



Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Instructional Resources Library

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Art Around the World Session 1

Subject: Art, History

Grade level: K-12

Time: Varies

Pinch Pot

Cultural Connection

Pinch pots are one of the oldest forms of pottery in the world. People in many ancient cultures—such as Native American, African, and Asian communities—used pinch pots to cook food, carry water, and hold small treasures.

Steps

1. Break off the amount of clay you want to use. (You may use the entire piece provided in your materials box if you choose.)
2. Roll the clay between your hands to form a ball.
3. Place both thumbs on top of the clay ball and press down to make a dent.
4. Keep your thumbs inside the dent while your fingers stay on the outside edge. Pinch your thumbs and fingers together, then turn the clay slightly and pinch again.
5. Continue pinching and turning until the ball begins to look like a small bowl or pot. The more you pinch, the thinner the sides become. Be careful not to make the sides too thin.
6. Smooth the surface with your fingers if you like. Add decoration by pressing or drawing designs into the clay with the popsicle stick, wooden rod, or skewer. (Be gentle—if you poke all the way through, the pot may break when it dries.)
7. Place your finished pinch pot in a warm, dry spot to dry. Once dry, you can paint it.

Reflection Prompts

- What was challenging about making your pinch pot?
- How do you think people long ago used pots like this in their daily lives?

Weaving

Cultural Connection

Weaving is practiced around the world in many ways. In Guatemala and Mexico, artists use bright, colorful yarns to create woven cloth. In Africa, the Kente cloth of Ghana uses bold patterns to tell stories. Native Americans also weave baskets and rugs with natural fibers.

“Art Around the World Session 1”

Updated: December 2025 | Instructional Resource Library

Page 1 of 3

Words to Know

- Loom: A wooden frame used to create a weaving.
- Warp: The vertical strings (yarn) stretched across the loom.
- Weft: The yarn woven across the warp strings.

Steps

1. Position your wooden loom so the 7 warp strings run up and down (vertical).
2. Choose a pre-cut piece of yarn (about the length of the loom). Hold one end between your thumb and finger.
3. Starting on the right side, weave the yarn over the first warp string, then under the next. Continue this over/under pattern until you reach the last warp string.
4. Pull the yarn through so the extra hanging on both sides is about the same length.
5. Use your fingers to gently push the yarn upward until it touches the wooden frame.
6. Take another piece of yarn. This time, start on the right side and weave in the opposite pattern (under/over). Push it up so it sits snugly against the first row.
7. Continue weaving, alternating the over/under pattern each time, and push each row up as you go.
8. As the loom fills, it will become harder to push the yarn up because the space is tighter. Keep going until the loom is full.
9. To finish, you may leave the extra yarn hanging or tie two ends together at the sides for a neat edge.

Reflection Prompts

- How did the weaving process feel as you repeated the steps?
- What colors or patterns did you choose, and why?
- How do you think woven cloth or baskets are important to a community?

Masks

Cultural Connection

Masks have been used in celebrations, ceremonies, and performances for centuries. African masks are often worn in dances to honor ancestors, Japanese Noh masks are used in theater, and in Mexico, masks are worn for festivals like Día de los Muertos.

Steps

1. Place the mask so the forehead is at the top, and the chin is at the bottom.
2. Paint the mask in any colors or designs you like. Remember to wipe extra paint off the brush before applying so the paint goes on smoothly.
3. Allow the paint to dry. Add more designs (stripes, dots, patterns) if you wish, then let it dry again.
4. For decoration, you may:
 - Tie raffia through the holes along the top edge and trim to your preferred length.
 - Use pipe cleaners to make horns or shapes, attaching them through the same holes.
 - Glue on feathers, sequins, or foam shapes.
5. Let all decorations dry completely.
6. Display your mask by hanging it on the wall or attach elastic to both sides so you can wear it.

“Art Around the World Session 1”

Updated: December 2025 | Instructional Resource Library

Page 2 of 3

Reflection Prompts

- What do you want your mask to represent?
- How did the decorations you chose help express your design?
- Why do you think masks are important in celebrations and performances?