

Harding Black: Taking it to Another Level

OVERVIEW

The following are suggested activities that may be used in conjunction with *Harding Black: An American Treasure* to further student learning and “take it to another level.”

GRADE LEVELS

Topics are adaptable to many grade levels.

SUBJECT MATTER

These activities include instructional goals in Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies and the Arts.

MEDIA COMPONENTS

VIDEOS

Harding Black: An American Treasure, Alamo Public Telecommunications Council, 1999.

This video chronicles the life of master potter Harding Black. Black’s pieces have been displayed in the Smithsonian and the National Ceramic Exhibition at the Syracuse Museum of Art.

RELATED ACTIVITIES

1. **Clay as a Natural Resource (i.e. Edwards Underground Water District)**
 - percolation experiment – porous and non-porous materials
 - cross-section diagram of aquifer showing clay as impermeable layer
 - map locations of clay deposits in the area
2. **Pottery Across Cultures and Time**

Compare and contrast pottery from a variety of cultures and time periods.

 - uses
 - style

- historical connection
- archaeological finds
- use of pottery as an art form
- use of clay in a practical product
- Greek
- Egyptian
- Mexican
- Native American
- Korean
- Chinese

3. Containers

Study natural resources and man-made products used for containers.

- hides
- wood
- dug-out rock (Pecos Indians)
- woven baskets
- glass

4. Legends from Egypt

Study Egyptian legends revolving around the idea that the first humans were made on a potter's wheel.

5. Pottery in Children's Literature

Use these books with literature circles to further explore pottery in different cultures.

- The Single Shard by Linda Sue Park
- The Pot the Juan Built by Nancy Andrews-Gorbel and David Diaz
- Children of the Clay: A Family of Pueblo Potters by Rina Swentzen and Bill Steen

6. Centrifugal Force/Potter's Wheel

- relate to uses in every day life – amusement park rides, turning a corner in a car
- Have a representative from Air Force discuss centrifuge training programs and connection to earth's gravity
- spin art
- rotational symmetry

7. History of Potter's Wheel

8. Pottery Building

Study the various methods of pottery building.

- pinch
- coil
- slab
- thrown
- sculptures

9. Clay and Ceramics

Compare and contrast a variety of types of clay and ceramics.

10. Chemical Connection

Explore the chemical connection to firing and glazing.

- Harding Black's discovery of new glazes and glazing methods
- relate modern glazes to ancient methods of sealing such as use of tar used to coat

- wooden and woven containers by the Karankawa Indians along the Texas coast
- practical uses versus decorative
 - Native American and Mexican relation to “Earth, Air, Fire, Water”
 - Study of crystallization as related to Harding Black’s glazes and compare to study of crystals – primary level experiment of creating crystals with salt water and evaporation – look at geodes (crystals in nature)

Texan and/or San Antonio artists and heroes.

14. “What is a hero?”

Have students write a journal entry or essay on the topic.

11. Museum Connections

Visit local museums and explore their resources.

- guided tours/docents
- collections
- Witte – connection to Harding Black
- Institute of Texas Cultures – outreach to schools, visiting collections

12. Timeline

Create timeline of Harding Black’s life and relations to historical San Antonio/Texas events.

- setting goals
- overcoming obstacles
- career choices/hobbies

13. Relations

Use Black as a relation to American,