LESSON 7 – SISIYUTŁ

"DOUBLE HEADED SERPENT"

1. Grade Level: Grade 4/5 (can be modified for Primary and Intermediate)

2. Activity: Using the Sisiyutł symbol students will create their own balance chart and practice drawing elements of design in Kwakwaka'wakw art.

3. Estimated Time: 3 periods

4. Prescribed Learning Outcomes:

- Art
  - Interpret reasons for preferences in artworks
  - Identify distinctive styles of visual images from various historical, cultural, and social contexts
  - Describe, compare and construct lines of symmetry
  - Discuss the choices an individual can make to attain and maintain a healthy balance

RESOURCES REQUIRED

Section of Website containing relevant information, photographs and film clips:

- Potlatch
- Virtual Tour

Blackline Masters:

- BLM 7A – Fact Sheet
- BLM 7B – Sisiyutł Photos
- BLM 7C – Balance in Art, Culture and Life
- BLM 7D – Sisiyutł Templates

Audio Clips:

- 'Mitła Story – Pauline Alfred
- Sisiyutł Story – Pauline Alfred

Film Clips:

- Potlatch Means to Give

Kwak̓wala Language Component:

- 'Mitła Story – Pauline Alfred
- Sisiyutł Story – Pauline Alfred

Other Materials:

- Blank Paper
- Tempera Paint
- Water
- Brushes
- Acrylic Paint

NEW WORDS

Sisiyutł – double–headed serpent possessing supernatural powers and the ability to transform.

Xa̲sała – seclusion and spiritual purification – new dance initiates participated in this before dancing for the first time.

PERIOD 1 – WHAT IS A SISIYUTŁ?

1. Introduce the lesson by playing the two audio clips of Pauline Alfred sharing information about the Sisiyutł and the ‘Mitła.

2. Use BLM 7B and View Sisiyutł in Virtual Tour, notice the characteristics, double head with centre face, hands on either side of central face.

3. Read handout Introduction to the Sisiyutł. Use BLM 7A and assign the following questions:
   - What does the Sisiyutł look like?
   - What are the Sisiyutł’s supernatural powers?
   - Where do you find the Sisiyutł design used?

4. Refer to the pictures in BLM 7B to make connections between the Sisiyutł and how balance and symmetry is achieved in Kwakwa̲ka̲’wakw art. Use BLM 7B–C.

5. Give each student a blank piece of paper.

6. Provide students with a variety of colored tempera paint and paintbrushes.

7. Have the students fold the blank paper into equal halves.

8. Open up the folded paper and have the students paint shapes with different colours on one side of the folded paper.

9. While the paint is still wet, have the students carefully flip the paper on the fold to rub the paint onto the unpainted side.

10. When the students finish they will see symmetrical images. Refer to students’ art to discuss symmetry and balance.

11. Discuss with students that the idea of balance has been around for centuries. Many cultures from around the world value balance in both art and life. For the Kwakwa̲ka̲’wakw balance can be observed in many forms: art, life, ceremony, plants, etc. Use BLM 7C to guide discussion.

PERIOD 2

1. Discuss the idea of balance in everyday life. Use BLM 7C.

2. Using BLM 7D, have students practice filling in the blank Sisiyutł template. Finally colour in their drawings or color in Sisiutł created by Kelsey Nelson.

PERIOD 3

1. Enlarge Sisiyutł template to 11 X 17.

2. Have students complete a second Sisiyutł template with Kwakwaka'wakw elements of design, look to masks in Virtual Tour for inspiration as well as video clip *Potlatch Means to Give* to examine the Sisiyutł design.

3. Paint the completed design with acrylic paint.

4. Display completed Sisiyutł at the pole raising to show the students designs.