

Beyond Jamestown: Virginia Indians Yesterday & Today Teacher's Guide



June 30, 2007 – January 20, 2008

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BEYOND JAMESTOWN: VIRGINIA INDIANS YESTERDAY & TODAY

The ground-breaking special exhibit *Beyond Jamestown: Virginia Indians Yesterday and Today* is now open at the Museum, serving as a leading attraction during America's 400th Anniversary. This exhibit examines Virginia Indian history from the Indian perspective and shows that Virginia Indian cultures are vibrant and thriving.

"...when you ask Virginia Indians how long our people have been here, we say 'always...'"

— Guest Curator Karenne Wood

Beyond Jamestown is guest-curated by Virginia Indian Anthropologist Karenne Wood, director of the Virginia Indian Heritage Trail.

"According to archaeologists, Native peoples have lived in the area we now call Virginia for as many as 15,000 years. But when you ask Virginia Indians how long our people have been here, we say 'always,'" Wood said. "Our histories, our ancestral connections, and our traditions are intertwined with the land called *Tsenacomoco* by the Powhatan peoples. It is a bountiful land, given to us by the Creator as the place most fitting for us to live."

Visitors entering the exhibit encounter images of modern Virginia Indians against a background of a peaceful wooded area. With the sounds of birds, rustling leaves, water and Native flutes, visitors enter the homeland of Virginia Indian peoples.

Inside, visitors encounter objects and images from the distant past. Beautifully colored images of the regions' Native peoples and their environment are accompa-

nied by displays of pre-colonial Native tools, including a complete set of lithic points and axe heads, bone fish hooks, inscribed hair pins, examples of decorated potsherds, and whole ceramic pots. These items are some of the finest examples of early Native craftsmanship.

Other highlights of the exhibit include a wigwam complete with smoky scent and log benches, a dug-out canoe that visitors can sit in, and a re-created one-room school with log walls, an antique desk, and rare images of Virginia Indian schoolchildren from 1914 through 1940.

The exhibit also includes a display focused on contemporary artisans, with beadwork, leather craft, flutes and other wood carvings, pottery, and contemporary paintings by Virginia Indian artists.

Come explore the world of Virginia's Indian tribes in this unique exhibition produced by the Virginia Museum of Natural History.



Photo by Robert Llewellyn © 2006

CORRELATED STANDARDS

CORRELATED VIRGINIA SOCIAL SCIENCE STANDARDS OF LEARNING

K.1; K.2; 1.6; 1.12; 2.2; 2.3; 2.4; 2.12; VS.1; VS.2; USI.3

CORRELATED NORTH CAROLINA STANDARD COURSE OF STUDY

K:1.05; K:3.02; K:5.05; 1:3.03; 2:3.03; 2:4.03; 2:5.06; 2:6.02; 3:2.03; 5:1.06.

American Indian Studies: 1.01; 1.03; 1.04; 4.01; 5.01



Photo from the Jackson Davis Collection, circa 1914, courtesy of the University of Virginia, Special Collections MSS 3072

FAST FACTS: VIRGINIA INDIAN HISTORY

COURTESY OF KARENNE WOOD, EXHIBIT GUEST-CURATOR

- Native peoples have lived in what is now called Virginia for as many as 15,000 years. The Cactus Hill archaeological site is among the oldest in our nation.
- The population of Native peoples in 1607, in what is now Virginia, may have been as high as 50,000. Up to 90 percent of indigenous people died from European diseases—not warfare—after their first contact with Europeans in 1492.
- Native peoples do not think of the Western hemisphere as a “New World.”
- Because American Indians were not Christian, European peoples felt it was their duty to claim the lands they occupied. They believed God had ordained them to possess such territories throughout the world.
- However, Virginia was not founded by English colonists for “religious freedom.” The Virginia Company was primarily an economic enterprise, with corporate investors.
- Powhatan was the paramount chief, the *mamanatowick* (spiritual leader) of 32 tribes in 1607. He believed in God. His people’s name for God was *Ahone*.
- Powhatan’s daughter, Pocahontas, was about 10 years old when the English arrived. Scholars argue whether or not the famous “rescue of John Smith” actually happened. If it did, it was most likely a Native ritual misunderstood by Smith. Pocahontas was a child. She did not fall in love with John Smith. She was not an heir to Powhatan’s leadership; thus, she was not a “princess.”
- Once the English colonists established dominion over Powhatan lands, they passed laws permitting Indian people to be killed for various reasons. “Friendly” Indians were required to wear silver “badges” issued by the Virginia Governor, symbolizing their allegiance to the colony.
- The Treaties of 1646 and 1677 between the King of England and the Virginia Indian tribes established terms of peace. Two tribes, the Pamunkey and the Mattaponi, have continued to observe the tribute required by those treaties. Every year, on the day before Thanksgiving, they present a tribute of fish and game to the state Governor.
- Virginia first passed “race laws” in 1705. These laws described Virginia Indians and other peoples of color and regulated their activities. Additional laws were passed during the 1800s. The Racial Integrity Act of 1924 declared that marriage between people of color and people determined to be white was illegal, and those who violated the law could be sent to prison.
- Walter Plecker, head of the division of vital statistics in Virginia for more than 30 years, was a staunch eugenicist and white supremacist. He changed many Indian people’s birth certificates, without any scientific proof, from “Indian” to “colored.”
- Virginia Indians students were not permitted to attend public schools until 1963. Mission schools, located near tribal populations, provided education up to seventh grade. For some tribes, high school education was not available at all. For others, the only option was to send their children to schools operated by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, located as far away as Oklahoma. Children who had never left their home counties were given \$200 and a train ticket. They were not able to return home for at least nine months.
- Eight Virginia tribes were recognized by the state of Virginia from 1983-1989. Although more than 560 tribes are recognized by the federal government today, the Virginia tribes are not. Six of the eight Virginia tribes have submitted a bill to the U.S. Congress requesting federal acknowledgment of their sovereign status. Their motto: “First to welcome, last to be recognized.”

SUGGESTED RESOURCES

LITERATURE

Egloff, Keith and Deborah Woodward. *First People: The Early Indians of Virginia*. 2nd ed. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006.

Gleach, Frederic W. *Powhatan's World and Colonial Virginia*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997.

Rountree, Helen C. *Pocahontas's People: The Powhatan Indians of Virginia Through Four Centuries*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990.

Waugaman, Sandra F. and Danielle Moretti-Langholtz. *We're Still Here: Contemporary Virginia Indians Tell Their Stories*, 2nd ed. Richmond: Palari Publishing, 2005.

Wood, Karenne, ed. *The Virginia Indian Heritage Trail*. Charlottesville: Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, 2007.

WEB SITES

www.jamestownjourney.org

The official education curriculum web site for America's 400th Anniversary.

www.virtualjamestown.org

A digital research, teaching, and learning project to explore the legacies of the Jamestown settlement and "the Virginia Experiment."

VIDEO

Moretti-Langholtz, Danielle. *In Their Own Words: Voices of Virginia Indians*. Williamsburg: American Indian Resource Center, College of William and Mary, 2002.

MULTIMEDIA

Moretti-Langholtz, Danielle. *In Their Own Words: Voices of Virginia Indians*. American Indian Resource Center. CD-ROM. Williamsburg: College of William and Mary, 2003.

POTTERY MAKING

BACKGROUND:

Pottery making is a lasting Native tradition that is still practiced today. Explore how potters created their pieces through the coil method.

MATERIALS:

Clay
Rolling pin
Damp cloth
Cutting utensil

PROCEDURE:

1. Introduce your students to the history of pottery making and why the practice was imperative. The coil method is often used to create pottery pieces. This method involves rolling clay into long pieces (coils) and placing them in a circle on top of each other to create a form.
2. To create the base of the pot, flatten a ball of clay into a slab, using either a rolling pin or your hands. Then, cut the slab into a circular shape.
3. Shape a ball of clay into a smooth coil or rope around 7 inches (17.78 cm) in length. Position your hands in the middle of the coil, slowly moving them towards the ends of the coil as you roll. Roll several coils for your pot.
4. To attach the coils, place a coil onto the base and using your thumb, gently push the clay from the coil onto the base; this will join the clay from the coil and the clay from the base.
5. Continue this process of adding coils onto the previous coil and gently pushing the clay together.
6. Smooth the outside and inside of your pot with wet hands or a damp cloth so the lines of the coils are not seen.
7. Your students can decorate their pots while they are still wet. Various items can be used to create shapes or indentations. Forks, stones, netting, or even just fingernails can be used to create these decorations. Let your students get creative with their designs.
8. Set the pots in a safe, dry spot to let them dry thoroughly. The pots will be more durable if you can fire them in a kiln.

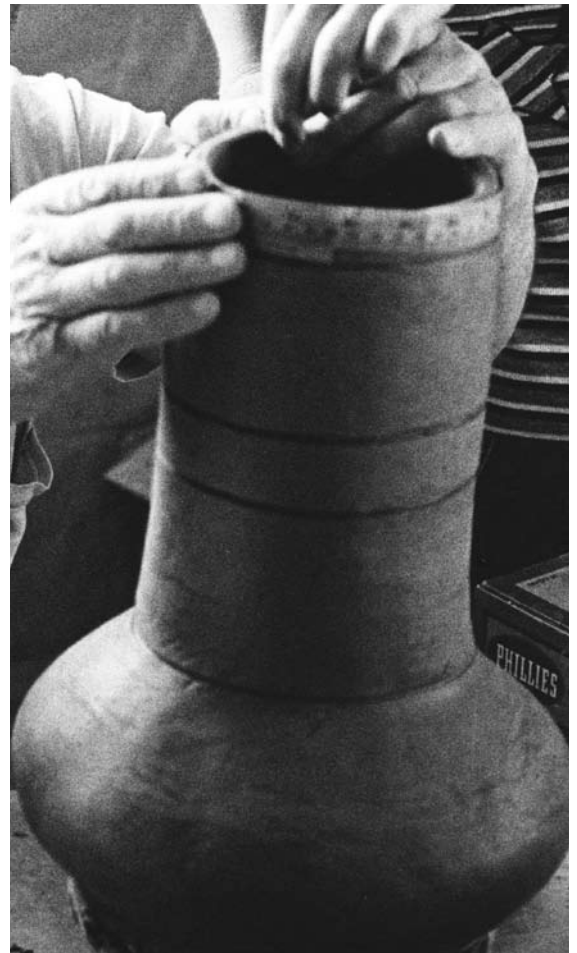


Photo by Chip Clark
Courtesy of the Chickahominy Tribal Center

CORN HUSK DOLLS

BACKGROUND:

Corn has been a sustaining food crop for a long time. As Native people harvested the crop, nothing was wasted. The stalks were used as support poles for the next year's crop. Corn stalks also served as walking sticks and kindling for fires. Corn cobs were used as kindling for fires also, and were sometimes crafted into pipes. The husk from the corn was used to create dolls.

When corn husk dolls were created, the faces were left blank. Below is the legend that explains why faces were not added to the dolls.

It is told that corn, one of the three sisters, wanted to create a wonderful gift for the people. She asked the Creator for help with this task. So, from corn's husks, the Creator made a doll with a beautiful face. Corn Husk Doll was responsible to help care for the children. Then one day, Corn Husk Doll saw her reflection in a pool of water, and she saw how beautiful she was. Soon she stopped watching the children and did nothing but look at herself. The Creator scorned Corn Husk Doll about being vain and not keeping her responsibility of watching the children. As punishment, the Creator took away Corn Husk Doll's face.

MATERIALS:

Dried corn husks (about a half dozen per student)
String or yarn
Scissors
Bowl of warm water
Towels



PROCEDURE:

1. Soak the corn husks in the bowl of warm water for 15 minutes.
2. Hold two husks together at the ends.
3. Wrap a third husk around the end of the first two to hold them together. This will create a "ball" on the end.
4. Fold the two husks down over the ball and tie together with string to create the doll's head.
5. Take one husk and split into three sections. Tie the strips together at one end.
6. Braid the three strips together and tie the end. Both ends should now be tied. This braided strip will become the arms.
7. Place the arms between the two husks under the head of the doll.
8. Below the arms, tie with string to create a waist.
9. Criss-cross another husk around the arms and below the head to create shoulders.
10. You can decorate your doll by adding a "dress" of husks, or scraps of fabric if desired. You can make a boy doll by dividing the skirt into two legs and tying with string.

THREE SISTERS GARDEN

BACKGROUND:

Native peoples from different parts of North America have used a wide range of agricultural techniques for farming. Perhaps the best known technique is the interplanting of corn, beans, and squash together—a trio often referred to as the “three sisters.” In a three sisters garden, the three partners benefit from one another. The corn stands tall and provides support for beans. Squash covers the ground, protecting her sisters from weeds and shades the soil from the sun. The beans climb through the squash and up the corn to bind them all together. The beans help keep the soil fertile by converting nitrogen into a usable form. These crops played an important role in the agriculture and nutrition of most of the Native American people. Because of the sisters’ central role as “sustainers of life,” a multitude of stories, customs, celebrations, and ceremonies are associated with them.

MATERIALS:

- Gardening area
- Soil preparation tools such as a rake and shovel
- Stakes to mark locations
- Seeds: corn, pole beans, winter squash or pumpkins

PROCEDURE:

1. Select a site for your three sisters garden. You will want to wait until late spring to avoid any danger of frost. Choose a site that has direct sunlight for most of the day. Once a site has been picked, and the site’s dimensions have been determined, have the students plan their three sisters garden layout on paper.
2. Next, prepare the soil. Cover the area with about 3 inches (7.62 cm) of compost or manure. Turn the compost and soil to mix well. Mound the soil to a height of 12 inches (30.48 cm) and around 2 feet (0.61 m) in diameter. The number of mounds your students create depends on the size of your growing area. Keep mounds at least 3 feet (0.91 m) apart.
3. Plant 6 or 7 corn seeds in a circle about 6 inches (15.24 cm) apart and an inch deep in the center of the mound. Water the seeds well. Many Native people honor the tradition of giving thanks to the “Four Directions” by orienting the corn to the north, south, east, and west. Having your students do this will allow them to practice their compass skills and observe the sun’s movements.
4. When the corn is about 4 inches (10.16 cm) high (about a week or two), plant 6 pole bean seeds in a circle, keeping them about 6 inches (15.24 cm) from the corn. Also plant 4 or 5 squash or pumpkin seeds next to the mound about 12 inches (30.48 cm) from the beans.
5. Remember to water your garden. As the corn grows tall, the beans will begin to climb the corn. The squash will spread out across the mound providing shade for the soil. Also remember to weed your three sisters garden as needed.
6. Enjoy the fruits (or vegetables rather) of your labor!
7. You can harvest and save seeds from your three sisters garden to replant the following year. Dry your seeds and store them in airtight containers in a dark area until ready to plant.

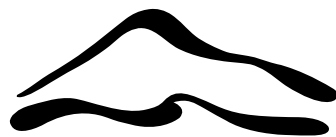


Photo by Robert Llewellyn © 2006

Dancing the Sky

You dance the grasses as grass shifts,
becoming the darkness,
and you dance the red fire,
a lone warrior backlit in flame—
you are the air through which
the sky's brilliant monarchs dart,
and you the river, banks dressed
in snow, the slow grace of water
which flows, and flows on,
and yet remains the same.
Each of you dancing your path
of stars upward—this is where
the body gathers around its own
heartbeat, its rhythms aligned
with creation, which does not
fade or falter but stays, and those
whose hearts dance themselves
become the sound that goes on.

From Guest Curator Karenne Wood's (Monacan)
forthcoming second collection, *Weaving the Boundary*.



Virginia Museum of
NATURAL HISTORY

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