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The following lessons were created by **Lynn Clements**, a teacher participating in the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute for Teachers entitled Touch the Past: Archaeology of the Upper Mississippi River Region.

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### **Petroglyphs of Pennsylvania: Safe Harbor, Susquehanna River**

Grade Level: 4<sup>th</sup> grade

Subjects: Library/Media; Social Studies, Art

#### **Objectives:**

- Students will be introduced to prehistoric rock art found in the local area.
- Students will understand the vocabulary related to rock art.
- Students will understand that petroglyphs were a way of communicating with symbols.
- Students will examine examples of rock art and draw conclusions about the symbols and their possible meanings, using prior knowledge and observation.
- Students will make their own petroglyphs, using symbols they create.

#### **Standards: PA Core Standards**

- ELA** Gr. 4 - CC.1.5.4A - Speaking and listening - engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grade level topics and texts, building on other's ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- Social Studies** Gr. 4 - 8.1.4 B - Distinguish between fact and opinion from multiple points of view, and primary sources as related to historical events.
- Arts and Humanities** Gr. 4 - 9.2.3A - Explain the historical, cultural, and social context of an individual work in the arts.
- 9.2.3 G Relate works in the arts to geographic areas.

Duration: This unit will consist of four 40-minute whole group lessons.

Materials/Supplies:

Air-dry clay - enough to have a small slab for each student

Wooden stylus - one per student

Sketch paper and pencils

Photos of petroglyphs that have been copied and laminated, several examples for each table/student group

LCD projector

Student access to computers

Vocabulary:

Archaeology - a method for studying past human cultures and analyzing material evidence (artifacts and sites)

Picto - picture

Graph - to write

Petro - rock

Glyph - symbol

Petroglyph - a design chiseled or chipped out of a rock surface.

Rock Art - a general term for the pecking, incising, or painting of designs onto rock surfaces

Symbol - a thing which represents something else

Background:

The students will not need any background knowledge for this unit. The lessons will be taught prior to the 4<sup>th</sup> grade field trip to the PA State Capitol and PA State Museum, where they will see petroglyphs that were removed from the Safe Harbor site.

The teacher will need to review the attached PowerPoint and the internet links to the information available from the PA Historical and Museum Commission, to be familiar with the topic.

Setting the Stage:

Students study Pennsylvania history in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. They are familiar with the Native American culture in the local area, as well as the geography of the Susquehanna River.

## Procedure:

Lesson 1 - Using the PowerPoint, open with a discussion of popular symbols and what they represent. This will lead into the study of petroglyphs as a form of cultural expression. Show examples of petroglyphs in the PowerPoint and discuss theories about the purposes of the rock carvings. Students will work in groups of 3-4 to closely examine a photo of a petroglyph and record their observations (provided in attachments). Each group will share their observations with the class.

Lesson 2 - To review, show video clip, *Petroglyphs from PA, Part II*, (in Project Links). Tell students that they will be creating symbols that represent themselves, to etch into clay. Today, they will brainstorm and sketch their ideas. Prior to sketching, they will each complete the interactive petroglyph activity on the PA History and Museum portal (see link). They may refer to these symbols, as well as the ones they observed in Lesson 1, to create and sketch the symbols for their personal petroglyphs.

Lesson 3 - Students will use the stylus to etch their symbols into the clay slab. They will write a brief artist's statement in their art class sketch book, describing their symbols and what they represent.

## Closure:

Lesson 4 - Students will set up a museum display in the library, of their dried clay tablets. Divide the class into two groups for a gallery walk. While one group is looking at the tablets, the other half will be showing their individual tablets, explaining what their personal symbols represent.

## Evaluation:

The clay tablet with the student-created petroglyphs, the written artist statement in the sketch book, and the oral presentation of their work in the gallery walk will serve as tools to assess student understanding of the concepts of rock art.

## Links/Extension:

A possible extension activity would be to lead the class in a discussion about ways to protect rock art and prevent vandalism of public art. Examples of graffiti on the rock art could be shown, and the students could talk about how vandalism destroys data, the evidence of people who lived here before us;

disrespects Native American cultural heritage; and destroys the opportunity for us to learn about other time periods and cultures.

Video Clip: Petroglyphs in PA Part II <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BhuZb1lrOOK>

Interactive Petroglyph:

[http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/petroglyphs/3892/little\\_indian\\_rock\\_petroglyph/428688](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/petroglyphs/3892/little_indian_rock_petroglyph/428688)

Map of PA Petroglyphs:

[http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/petroglyphs/3892/map\\_of\\_pennsylvania\\_petroglyphs/428687](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/petroglyphs/3892/map_of_pennsylvania_petroglyphs/428687)

References:

Boszhardt, Robert F. *Deep Cave Rock Art in the Upper Mississippi Valley*. St. Paul: Prairie Smoke Press, 2003.

Guthrie, R. Dale. *The Nature of Paleolithic Art*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.

Malone, Bobbie. *Digging and Discovery: Wisconsin Archaeology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 2000.

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

<http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/petroglyphs/3892>, July 27, 2014.

Smith, Shelley J. *Intrigue of the Past*. US Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, 1996.

Attachment: Safe Harbor Petroglyphs PowerPoint

## **Interpreting Petroglyphs from Safe Harbor, Pennsylvania**

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Directions:**

Study the photo of this petroglyph from the Safe Harbor site. Work as a team to observe and examine the symbols. Use the magnifying glass to observe details of the rock carvings. Complete the observation form. You may sketch the symbols or write a word to describe each symbol, in the first column.

**What We Observe**

**What We Think**

**What We Wonder**