



Country: Guatemala

Guatemalan Textiles - Weaving Identity and Place 2022-2023

Guatemalan Textiles-Weaving Identity and Place, Grades 1st-12th

How do we express ourselves through what we wear? Learn about the colorful world of Guatemala through textiles. Students will learn about the Maya, weaving, and how different people in Guatemala identify where they come from through design in their Huipils. Younger students will then create their own design out of fabric scraps. Older students get to test their motor skills and will learn how to weave.

Objective: This workshop will introduce students to Guatemala, its environment, the Maya and how they used their surrounding natural resources to eat, to build their homes and monuments, and to create a variety of art forms. Students will learn about weaving, how clothing is made, and how specific designs can be used to indicate one's identity or place of origin.

Art Component: Students will learn the basics of weaving on a small scale as well as pattern recognition and creation. The activity encourages students to plan ahead to create a pattern or design and how to achieve that goal. It also tests their fine motor skills as they work with their hands to create their design using yarn and fabric scraps.

Deliverables: Students will know the geographic location of Guatemala, the basics of its environment, and the people who have lived there since antiquity. Additionally, students will explore their manner of self-expression. Students will be able to perform basic weaving techniques and identify the warp and weft on a textile or loom.

Vocabulary: back-strap loom, brocade, codex/codices, embroidery, glyph, huipil, indigenous/native, motif, tradition, warp, weaving, weft

Guatemalan Textiles, Vocabulary Definitions

Back-strap loom - the oldest form of loom in the world. It is a non-mechanized instrument often constructed with wood, bone, and strings. This loom is easily portable from the home to the field. It is made of nine parts, which may vary slightly depending on the region and needs of a project. This type of loom primarily works with three anchor points: the weaver, the ground, and a tree or pole. A loop goes around the weaver's back (the weaver is usually a woman), the loom itself then extends in front of the weaver with its base at her knees and the ground and the top end raised up against a tall and sturdy post-like structure.

Brocade - a rich fabric woven with a raised pattern, typically with gold or silver thread. It is a supplementary technique produced by a non-structural weft (the horizontal interweaving of thread) in

addition to the standard weft that holds the warp threads together. Its purpose is to give the appearance that the weave was embroidered on.

Codex/Codices - an ancient manuscript text in book form. These were usually composed of sheets of vellum, papyrus or other materials.

Embroidery - the craft of decorating fabric or other materials using a needle to apply thread or yarn. This may also incorporate other materials such as pearls, beads, quills, and sequins.

Glyph - a hieroglyphic character or symbol; a pictograph.

Huipil - a straight slipover one-piece garment that is made by folding a rectangle of material end to end, sewing up the straight sides but leaving openings near the folded top for the arms, and cutting a slit or a square in the center of the fold to furnish an opening for the head, is often decorated with embroidery, worn as a blouse or dress by women.

Indigenous/Native - originating or occurring naturally in a particular place; native. Indigenous peoples are the holders of unique languages, knowledge systems and beliefs and possess invaluable knowledge of practices for the sustainable management of natural resources. According to the UN there is no official definition of indigenous, but the following system has come to be accepted by a majority: an indigenous person or group is understood as: self-identification as indigenous peoples at the individual level and accepted by the community as their member; historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies; strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources; distinct social, economic or political systems; distinct language, culture and beliefs; form non-dominant groups of society; resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities.

Motif - a decorative design or pattern; a distinctive feature or dominant idea in an artistic or literary composition. (In music) a short succession of notes producing a single impression; a brief melodic or rhythmic formula out of which longer passages are developed.

