Indigenous Designs
SCHOOL WORKSHOPS | Classroom Connections
Grade Level: 2nd–6th

Explore the galleries in search of distinctive designs from various cultures, including Native American functional art. Inspired by the collection, design a **parfleche** utilizing colors, shapes, and patterns.

**WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION**
Explore the galleries in search of distinctive designs from various cultures, including Native American functional art. Inspired by the collection, design a **parfleche** utilizing colors, shapes, and patterns.

**WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES**
Students will:
- Describe and identify patterns in artwork from various cultures in the Museum’s collection.
- Create a mixed media **parfleche** which includes the use of shapes, colors and patterns within the surface design.
- Identify a **parfleche** as being a functional piece of American Indian Art with aesthetic value.
- Identify and discuss symbolism in artwork as reflected in the Museum’s collection.

**COLLECTION FOCUS**
- Native American galleries
  - Additional stops may include China, Japan and Africa

**SOCIAL MEDIA**
Share photos with #nelsonatkins

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**CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS**

*National Visual Arts Standards*
- Create Artwork Using a Variety of Processes and Materials (VA:Cr2.1.3a)
- Brainstorm Multiple Approaches to an Art or Design Problem (VA:Cr1.14a)
- Identify and Explain Where Different Cultures Illustrate History Through Art (VA:Pr6.1.3a)
- Identify and Analyze Cultural Associations Suggested by Visual Imagery (VA:Re7.2.5a)
- Infer Information Through Observation (Time, Place, Culture) (VA:Cn11.1.4a)

*MO & KS Learning Standards: Math*
- Recognize and Construct Lines of Symmetry for a 2-D Figure (4.Gm.A.3)

*National Social Studies Standards*
- Describe Ways in Which Artistic Creations Serve as Expressions and Influence Behavior of a Particular Culture (1.c)

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Certain collections or galleries may be unavailable due to rotations or construction. We apologize for the inconvenience.

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School Workshop Scheduler
StudioWorkshops@nelson-atkins.org
BEFORE YOUR VISIT
- Read a book to your class that includes designs from various cultures

AFTER YOUR VISIT
- Collect a variety of objects found in nature such as; leaves, flowers, butterfly wings, wood, feathers, seed pods, etc. Provide a magnifying glass to look closely for patterns. Ask if the students see symmetrical, asymmetrical, or radial balance. Compare these patterns and designs with those seen in the Nelson-Atkins galleries.

VOCABULARY/CONCEPTS
- **Design**: An arrangement of lines or shapes to create a pattern or decoration.
- **Pattern**: Decorative visual repetition (organized and random)
- **Balance**: *Asymmetrical* - Organization of a design so that unlike objects have equal visual weight
  *Symmetrical* - Organization of a design so that elements are the same on either side of a central axis
  *Radial* - Organization of a design so that elements branch out from a central point
- **Shape**: An element of art that is two-dimensional and encloses space
  *Organic* - An irregular shape or one that derives characteristics from nature
  *Geometric* - Any shape having more mathematical than organic design such as; circle, square, triangle or rectangle
- **Indigenous**: Originating or occurring naturally in a particular place; Native.
- **Functional Art**: Works of art intended to be used in a practical way in addition to being aesthetically pleasing
- **Border**: A decorative band that runs along the outside edge of a composition
- **Parfleche**: A Native American rawhide bag

EDUCATOR RESOURCE CENTER
The ERC can help you expand your before and after visit activities to fully connect your museum experience with your classroom curriculum. The ERC provides:
- **Curriculum Consultations**
- **Circulating Resources, including Art Connection Kits**
- **Professional Development Workshops**

[For more information, visit nelson-atkins.org/educators/](http://nelson-atkins.org/educators/).