for this resource was taken from the following works:

Works Cited:

British Columbia . *Arts Education*. Province of British Columbia.