



# INDIGENOUS WISDOM: CENTURIES OF PUEBLO IMPACT IN NEW MEXICO

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## Unit Plan Format:

Section A: Introductory Materials

Name: Azella Humetewa

Title of Unit: Poveka: A Pueblo Legacy

Content Area: Language Arts

Grade Levels: 6<sup>th</sup>

**Rationale:** In historical times, Pueblo pottery was used for utilitarian purposes such as carrying water and storing items, water and food. As time went on, pottery became a very popular art form all over the world. As people began to travel, the art form continued to flourish, thus creating an opportunity for Pueblo people to earn an income and support their families. Throughout the years, many artists have gained notoriety for their craft and skill in pottery making. One such potter was Maria Poveka Martinez, a woman from San Ildefonso Pueblo who lived in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. She has been described as one of the most famous potters of all time and her legacy has been passed down to the next generations. This unit will introduce students to the life of Poveka and describe how she demonstrated the Pueblo core values of faith, love, and perseverance while remaining true to her identity as a Pueblo woman. Furthermore, students will create connections from her life to their own using poetry as a medium.



Photo Credit: [Palace of the Governors Photo Archives](#)

Maria Martinez polishing pottery, San Ildefonso Pueblo, New Mexico

Photographer: Wyatt Davis

Date: 1938

Negative Number: 044192

## **Unit Goals:**

1. Students will analyze secondary documents to infer meaning from a text.
2. Students will be able to provide an overview of the life of Maria Poveka Martinez and her contribution to the art of pottery making.
3. Students will understand the process of the creation of pottery and its importance in Pueblo communities.
4. Students will use their creative writing skills to create a shape poem which demonstrates their understanding of the unit.

## **Standards**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.2

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.4

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.1

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.1B

CCSS ELA-LITERACY.W.6.4

## Lesson Plan Format:

Section B: Lesson Plan One

Title: Poveka

Duration: 1-2 class periods

Grade Level: 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will determine the theme/central idea of the text.
2. Students will provide a summary of the text in their own words citing evidence.
3. Students will create a timeline of important events in the life of Maria Martinez.

Prerequisite Skills and Knowledge:

1. Students should know how to cite evidence from a text
2. Students may need background knowledge of the location of places in New Mexico
3. Students should have an understanding of navigating a website for information.

Materials and Resources:

1. Handout #1-Maria Poveka Martinez
2. Background information on San Ildefonso Pueblo: <https://www.sanipueblo.org/>
3. Author Unknown. (2003). Shaping A Revolution. Southwest Art, 183-185.
4. Lusk, J. (1981). Maria shaped pots and people's attitudes. The New Mexican, 30-31.
5. NM History Museum Website: <https://www.nmhistorymuseum.org/blog/2021/03/marking-nms-historic-women-maria-montoya-martinez/>
6. [Handout #2—Unpacking the Text](#)
7. [Handout #3—Understanding the Text](#)

Guiding Questions:

1. What was the legacy of Maria Poveka Martinez?
2. What factors shaped Maria's values and beliefs?
3. Why is it important to construct narratives about other's experience?
4. What do you know about the author's intentions based on the narrative?

Core Values:

Love

Service

Balance

Faith

Procedure:

1. Reading of Narrative—Handout #1
  - a. Pass out copies of the narrative and depending on the student's reading level, teacher will lead a whole class, small group, pair/share or individual reading of the text.
2. Unpacking the Text---Handout #2--Mixed ability pairs
  - a. Ask students to re-read the text and use Worksheet #2 to annotate and take notes.
  - b. Explain that unpacking the text will help with reading comprehension.
  - c. Scaffold instruction by modeling the steps of the worksheet.

- d. Ask students to share their notes with the class to lead a discussion about the text.
  - e. Clarify any unfamiliar words, phrases or sentences that aren't understood by students.
3. Understanding the Text—Handout #3
- a. Group students according to your classroom needs (mixed ability, whole group, small group, pairs).
  - b. Read all the questions to students and ask for question or needed clarification.
  - c. Allow students time to work on this assignment in class.
  - d. Prompt a discussion using the questions as your guide.
  - e. Focus on question #4. Ask students to share their ideas, artwork and information to encourage creative thinking and text to self-connections.

Modifications:

1. Simplify the language, length and complexity of the text to meet reading levels.
2. Allow for a scribe or audio version of the text.
3. Shorten assignment and allow for extra time to complete tasks.
4. Check progress and provide feedback frequently.

Notes to Teacher: Please be aware that certain objects, animals, or traditional ceremonies, may be sensitive for some children to speak about. This depends on each Pueblo's traditional teachings. You can make the statement that assures students that if there is anything presented that is uncomfortable for them to please let you know. This is a sensitive area and students should be excused from writing or speaking of sensitive areas

Formative Assessment: Understanding the Text Handout

### Handout

Handout # 1: Maria Poveka Martinez Narrative by Azella Humetewa

San Ildefonso Pueblo (Po-Woh-Geh-Owingeh) is located in northern New Mexico along the Rio Grande. In this region, the people and the land have flourished for hundreds of years and is home to one of the most famous Pueblo potters in the world.

Maria Poveka Martinez was born around 1887 in a time of simplicity. This was a time where most people grew their own food and travel was a luxury. As a young girl, Maria's aunt Nicolasa taught her how to gather clay and other materials to make pottery. Her aunt took great care in teaching her the process and more importantly the reverence of her craft.

It was around this time that Maria attended the St. Catherine's Mission School in Santa Fe, New Mexico where she learned such skills as sewing. However, her heart always remained in her Pueblo. As soon as her schooling was complete, she returned home. Upon her return home, she began working at the day school as a housekeeper, and this is where she met her future husband.

Maria and Julian Martinez were married in 1904 and days after their wedding, she would travel to the St. Louis World's fair with her in-laws to perform dances and share their culture. This must have been a unique opportunity for the young Maria that many people in her Pueblo never experienced. When they returned months later, they began their life as a couple.

As fate would have it, a historical excavation was taking place near San Ildefonso Pueblo from 1908-1909 under the direction of Dr. Edgar Lee Hewitt. Maria's husband Julian was employed to help with the excavation as the discovery of black potsherds was made. Maria was intrigued with the black color of the pottery and at the encouragement of Dr. Hewitt and others she and Julian began to create the blackened pots.

As leisure travel began to increase, so did the popularity of pottery. Maria's work was becoming sought after by collectors around the world. Although her pots were being sold at a minimal cost, Julian and her were able to provide for their family and others. As a Pueblo person, they were always taught to share and give back to their community. In the magazine, *The New Mexican*, writer Jennie Lusk described this in detail by saying, "Though she and Julian owned the first car in San Ildefonso, they used it for transporting all who needed medical care and to shop for the pueblo." (*The New Mexican*, 5/31/81)

Julian passed away in 1943 and Maria stopped creating pottery for a time. However, she understood her gift and began working with other family members to keep the tradition going. Maria's pottery was becoming increasingly valuable and her career spanned well into her eighties. She traveled the world and met with two first ladies in the White House and famous people. Maria was given an honorary doctorate by the College of Santa Fe in 1980. However, in her own view, Poveka was just another Pueblo potter. She was humble and lived live simply and remained in her Pueblo of San Ildefonso throughout her life.

She passed away on July 20, 1980 and the world lost a beautiful soul. Harold Littlebird, potter and poet (Laguna, Santo Domingo) wrote a poem that was published in the 1980 Santa Fe Indian Market's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Poster, that read,

*"We will remember Poveka, this gentle lady of clay  
She who shaped the earth fondly  
As if caressing a child's hand  
Worked a smooth river stone with ageless care and wisdom  
Polishing with prayer, blessing with fire  
And shared with all humanity her life's harmony."*



Photo Credit: Maria Martinez and Julian Martinez, No title (jar), circa 1925, matte-on-black ceramic, 5 5/8 x 8 3/8 in. Collection of the New Mexico Museum of Art. Gift of Lois Shively, 2013 (2013.14.1)

Handout #2: Unpacking the Text

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Unpacking the Text

Title of Article/Narrative: \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 1:** Read the article on your own.

**Step 2:** Underline-anything that stands out as interesting

**Step 3:** Circle-unfamiliar words or phrases

**Step 4:** Draw a ? (Question Mark)- for sentences you do not understand

**Step 5:** Draw an ! (Exclamation Mark)-for sentences that you find extremely important or interesting.

**Step 6:** Use the chart below to write your notes

Things I found interesting:	
Words/phrases that are unfamiliar:	
Sentences I didn't understand:	
Important sentences:	

Handout #3: Understanding the Text

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Who was Maria Poveka Martinez? (Summarize using evidence from the text)

2. How do you relate to her life story? How are you alike? How are you different?

3. Fill in the timeline below using 4 important events from Poveka's life.

Event 1	Event 2	Event 3	Event 4
Year:	Year:	Year:	Year:

4. Re-read the poem by Harold Littlebird. On the back of this page, describe ideas or draw the images that come to your mind below.

**Section B: Lesson Plan Two**

**Title: Pottery Creation Process**

**Duration: 1-2 Class Periods**

**Grade Level: 6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be able to view the video and explain the process of pottery making.
2. Students will be able to create notes from the video to infer meaning.
3. Students will be able to interpret the intent of a piece of pottery.
4. Students will be able to understand how the Martinez family's legacy lives on.

Prerequisite Skills and Knowledge:

1. Students should have a working knowledge of navigating various websites for information and if the website is a reliable source.
2. Prior knowledge of notetaking skills is required.
3. Students should have completed lesson one of this unit to understand who Maria Poveka Martinez is and her legacy.

Materials and Resources:

1. YouTube Video: <https://youtu.be/SkUGm87DE0k>
2. If you do not have access to the video, the process can be found here: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maria\\_Martinez](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maria_Martinez)
3. Handout #1—Video Notetaking Guide
4. Additional website resources: <https://www.mariapottery.com/>
5. Additional website resources: <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-art-history/indigenous-americas-apah/north-america-apah/a/puebloan-maria-martinez-black-on-black-ceramic-vessel>

Guiding Questions:

1. How can you interpret the intent of a piece of pottery?
2. How can the process of creating pottery communicate what is important to a group of people?
3. Why did the process of creation take such patience and love?
4. How did collaboration expand the creative process?

Core Values:

Love

Respect

Balance

Faith

Procedure:

1. Video and Handout #1: Locate the YouTube video and prepare to show it in class.
  - a. Explain to students they will be viewing a video of Maria Poveka Martinez and her family creating pottery.
  - b. Pass out Handout #1-Video Note Taking Guide and ask students to think about what they already know about creating pottery. In the top section titled, “Before the video” prompt a discussion and ask students to enter what they already know before you show the video.
  - c. Ask students to take notes while the video is playing and jot down new facts they learned.
  - d. Create a chart on the board or poster board to write down answers or ask students to write their responses on a sticky note to place on the boards. See example below.

Before the Video...	As you watch....	After the video....

e. After the video is over, prompt students to jot down any questions they may have and place them in the last section of the chart you created.

2. Handout #2—Reflection

- a. Pass out handout #2 and read the directions and questions with students.
- b. Allow students to work on this assignment individually in the beginning. Check in with students frequently for questions or to clarify instructions.
- c. Explain they will share with a partner first, and then share with the class
- d. Prompt a discussion with students, when they share their pictures.
- e. Ask the questions listed on the handout one by one and ask for student feedback.
- f. You may write answers on the board.

Modifications:

1. Create pre-written notes and simplify the language, length and complexity of the text to meet reading levels.
2. Allow for a scribe to take notes of the video.
3. Allow students to type instead of write notes.
4. Shorten assignment and allow for extra time to complete tasks.
5. Check progress and provide feedback frequently.

Notes to Teacher:

If you are unable to show the video in class, it would be a good idea to create a timeline of the process of creating pottery, so students will be able to view. Using the information from various websites, you will be able to complete a good description.

Formative Assessment: Handout #1 and Handout #2

**Handout**

Handout # 1: Video Note Taking Guide

**Video Note Taking Guide**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Before and as you watch the video, keep track of your knowledge and new facts. Afterwards, think of questions you still have.

<p><b>Before the video</b></p>	<p>I already know....</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1)</li> <li>2)</li> <li>3)</li> </ol>
<p><b>As you watch</b></p>	<p>Facts I've learned....</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1)</li> <li>2)</li> <li>3)</li> <li>4)</li> <li>5)</li> </ol>
<p><b>After the Video</b></p>	<p>Questions I have....</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1)</li> <li>2)</li> <li>3)</li> <li>4)</li> <li>5)</li> </ol>

Handout #2—Reflections from the Video

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Describe the process of creating pottery with words or pictures.

Step 1:	Step 2:	Step 3:
Step 4:	Step 5:	Step 6:

2. Why was it so important to have patience and care while creating the pottery? How can patience and care relate to the importance in our own lives?

3. Why do you think creating pottery was important?

**B: Lesson Plan Three**

**Title: Creative Writing Process—Writing a Concrete/Visual Poem**

**Duration: 1-2 Class Periods**

**Grade Level: 6<sup>th</sup>**

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be able to understand what a concrete poem is.
2. Students will create poems that convey creativity and its importance to culture
3. Students will understand the legacy of Maria Poveka Martinez and apply it to poetry.
4. Students will apply their knowledge and create connections to their learning using the creative process.

Prerequisite Skills and Knowledge:

1. Students should have viewed Lesson 1 & 2 in this unit to have an understanding of content.
2. Students should understand the writing process to include brainstorm, rough draft, edit, final draft
3. Students should understand how to create poetry.

Materials and Resources:

1. How to Write An Image Poem Resource: <https://penandthepad.com/write-image-poem-5032777.html>
2. Concrete/Visual Poem Resource: <https://powerpoetry.org/content/tips-writing-concretevisual-poetry>
3. Handout #1—Concrete Poem
4. Handout #2—Brainstorming Chart
5. Handout #3--Outline of Pottery

Guiding Questions:

1. Why is it important for people to construct narratives about Pueblo People?
2. How can we showcase the contributions made by others?
3. Why is poetry a good medium?
4. How do we honor those who have come before us?

Core Values:

Faith  
Love  
Respect

Procedure:

1. Explain to students they will be creating a concrete poem. Handout #1—How do I create a poem in the shape of pottery?
  - a. Describe to students what concrete poetry is: “Concrete poetry is an arrangement of linguistic elements in which the typographical effect is more important in conveying meaning than verbal significance. In other words, “It’s sometimes referred to as visual poetry.” Wikipedia
  - b. Use examples from Handout #1-Concrete Poem throughout the process so students will understand what they are supposed to do.
  - c. Ask students to work individually in the beginning, but explain they will be working together during the editing process.

### 2. Handout #2—Brainstorming Chart

- a. Pass out the brainstorming chart and ask students to fill in the information that is being asked of them.
- b. Model a few answers for students to gain a better understanding.
- c. Ask students to share their ideas with each other and with the class.
- d. Ask students to use their creative thinking skills and think outside of the box.
- e. Remind students the more information they have, the easier it will be for them to create their poem.

### 3. Creating the poem

- a. Ask students to write a rough draft of the poem (refer to Handout #1) for information regarding this.
- b. Allow students an opportunity to give each other feedback with their rough drafts for editing.
- c. Remind students all of their creativity is valuable so there are no right or wrong answers.
- d. Their goal is to tell others about the legacy of Maria Poveka Martinez and how they relate to that legacy.

#### Modifications:

1. Create pre-written notes and simplify the language, length and complexity of the text to meet reading levels.
2. Allow for modified worksheets to help students comprehend information.
3. Allow students to type instead of write poetry.
4. Shorten assignment and allow for extra time to complete tasks.
5. Check progress and provide feedback frequently.

#### Notes to Teacher:

Please be aware that certain objects, animals, or traditional ceremonies, may be sensitive for some children to speak about. This depends on each Pueblo's traditional teachings. You can make the statement that assures students that if there is anything presented that is uncomfortable for them to please let you know. This is a sensitive area and students should be excused from writing or speaking of sensitive areas.

**Handout**

Handout #1: Concrete/Visual Poem

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

How do I create a poem in the shape of a pottery?

1. Brainstorm your ideas for your poem by using the Brainstorming Chart.
2. Once you have ideas for your poem, write out a poem on a piece of paper. You can worry about the shape later. However, the more you have written the more you'll have to add to the shape of your poem.
3. What story do you want to tell about Maria Poveka Martinez? How can you relate to her story? What emotions do you feel when you think of her life, and legacy? Jot all of these things down to help you with the poem.
4. Use Handout #3 as your guide to create the pottery shape for your poem.
5. Using your words, you can create the outline of the shape. Please see example below:

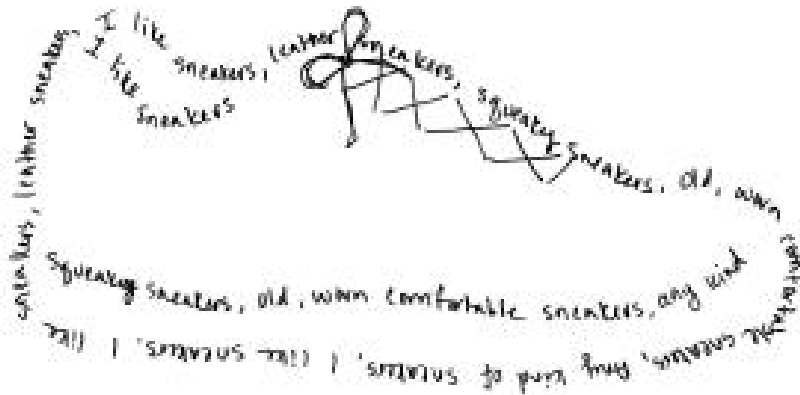


Photo Credit: <https://libguides.bernardsboe.com/c.php?g=701044&p=4974427>

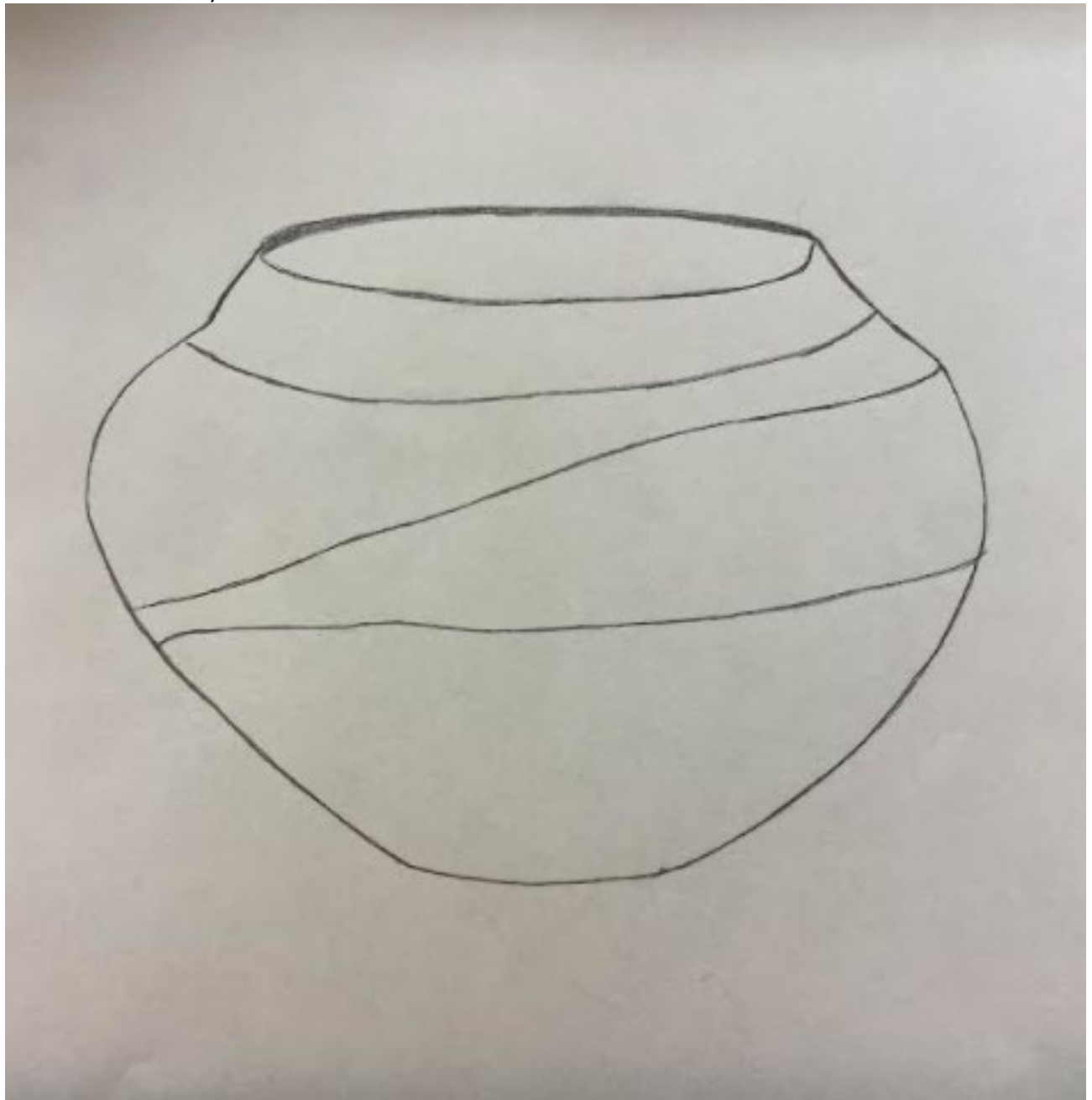
Handout # 2: Brainstorming Chart

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Brainstorming Chart

<p>Words or phrases that describe Maria Poveka Martinez and her life</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2.</li><li>3.</li><li>4.</li><li>5.</li></ol>	<p>Words or phrases that describe the pottery process.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2.</li><li>3.</li><li>4.</li><li>5.</li></ol>
<p>Words or phrases that describe you and your life</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2.</li><li>3.</li><li>4.</li><li>5.</li></ol>	<p>What do you want the world to know about Maria Poveka Martinez?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.</li><li>2.</li><li>3.</li><li>4.</li><li>5.</li></ol>

Handout #3—Pottery Outline



## **Culminating Activity:**

Students will create their own pottery utilizing the coil method. Teachers can use play dough or make their own dough by using the recipe below:

- 2 cups of plain/all-purpose flour
- 1 cup salt
- 1 cup cold water
- 1 Tbs. oil (vegetable oil is fine - baby oil smells lovely).

**Drop the ingredients into a plastic bag and seal.** Let the children knead them together inside the bag - then tip it out for modeling fun.

Recipe can be found at:

<https://www.homeschooling-ideas.com/how-to-make-clay.html#index>

Remember to view the video to show students how to