



Native Maker Program Lesson Plan

Basket Bots



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Summary:

Basketry in California is a cultural tradition passed from generation to generation. Students will learn the cultural significance and use of baskets, and techniques to create a basket bot.

Goal:

Material:

Cultural Information

Pomo basketweavers have continually stressed that an essential part of learning the art of basketry is learning the art of root collection. Root digging is often a family affair, with men, women, children, and old people participating. Many times they'd make a big trip of it, camp a week at a good spot, with everyone collecting and the men doing the 'heavy work.' In the early days, a fire-hardened, singlepointed, hardwood digging stick was used to loosen the soil and expose the roots.

Five interrelated qualities are recognized by basketmakers in assessing sedge roots: length, color, straightness, strength, and pliability. The importance of these qualities varies according to the intended use of the basket, which in turn determines the basketry technique required. (Peri, David and Scott Patterson (1976) *The Basket is In the Roots, That's Where it Begins.*)

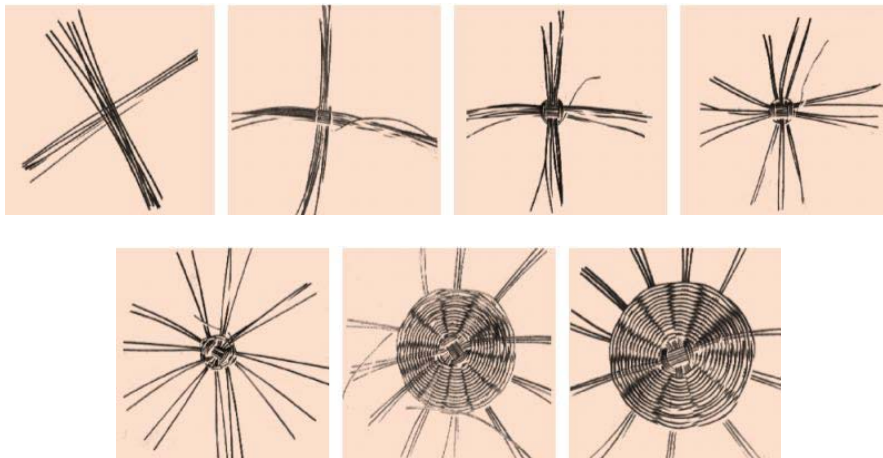
Pomo people have been making baskets for at least 1000 years. They are considered to be one of the most artistic basket makers in the world, and their baskets can be found in many museums. Pomo baskets are made for the purpose of storing, preparing and serving food, and to carry out daily tasks. However, the Pomo also created more artistic baskets for ceremonies or as gifts, such as when a Pomo bride gives baskets to the husband's family as part of a marriage agreement. These wedding and ceremonial baskets are typically beautifully decorated with feathers, shells and beads. The Pomo used a variety of plant materials for making baskets, such as willow, sedge (*Carex*), the bark of redbud (*Cercis*), the root of bulrush (*Scirpus*), and the root of the digger pine, but mostly sedge was used. Before the harvest, ritual prayers and offerings are made, as the natural material is considered alive and has to be treated with respect. Pomo baskets come in all sizes and shapes and exhibit a variety of patterns which are mostly asymmetrical and discontinuous. The Pomo are one of the few groups where men and women weave baskets; however, it is the women who make the fine baskets, and the men who weave fish traps, baby carriers, burden and storage baskets. (Fassbender, Johanna, (2006) Pardee Home.)

Adapted from Pardee Home and The Autry



Overview:

- Brief history of basketry
- Cultural information of basketry
- View pictures of basketry
- Layout material to make a basket bot
- Describe the process by doing a demonstration
- Create basket bot
- Discuss shapes, designs used



Resources:

Pomo & Miwok Round Reed Basket Kit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jPE47SONaM>

Julia and Lucy Parker in Yosemite National Park California:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vWYDNapbxXw>

Alice Elliot: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jFMPIaMnfb4>

Make a Round Reed Basket:

https://theautry.org/sites/default/files/documents/education/california_indian_basketry.pdf

Basketry:

http://www.pardeehome.org/Basketry_module.pdf