

Raven Sculptures Inspired by Emily Carr

A HANDS-ON ART ACTIVITY
DESIGNED BY SUSAN
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Image Source: Educator Example

Description

In this lesson students will be introduced to Pacific Northwest artist Emily Carr, learn about totem poles, and create sculptures.

Vocabulary

- ✓ Shape
- ✓ Form
- ✓ Sculpture
- ✓ Circle
- ✓ Oval
- ✓ Character



Materials

- Modeling clay (such as Crayola Magic Modeling Clay)
- Artist info & images (included)
- Books and stories about the raven. We suggest ***The Raven and the Loon*** by Sean Qitsualik-Tinsley or ***Raven: A Trickster Tale from the Pacific Northwest*** by Gerald McDermott

Instructions

- 1) Begin by giving students an overview of the activity, and introduce the artist and images.
 - Full size images included at end of lesson
 - Here, it may be helpful to use VTS (Visual Thinking Strategies). VTS tips and resources can be found at the end of the lesson!
- 2) Introduce the character of the Raven by reading and discussing books and stories related to the character. Share some information about totem poles with the students (included on the next page).
 - **Or** watch this [read-aloud video](#)
- 3) Students will then be led in an art making activity. Students will form their individual raven sculptures using modeling clay, using the artworks of Emily Carr as reference. See the attached clay building techniques and common forms to help guide your students in their process.

Learning and State Standards

Fulfills **Washington State Arts Learning Standards:**

- **VA:Cr2.1.K** (Through experimentation, build skills in various media and approaches to art-making)
- **VA:Cr2.2.K** (Identify safe and non-toxic art materials, tools, and equipment)
- **VA:Re7.2.K** (Describe what an image represents)





Portrait of Emily Carr
Image credit: The Georgia Straight

Emily Carr (1871-1945) was a Canadian painter who gained inspiration from Indigenous communities of the Pacific Northwest. Carr's work was unique to Canada at the time, because she painted in a modern, Post-Impressionist style (previously unseen in the region). Her expressive paintings often depict images of animal figures, totem poles and beautiful forest scenes.



Big Eagle, Skidigate, B. C. by Emily Carr (1929), oil on canvas
Image credit: Canadian Art Historical Act



Big Raven by Emily Carr (1931), oil on canvas
Image credit: Art Canada Institute

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**What are
totem poles?**

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Totem poles are carved monuments created by First Nations peoples of the Pacific Northwest.

Totem poles show human, animal and spirit figures, often symbols for a clan or family crest. They are also used to document histories and stories significant to the community. To learn more about totem poles, [click here](#).

Visual Thinking Strategies

MoNA's Education programs utilize Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS), which is a research-based teaching method that promotes aesthetic development including critical thinking and communication skills. Here in the MoNA, we use VTS to engage students and general visitors with art encouraging them to observe closely, think critically and discuss respectfully; however, VTS can be effectively used across curricula. This approach teaches its participants how to take the time to observe closely, describe what they see in detail and provide evidence for their observations. Students learn that their reflections and thoughts are valued and appreciated in this inclusive teaching method.

In order to facilitate a VTS discussion, you first encourage viewers to take a quiet moment to observe the work you are going to explore. Then you ask the following questions and paraphrase the responses without adding any of your own judgements. You can insert additional vocabulary and point to specific parts of the artwork.

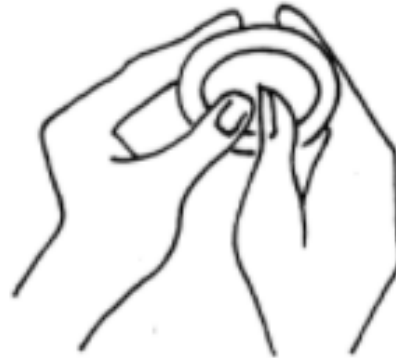
What's going on in this picture?
What do you see that makes you say that...?
What more can you find?

Visual Thinking Strategy Links

If you are interested in learning more about VTS, [here is their website](#). If you already know and love VTS, but want help finding great images to VTS in your classroom, here is a [fantastic gallery](#). You can also visit this website for additional resources: <https://www.monamuseum.org/resources-for-educators>

CLAY BUILDING TECHNIQUES

PINCHING



MODELING



SLAB



COILING



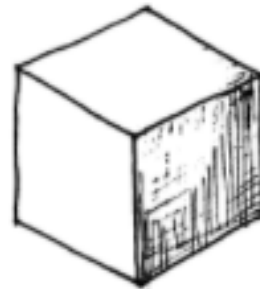
SPHERE



CYLINDER



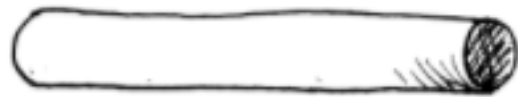
CUBE



SLAB



COIL





Big Raven by Emily Carr (1931), oil on canvas
Image credit: Art Canada Institute



Big Eagle, Skidgate, B. C. by Emily Carr (1929), oil on canvas
Image credit: Canadian Art Historical Act