



CRAFT IN AMERICA

JEWELRY EDUCATION GUIDE

Worksheet #1: Exploring Personal Connections with Materials

Artists often choose to work with materials because of their personal connections and associations with those materials. Use the following prompts to explore your own personal connections with materials. Write your responses to these prompts below or in your sketchbook.

1. Exploring Family Associations

Jesse Monongya has strong connections to his grandfather and the tradition of making jewelry that goes back to his ancestors.

- Who makes something in your family?
- Has this person taught you or others how to make it?
- Is this a family tradition?
- What family “making” traditions can you think of?

2. Exploring Associations with Ideas and Feelings

Harriete Estel Berman chooses objects from popular culture to express ideas about women’s issues, and plastic containers to emphasize our destruction of the environment. Gabriele Gould chooses feathers and natural materials because of her connection to nature—a life-long connection going back to her childhood.

For each of the following items, list your associations with them. Think about your immediate reaction, as well as the people, places, things, feelings, and ideas that come to mind. Add other items to the list and record your associations.

OBJECTS	REACTIONS & ASSOCIATIONS (your reaction; people, places, things, feelings, and ideas)
Pinecones	
Twigs	
Feathers	
Drinking straws	
Seashells	
Bolts, screws, washers, other hardware items	
Wishbones	
Acorns	



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Shoelaces	
Watchband	
Plastic bottles	
Plastic bottle caps	
Ribbons	
Velvet fabric	
Yarn	
String	
Wire	
Paper clips	
Pearls	
Brightly colored beads	

3. Create a list of materials you might use in your jewelry. Record the associations you make with those materials. What ideas or messages do the materials evoke?
4. Which are your favorites, and why?
5. What are some ways you might work with these materials? (wrap, bend, twist, sew together, paint, etc.)
6. Sketch some ideas here or in your sketchbook. Work out construction details as you imagine creating the piece.