



Theme: Archeology (grades K-2)

Sub theme: Native Americans

Pre-Visit Activity #1

Clay Sculptures

The Paleo Indians are thought to be the first tribe in America. Paleo means “old” or “ancient”. The most interesting thing about this tribe is that they were living in America longer than any other group of people ever lived here, but there is very little that we know about them. This tribe was known for their artwork and for their hunting tools, but little else. This activity will be each child’s interpretation of what these people might have looked like. They may choose to depict a father hunting for the family’s food, a mother weaving a basket to gather berries in, or a child who is making a necklace from the bones of an animal.

Materials:

- A 4x6 piece of cardstock for each student’s base
- Sculpting clay, mostly in earthy colors
- Toothpicks for “spears” and/or for sculpting
- Native American music to be played in the background

Activity:

1. The students will use the cardstock for the base of their artwork
2. We use earthy colors because the Paleo Indians wore little or no clothing, only some animal skins.
3. The teacher would make a sample size so the students would know what is appropriate and not too heavy for the cardstock.
4. Brainstorm ideas of what any of the Paleos might be doing:
 - *Father-hunting, fishing, sleeping, running
 - *Mother-gathering berries, making baskets, making jewelry
 - *Children-fishing, playing with sticks
5. Show how to utilize the toothpicks to sculpt or place them as a spear or fishing rod in the clay figure.
6. Play music such as “Ghost Dancer” to set a great mood.
7. Give a title to their artwork and encourage them to tell their parents about the oldest inhabitants of the Americas, the Paleo Indians.