


TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION



LEARNING GUIDE

History in Your Hands: Pinch Pots

K-2nd grade



Over the course of human history, pottery has been used for both everyday tasks and as artistic representations of culture. Broken pieces of pottery, called *sherds*, are often important evidence in helping archeologists identify the inhabitants and their activities at a site. In these activities, learners are introduced to the field of archeology and experience the process of making a clay pinch pot.

Objectives

- Recognize the purposes and types of work in the field of archeology
- Understand the purposes of pottery
- Demonstrate the ability to create a clay pinch pot through a process;
Create original decorative designs
- Self-evaluate activity performance

Social Studies TEKS

K: K.13A, K.13B, K.14A, K.14C, K.14D

Grade 1: 1.14A, 1.16A, 1.16B, 1.17C, 1.17D, 1.17E

Grade 2: 2.15A, 2.15B, 2.16B, 2.16D, 2.16E, 2.16F

Additional Discipline TEKS

K: **Fine Arts:** FA.A.K2A, FA.A.K2C, FA.A.K3A, FA.A.K3C, FA.A.K4A

Math: K.2A, K.2B, K.2C, K.2D, K.3A, K.3B, K.4A

ELAR: K.1A, K.1B, K.1C, K.2E, K.5E, K.6F, K.10E, K.11B, K.12A, K.12D

Grade 1: **Fine Arts:** FA.A.1.2A, FA.A.1.2B, FA.A.1.2C, FA.A.1.3A, FA.A.1.3B, FA.A.1.3C, FA.A.1.4A

Math: 1.2A, 1.3A, 1.3D, 1.3F, 1.4A, 1.4C, 1.5B, 1.5D, 1.5F

ELAR: 1.1A, 1.2F, 1.6E, 1.6H, 1.12A

Grade 2: **Fine Arts:** FA.A.2.2B, FA.A.1.2C, FA.A.2.3B

Math: 2.2A, 2.4A, 2.2B, 2.4C, 2.5A, 2.7C

ELAR: 2.1A, 2.2B, 2.6E, 2.6H, 2.7E, 2.7F

Materials

- THC pinch pot activity kit. (Go to thc.texas.gov/tam to find out how to get an activity kit).
- History in Your Hands: Pinch Pots Learning Guide activities and resources

Vocabulary

- **archeologist** (ar kee AH luh jist) noun: a scientist who studies the past by examining the objects people made, used, and left behind
- **artifact** (AR tih fakt) noun: any item made, modified, or used by humans
- **clay** (klay) noun: a natural material made of tiny pieces of rocks and minerals
- **excavate** (EK skuh vayt) verb: to find or remove something by digging
- **pattern** (PAA turn) noun: a design (shape, line, color) that repeats in a specific way
- **pinch** (pinch) verb: to squeeze between the fingers
- **pottery** (PAH tuh ree) noun: containers and other objects made of clay
- **sequence** (SEE kwens) noun: a pattern or process where one thing follows another
- **sherd** (shurd) noun: a piece of broken pottery often used by archeologists to help them date a site and determine who lived there

Historical Context

Making pottery has been identified as one of the earliest activities of human cultures. The materials for making objects—clay, water, plant fibers, sand, shells, wood—were abundant and available in nature. Some historians believe that the first pottery made by Native Americans can be dated to about 3,500 B.C.E. These pieces were primarily functional containers for storing food or water. As the craft evolved, more elaborate and decorative pieces were created for ceremonial purposes.



Some cultures, like the Caddo, developed their own very recognizable styles of making and decorating pottery. The Caddo lived in the East Texas piney woods from around A.D. 800-1800. They built homes and communities, hunted and gathered food, farmed, and traded with other communities in the region. In 1859, the Caddo were removed to what is now western Oklahoma. The Caddo Nation is currently headquartered in the same area, near Binger, Oklahoma. *Image: Painting of Caddo grass house by George Nelson; texasbeyondhistory.net*

The Caddo had a strong tradition of making pottery. The craft was likely passed along the female line, from mother to daughter, aunt to niece. They created many different styles and forms of pottery over the course of about 1,000 years. Early Caddo pottery, mostly used for everyday needs, was not decorated. Over time, circular or rectangular decorative patterns were often added to ceremonial pots. Later pottery included detailed decorations including symbols important to the Caddo culture such as sky, earth, water, sun, moon, gods, goddesses, and animals. Their pottery was fired in an open fire and varied in color from grays and blacks to oranges and reds. *Image: Caddo pottery, THC Caddo Mounds State Historic Site*



Activity: Introduction to Archeology

15 minutes

This activity introduces learners to the field of archeology.

- Share or display the resource image **What Is Happening?**
- Ask learners to describe the people they see in the picture. Then ask them to describe the objects they see in the picture.
- Ask them to look closely at the woman in the center of the picture. Talk about what she is doing. Suggested guided questions:
 - What object has been **excavated** (dug up)?
 - What are objects from the past that were made by humans called? (artifacts)
 - What is she doing with that paintbrush? Why might she have picked that tool to use?
 - What is the name for a scientist who studies the past by examining **artifacts**?

A summary activity could include sharing the video, **What Is Archaeology?** Suggested content begins at time code 1:28 and ends at time code 3:28. (<https://youtu.be/YyB2We3PzHE>)

Activity: Introduction to Making a Pinch Pot

15 minutes

This activity introduces learners to the process of making a pinch pot.

- Display a collection of bowls, pots, glasses, vases, etc. Allow learners to look at each one. Suggested guided questions:
 - What words can you use to describe these objects?
 - How are they alike? How are they different?
 - Why do you think someone created objects like this?
 - How do you think these objects might be used?
- Share or display the resource image **From This...To This.**
- Ask learners to describe the two objects in the images.
- Ask how they are alike and how they are different.
- Share or display again the **What is Happening?** resource image. Point out the pots in that image and describe how those pots began as lumps of clay until a human shaped them into pots. Pots like these, and the objects they looked at earlier, were created by humans to address a need for storing food and water. Pots were also eventually made to use as decorations or as special containers in ceremonial events.
- Explain that they will use a specific method to make a pot out of a lump of clay.
- Share the **video** of a Texas Historical Commission archeologist explaining the process of making a pinch pot. (<https://youtu.be/vRGxJLv7cgY>)
- Explore the components of the **Pinch Pot Activity Kit** as a show-and-tell with learners. Share each component of the kit and explain how each will be used.

Activity: Pinch Pot Designs

flexible

In this activity, learners draw original designs to decorate their pinch pots. It is suggested this activity be done before learners begin making their pinch pots. This ensures that the design can be carved into the pot while the clay is still wet.

- Share or display the image resource **Decorated Caddo Pottery**.
- Ask learners to look closely at each image.
- Guided discussion questions could include:
 - What shapes, colors, and patterns do you see on the pots?
 - Why do you think the potter used those elements on the pot?
 - How does adding those design elements change the pot?
- Share or display the activity resource **Pinch Pot Designs** and explain the activity before distributing the resource sheets and art materials.
- Share or display the image resource **Types of Lines** to spark design ideas.
- Distribute the Pinch Pot Designs resource and art materials.
- Share design ideas when the activity is completed.

Activity: Make a Pinch Pot

flexible

In this activity, learners follow the instructions in the **Pinch Pot Activity Kit** to make a pinch pot.

Activity: Make a Pinch Pot Activity Assessment

flexible

In this activity, learners assess their performance on the entire pinch pot activity.

- Preview the **How Did I Do? activity assessment rubric**. Explain that learners will be thinking back over the whole activity from start to finish to determine how well they accomplished the activity goals.
- Point out/read aloud the assessment text statements. Explain the ranking columns and rows including the category ratings, number points, and icon meanings.
- Demonstrate how to fill in number points and total each row. Then demonstrate how to add the column numbers to fill in the total points score.

Additional Activity Resources

Steps in Making a Pinch Pot

flexible

This sequencing activity can be used either before or after learners make a pinch pot, and can be conducted as whole class, small groups/pairs, or individually. Additionally, the sequence pictures can be cut apart and glued onto index cards to increase kinesthetic activity.

Pinch Pot Color by Number

flexible

This art activity can be used to review number, color, and shape recognition with younger learners.

Putting It Together

flexible

This sequencing and coordination activity can also be expanded to include ELAR skills by having learners talk through their reconstruction processes, write out sequenced steps, and discuss the pre- and post-activity experiences.

The purpose of the activity is to help learners experience a task that archeologists do: putting together pieces of a broken artifact. Make copies of the **blank paint-by-number pot resource**. Cut out the pot shape. Then cut the complete image into various pieces like a puzzle. Put the pieces of each pot in a resealable bag. Distribute the bags and instruct the learners to figure out how to put the pieces together to form a complete picture of the pot. This activity can be done in pairs or individually. When the pieces are in place, learners can tape them together.

Math With Pinch Pots

flexible

This math activity includes addition, subtraction, multiplication, sequencing, and money recognition operations. The resource can be used in its entirety or be parsed out as multiple individual problems. The activity can be conducted as whole class, small groups/pairs, or individually with assistance or accommodation as needed.

My Artifact

flexible

This ELAR activity can be conducted as whole class, small groups/pairs, or individually. Assignment tasks can be completed as an entire activity or broken up into individual, assisted activities depending on assistance or accommodation needs. This activity lends itself to oral sharing after completion.

Additional Learning Resources

Video: Introducing archeology for younger learners

- <https://youtu.be/zOJlCdMvWAI>

Video: Career spotlight on archeologists for older learners. This link also includes an archeology playlist on related topics.

- <https://youtu.be/4BXkL5nba40>

Website: THC Virtual Learning Portal Caddo Voices online experience

- <https://learning.thc.texas.gov/online-experiences/caddo-voices-exhibit/>

Website: THC Learning Resources. This site features K-12 lesson plans categorized by content area and historic site location

- <https://www.thc.texas.gov/education/learning-resources>

Website: THC website page focusing on archeology

- <https://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/archeology/what-does-archeologist-do>

What's Happening?



Image: Harvard Gazette

From This... To This!



Images: Wikimedia Creative Commons

Decorated Caddo Pottery



Images: Chase Kahwinhut Earles Caddo Pottery



Pinch Pot Designs



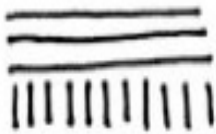
Draw three design ideas to decorate your pot. Draw a different design in each box.

Name _____

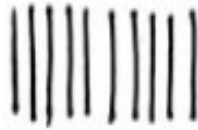


Types of Lines

STRAIGHT



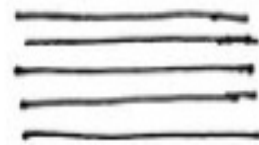
VERTICAL



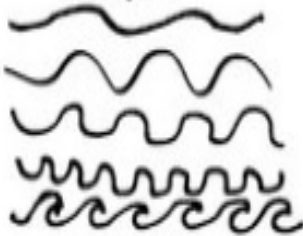
DIAGONAL



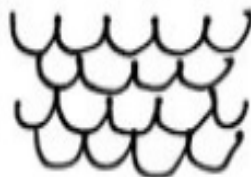
HORIZONTAL



WAVY



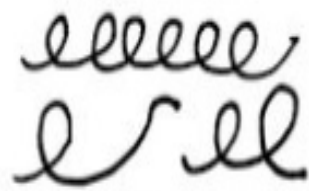
SCALLOP



ZIG ZAG



CURLY



DABBED



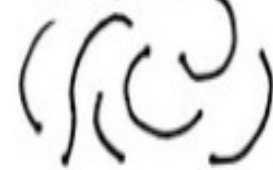
GRADUATED



ZIG ZAG



CURVED



DOTTED



DASH



CHEVRON



SPIRAL



BROKEN



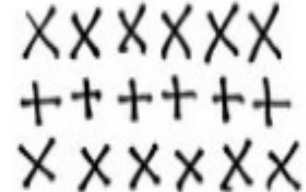
THIN



THICK



















CRISS CROSS



How Did I Do?

Pinch Pot Activity Rubric K-2

	4 = Excellent	3 = Very Good	2 = Good	1 = Almost	Score
I followed directions to make my pot.					
I used my own ideas to decorate my pot.					
I did good work on this art project.					
I cleaned up my work area.					
					Total Score

Comments: _____

Name _____



Steps in Making a Pinch Pot

These pictures show six steps in making a pinch pot. Label the pictures 1,2,3,4,5,6 to show the correct sequence from start (1) to finish (6).

Step _____



Step _____



Step _____



Step _____



Step _____



Step _____



Name _____



Pinch Pot Color By Number

1 = black

2 = brown

3 = blue

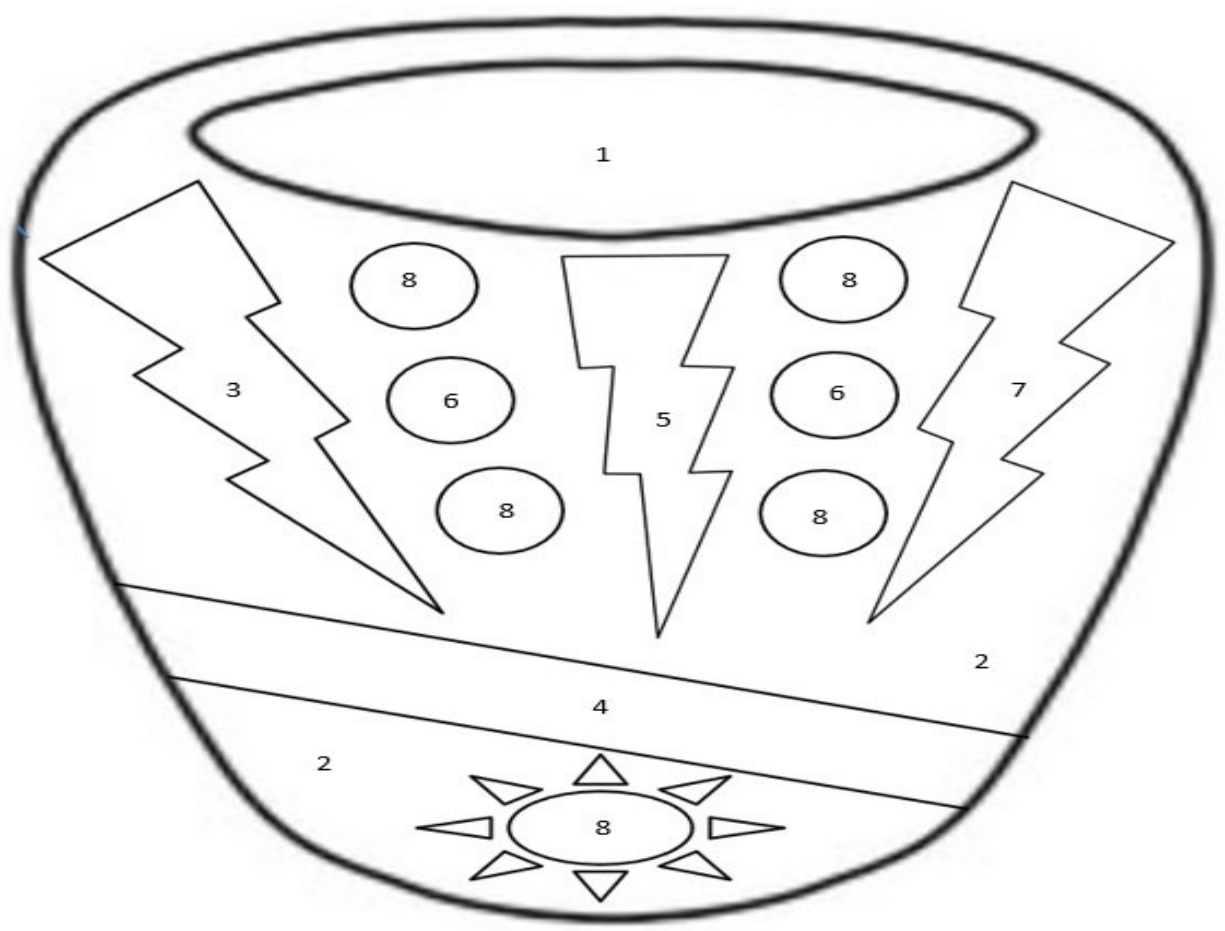
4 = red

5 = yellow

6 = green

7 = purple

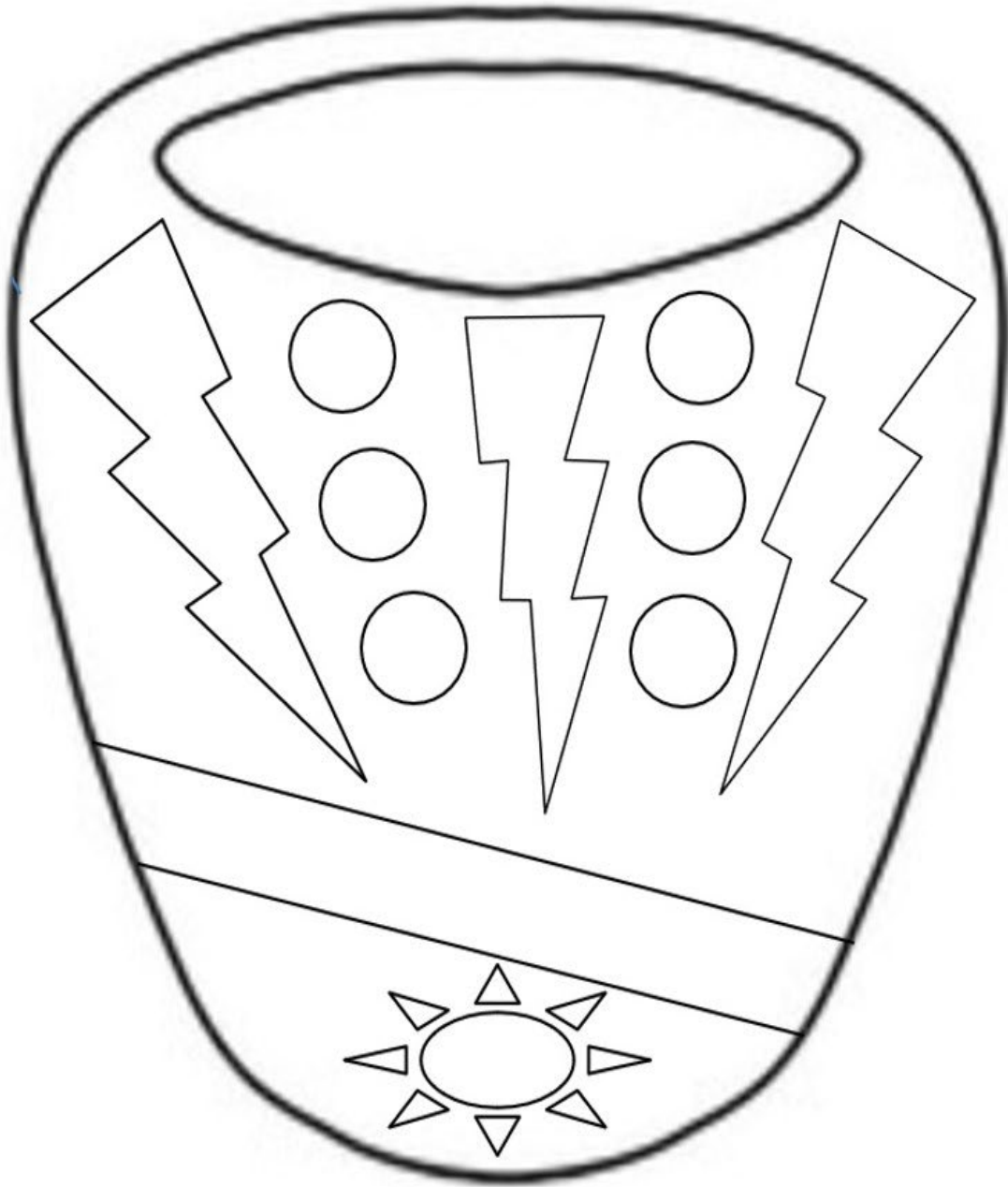
8 = your favorite color!



Name _____






Putting It Together



Math With Pinch Pots

K/1/2

Write the next numbers in the sequence.

2	4	
8		12
14	16	



The art class needs 18 clay balls to make the pots. Jason rolled 3 balls, Diego rolled 5 balls, and Ki rolled 2 balls. How many more balls does the class need?



Emma made a pot that is 7 inches tall. Max's pot is three inches shorter than Emma's. How tall is Max's pot in inches?







Count the pots. Write the numbers. Find the sum.

	+		=	_____
_____	+	_____	=	_____

Solve the equation. Circle the pot that has the number you wrote.

3 x _____ = 15

6	3
	
5	15
	

Felix finished 12 pinch pots. He put all of them on a tray to carry them to his desk. Oh no! He tripped! Half of the pots fell off and broke. How many finished pots does Felix have left?



Hana wants to buy clay to make pinch pots. Each pound of clay costs \$5. This is how much money she has. How many pounds of clay can Hana buy?



Name _____



My Artifact

Scientists called **archeologists** learn about the past by studying the objects people leave behind. These objects are called **artifacts**.

Imagine that 100 years from now, archeologists discover an artifact from your life. What will this artifact tell them about you and your life today?

Draw a picture of an object that is important to you today.



Why did you pick that object?
What does it tell about you and your life?

What is your artifact made of? Put a check on all the materials that are in your artifact.

metal plastic clay leather

fabric bone fur paper

What is one question archeologists might ask when they find your artifact 100 years from now?



Name _____

