

Worksheet: Examining Basketry

"Baskets were the essential tool of life, from birth to death, from hunting to fishing, to gathering and cooking..."
– Sherrie Smith-Ferri, Curator, Grace Hudson Museum

Baskets help us store or transport things. When do YOU encounter this "essential tool of life?" Are baskets used in your life for everyday purposes or special occasions? Look carefully at the baskets and images of baskets provided. Sort the baskets (and/or images of baskets) according to overall shape or form, their possible function, or materials used to produce them.

What forms do you see? Describe or sketch below:

What patterns do you see? Describe or sketch below:

What materials can you identify?

How might these baskets be used in everyday situations? List the everyday functions you think they might serve.

What kinds of special or ceremonial functions might some of these baskets serve?

Where in the world do you think some of these baskets were made? In what kinds of environments might they have been produced?

What are some clues do you see that lead you to believe that a basket is from a particular culture or time period?

Imagine that you might get a chance to talk with someone who makes baskets. What questions would you want the basket maker to answer?

After sorting and speculating about these baskets you will watch a segment from *Craft in America: CALIFORNIA*, featuring Pomo basket maker Corinne Pearce and curator Sherri Smith-Ferri. Hopefully, they will address some of the questions you've listed above. Also, as you learn about Pomo baskets, consider the broad critical questions posted in your classroom.