

Kansas City Young Audiences

Teacher Program Guide

Colonial and Pioneer Spinning and Weaving

Artist: Jamie Root

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Workshop Description

Spinning and weaving in early American history were important to the survival of settlers and vital to the development of the Industrial Revolution. Students will learn how the making of cloth was a job shared by the entire family. Students will experience various spinning techniques, tools used in the trade, and the processes used to create fabric during this time in our nation's development.

Fibers used in Colonial times included linen, wool, and hemp. Students will be able to try the tools used in processing these fibers in order to understand the time and effort these tasks required. Often these tasks were the responsibility of children, especially young girls.

Jamie will explain the importance of looms at the beginning of the Industrial Age and the role of women and young children in early factories. Students will also learn that early mechanized looms were the forerunner of computers.



Educational Objectives and Standards

Students will:

- Examine the role of textiles and dyes in the development of the early American economy
- Be introduced to the tools and processes involved in cloth production

Social Studies:

- Knows how people depend on, adapt to and change their physical setting.

Visual Arts:

- Understands the visual arts in relation to history and culture.

Special Points of Interest:

In a Weaving Guild the Master was a Master Weaver. The Master Weaver owned all the raw materials, machines, and tools needed to weave cloth.

Special REQUIREMENTS:

Table; chair; please schedule all workshops in same room

Artist Bio: Jamie Root

Growing up in a talented and creative family, Jamie was encouraged to express her artistic tendencies in paint and sculpture. She continued to explore new media while earning a Bachelors of Science in Animal Science.

Jamie's teaching career started serendipitously during an internship in the exhibits department at the Kansas City Museum. She was drafted to develop and teach history and

nature classes to preschoolers. More recently, she spent 11 years teaching life sciences in the public schools.

A single lamb purchased in 1991 for these classes began a new passion. Wool from her flock of sheep is the material of her art now. Jamie loves spinning yarn and all forms of felt. She is a member of the Fiber Guild of Greater Kansas City and a known fiber art enabler.



Jamie Root

Vocabulary

Carding: The combing and preparing of fiber before it is spun.

Fulling: The washing and sometimes beating of fabric when it comes off the loom before it is made into a garment, blanket, etc.

Spindle: A stick, usually hand carved, with a whorl on the bottom to give it weight and used to twist the yarn and wind upon the stick.

Warp: Horizontal or vertical threads attached tightly to a loom.

Weft: Filling yarn which is sometimes on a shuttle or is passed with the fingers through (over and under) the warp threads creating a web of oven fabric.

Whorl: A small flywheel that regulates the speed of a spinning wheel.

Post-Workshop Activities

1. Study the etymology of words and phrases in the English language that have come from weaving terms: shuttle, dyed-in-the-wool, spinster, teased, "on tenter hooks", crazy as a "mad hatter", etc.
2. Look at wool and linen under the microscope and have students consider the advantages of each in clothing. Look at the fire-proofing properties of linen and why tow linen was used with black powder guns.
3. Borrow a large "friendly loom" (brand name) to have students make a class weaving.
4. Weave with paper strips through cardboard or paper (cut with slits first) to make a placemat.
5. Set up a hypothetical village with students bartering for skills, services and goods, including those of the local spinner or weaver.

List of Resources

BOOKS

Unraveling Fibers

by Patricia A. Keeler, jr.,
Francis X. McCall Atheneum;
1st ed edition (June 1, 1995)
ASIN: 0689317778

The Weaving, Spinning,
and Dyeing Book by Rachel Brown
Alfred A. Knopf; 2nd/Rev/Ex edition
(May 1, 1983) ISBN: 0394715950

Cotton Now and Then

by Karen B. Willing, Sarah Morse
Now & Then Publications; (April 1996)
ISBN: 0964182025

