

## Interpreting Cultural Artifacts through Native American Pottery

### **Lesson Description:**

Archeologists have proven that Native Americans have settled the Midlands long before European contact, and date some artifacts back 12,000 years. Using the Cayce Historical Museum's collection of Native American artifacts as reference, students will learn about the different historic periods of Native American settlement in South Carolina, and the cultural history of the various South Carolina tribes that once settled the Midlands. Our exhibits will show students how archaeologists are able to use artifacts to piece together images of the past, and will allow students a deeper understanding of the individual cultures and histories of the varying South Carolina tribes. Finally, students will go on a brief nature hike through the museum's trail and boardwalk to the Granby Pavilion. On the hike they will learn about and identify the various indigenous plants that Southeastern Native Americans used for food, medicinal, and ceremonial purposes. Once the students reach the pavilion, they will create and decorate their own piece of "Native American" pottery so they may better understand how these historic tribes used the natural environment to their benefit to create tools and cultural artifacts.

### **Standard 3-2: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the exploration and settlement of South Carolina.**

**3-2.1** – Compare the **culture**, governance, and physical environment of the major Native American tribal groups of South Carolina, including the Cherokee, Catawba and Yamasee.

**3-2.2** – Summarize the motives, activities, and accomplishments of the exploration of South Carolina by the Spanish, French and English.

**3-2.3** – Describe the initial contact, cooperation, and conflict between the Native Americans and European settlers in South Carolina.

### **Standard 4-1: The student will demonstrate an understanding of political, economic and geographic reason for the exploration of the New World.**

**4-1.1** – Summarize the spread of Native American populations using the Landbridge Theory.

**4-1.2** – Compare the everyday life, physical environment, and **culture** of the major Native American cultural groupings, including the Eastern Woodlands, the Plains, the Southwest, the Great Basin, and the Pacific Northwest.

### **Standard 8-1: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the settlement of South Carolina and the United States by Native Americans, Europeans, and Africans.**

**8-1.1** – Summarize the collective and individual aspects of the Native American **culture** of the Eastern Woodlands tribal group, including the Catawba, Cherokee, and Yemasee

**8-1.2** – Compare the motives, activities, and accomplishments of the exploration of South Carolina and North America by the Spanish, French, and English.

## Vocabulary

Paleo, Archaic, Woodland, Mississippian, Exploratory, Historic, Chiefdom, Confederation, Artifact, Sherd, Surface Treatment, and Projectile Point

## Teachers Need to Provide

- Pottery sherd identification work sheet (attached)
  - One copy per student OR
  - One copy per group

## Museum Will Provide

- Pencils
- Clay
- Decorative Materials
- Wipes & Paper Towels

## Lesson Progression

### **Part 1: Brief Introduction to the Museum & Midlands History**

Staff will welcome students to the museum and provide them with a brief introduction to Cayce's history. Staff will discuss the origins of the Midlands and Cayce, SC including early European settlements, the importance of river trade to the development of the Midlands, and the development of Cayce.

### **Part 2: South Carolina Tribal Groups & Cultural Artifacts**

Staff will take the students to tour the displays of Native American artifacts. Students will learn about the different periods of Native American settlement in South Carolina, including the different cultural and political aspects characteristic to each period. They will also learn about the different tribes that once inhabited the Midlands, including the Cofitachequi, Catawba, Cherokee, and the Congaree.

### **Part 3: Artifact Scavenger Hunt (optional)**

Students will learn how artifacts reveal cultural and historic aspects of Native American tribes, specifically pottery sherds. Staff will teach students how to identify different characteristics of pottery sherds, and what these characteristics mean. Using the information they've learned and the museum's displays, students will identify and date the pottery sherds on their worksheet.

### **Part 4: Nature Hike (weather permitting)**

Students will go on a brief hike through the museum's trail and boardwalk to the Granby Pavilion. On the hike they will learn about and identify the various indigenous plants that Southeastern Native Americans used for food, medicinal, and ceremonial purposes.

### **Part 5: Pottery Activity**

Students will move to the Granby Pavilion (or Council Chambers if there is inclement weather) where they will learn about the different methods Native Americans used to make pottery, and the different uses pottery served. They will learn how to make their own "Native American" pots, and decorate their pots with a variety of tools including sea shells, fabric, corn, etc. Once they have decorated their pots, students will work with staff to identify the type of "surface treatment" they used, what information the "surface treatment" can reveal, and determine how "old" their pot is and where "sherds" from their pot may be found.