

## Exploring Patterns Through Coast Salish Weaving



Coast Salish Weaving – Sample 1  
Artist: Paula James, Katzie First Nation



Coast Salish Weaving - Sample 2

Artist: ?

## Lesson One

### Coast Salish Weaving and Exploring Shapes

#### Learning Standards

##### Curricular Competencies:

- Use technology to explore math (using manipulatives and apps)
- Model mathematics in contextualized experiences (act it out by using concrete materials)

##### Content

- From a concrete pattern, describe the pattern rules using words and numbers (attributes)
- Understanding the preservation of shape

##### Materials:

- Photos or samples of Coast Salish Weavings
- Pattern blocks (squares, rectangles, triangles, diamonds)
- Paper blanket template
- Foam blocks (squares, rectangles, triangles, diamonds)

##### Indigenous Connection

- Coast Salish weaving links directly to indigenous knowledge (harvesting weaving materials: processing wool, spinning, dying; traditional Coast Salish weaving vs contemporary Coast Salish weaving).
- Understanding that FN art often relates to the connection to land and place. Symbols, animals featured in FN art demonstrates the strong connection to the land and animals and nature.

##### Activities:

Teacher will share several examples of Coast Salish weaving. Ideally they will be actual samples but if that is not possible, use the photos included in this lesson.

##### Looking at Sample 1: Weaving by Paula James

##### Questions:

- What do you notice?
- What is this blanket made from?
- What shapes do you see in this blanket?
- How do you think it was made?

Give every student a pattern block and one at a time, ask students to see if they can locate their shape on the blanket. Ask them to describe their shape. How many sides does your shape have? How many corners. How are some of the shapes the same/different.

Ask them to place their piece on the matching shape. It may not be the same size but it will have the same number of edges and vertices.

Looking at Sample 2:

Questions:

- How is this weaving the same/different from the first?
- What shapes do you see?
- Do you see any patterns in this piece of weaving?
- What makes a pattern?

Be sure to talk about Coast Salish weaving as art. Learning to weave takes patience and time. Weavers often learned by working along-side a master weaver. Ask students to think about how they learn a new skill. What is involved? What are the steps involved in learning a new skill? Can you become a really soccer player after playing one game? What does it take to become a really good soccer player? The idea here is to help students understand that Indigenous art is a skill that is learned and mastered. It takes practice. There is knowledge to be learned too.

Let's Make a Blanket – Station 1 – Using foam shapes

1. Model how you might make a blanket from the selected shapes (squares, rectangles, diamonds, triangles). Students get a base template and then organize shapes to place on top of their template.
2. What shapes do you see? Talk about your blanket. Explain how you decided on what you might include in your blanket.

Let's Make a Blanket – Station 2 – using Pattern block

1. Model how you might make a blanket from the selected shapes (squares, rectangles, diamonds, triangles). Students get a base template and then organize shapes to place on top of their template.
2. What shapes do you see? Talk about your blanket. Explain how you decided on what you might include in your blanket.

Let's Try Weaving – Station 3 – Making a class wall hanging

1. Each student is given one length of wool. They add it to the class loom.
2. See videos for instructions.

When I tried this lesson out, we set up learning stations for students to explore. Let students pick the station they want to visit. Also allow opportunities for gallery walks. Have students look at the patterns their peers have made. This allows them to build on the ideas of others.



## Assessment

- I used the discussion at the beginning of the lesson – describe your shape as a sort of pre-assessment activity. It gave me a sense of what students knew about shapes. Could they name the shapes? What language did they use to describe their shapes (corners, vertices, sides, faces, or corners?).
- During the activity, I asked students to describe their patterns for their blankets using pattern blocks. I did the same thing when students made their blankets using foam shapes. Through observation and conversation, I got a sense of what students knew about 3-d shapes.
- Discussion enabled conversations about preservation of shape (a square becomes a diamond – scale) and patterns (A, B, A, B) – students made observations about patterns created by colour, by shape).
- At the weaving station, we talked about the thickness of wool used. What difference does it make if I use thick wool/thin wool? We talked about patterns (over, under, over, under). We talked about patterns of colour.

## Final Thoughts:

- This was a model lesson I did with two classrooms of grade 2 students. I did not know the students nor did I know what they knew about Coast Salish art or the learning standards listed in this lesson.
- 'I would recommend doing these stations over a couple of lessons so students have more opportunities to explore and play with shapes.
- The class weaving can be used by the teacher for additional lessons – it serves as a sample of Coast Salish weaving.

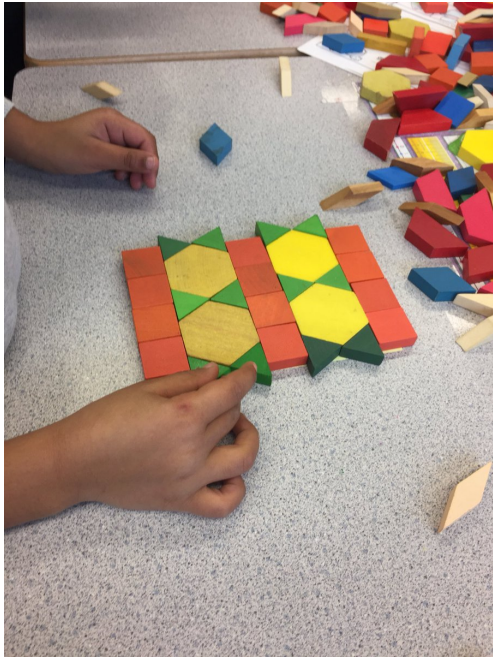
## Extension Activity

- Try this app - <http://starblanket.cpx.ca/>

## Weaving Videos

- <https://youtu.be/-ByYj5G4-Hc>
- [https://youtu.be/LbtKnvc\\_9No](https://youtu.be/LbtKnvc_9No)

Samples of student work:



Criteria for pattern blocks activity:

- Use the piece of paper as your blanket template. It was one of the larger sized post it notes. This gives students a framework to work with. I believe the size was 10 cm X 15 cm.
- Incorporate pattern in your blanket.
- Be prepared to talk about your blanket design.



Criteria for pattern blocks activity:

- Students used the piece of paper as your blanket template. Students place and try out the shapes first and then peel the paper of the back to make their blanket. This was done so students could take their 'blanket' home and talk about the shapes in their blanket and how it relates to patterns in FN art.
- It was one of the larger sized post it notes. This gives students a framework to work with. I believe the size was 10 cm X 15 cm.
- I love this piece. Students were given triangles, squares, and rectangles. It took me a few minutes to figure out the student made an X given the foam shapes she was given!



Criteria for class weaving:

- Use a 'non-standards unit of measure' to determine the length of your piece of wool. (tip of finger to shoulder).
- Learning takes patience and time. This is a project that will last over several days. It is a cooperative project. Coast Salish weavers were very talented. It is a skill that was mastered. Blankets took a great deal of time to make and reflect things that were important to them (place based items – nature, animals). Sometimes when you are learning something new, you get frustrated. When you start to feel frustrated, stop and give yourself a break. Ask a friend to help if you need it. (This models learning alongside an expert).
- This project gives students to see how a community can do something together. When we pull our individual strengths together, we can create something beautiful!.



