



CRAFT IN AMERICA

PURPOSE AND PLANNING EDUCATION GUIDE

Worksheet #1: Meaning in Materials

“You know, you can weave, you have my hands, you can weave.’ I woke up the next day and that willow tree we were camping under looked very different. I was able to look at this willow tree with basket maker eyes. So I harvested, I wove a little basket that day, and I’ve been harvesting and weaving ever since then.”

– Corine Pearce, speaking about a dream she had of her great-great-grandmother, Mary Francis Goat, one of the best Pomo basket weavers who ever lived

After watching the segment, we learned that it is important to the Pomo people that the materials for their baskets are harvested from their land. Certain materials are especially significant, such as the branch from the oak tree, because the acorn has always been an important food supply for the Pomo people. The oak branch used in making the baby cradle has meaning, not only because it is very strong, but because it references the life-giving acorn.

Think about materials available to you. What materials could you gather from the natural or human made environment around you? Think about how the materials readily available to you connect you to the place and time in which you live. As you list the materials available to you, also note how those materials are a part of your life or culture. What associations come to mind? Can your basket be deeply personal? Are there materials that you can use to hold a memory or a story? What materials might you use to create a personal basket? For example, you might weave strips from a T-shirt from a significant activity or event. Are there materials that might be appropriate for a communal basket? For example, you might weave strips from the pages of writing from everyone in class.

Examples are listed below.

Material

String from a soccer net

Jump rope

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Association

connection to a group that represents teamwork & hometown

building friendships through play, favorite childhood playground