



Pottery Imprints and Refits

Adapted from the Ceramic Refit lesson plan in the Third Grade Education Manual of the South Carolina Archaeology Public Outreach Division, Inc.

Objectives

Students will gain knowledge of the diversity of surface treatments found on prehistoric vessels in the area now known as Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. They will also gain experience in the archaeological laboratory method for reconstructing fragments of vessels.

Grade Level

Grade 4

North Carolina Education Standards

2.01 Locate and describe American Indians in North Carolina, past and present.

5.02 Describe traditional art, music, and craft forms in North Carolina.

Materials

- Plain small ceramic flower pots (one per student)
- Markers or other material for creating pottery patterns
- Pourable craft glue
- Small paintbrushes (one per student)
- Small paper cups (one per student/one per student group)
- Disposable plates (sturdy enough to hold and move one pot)
- Pottery pattern sheets (reference pages 6 - 8)
- Sandwich size plastic bags (one per student)
- Graph paper (reference page 9)

Time Required

Allow for approximately one hour for students to decorate their pottery when markers are used. Approximately two hours will be required to reconstruct the pottery, and another one hour will be required to illustrate the pottery refit. This lesson can be divided between many class meetings if you have room to store the pottery pieces.

Background

Late Archaic Period (3000 – 1000 BC)

This period is marked initially by the broad-bladed, broad-stemmed Savannah River Stemmed “point” which actually more likely functioned as an all-purpose knife as well as a spear. Late Archaic groups also continued to use atlatl weights and grooved axes seen during the Middle Archaic. But while earlier periods were marked archaeologically primarily by morphological change in projectile points, the Late Archaic is noteworthy for the advent of pottery. The earliest expression of pottery in the Coastal Plain is the fiber-tempered Stallings series, dating from about 4,500 BP (Sassaman 1993:19, Ward and

Davis 1999:76). Exterior surface treatments included punctations, incising, and finger pinching. Stallings pottery is found throughout the southern Coastal Plain, but is rare north of the Neuse River, leading Phelps (1983:26) to subdivide the Coastal Plain into north and south sub-regions. The Thom's Creek series, which is similar to the Stallings series in terms of exterior surface treatments, is a sand-tempered ceramic also associated with the Late Archaic. Initial dates for Thom's Creek are about 4,000 BP, and the Thom's Creek geographic range extends well into the study area (Sassaman 1993:20).



Figure 1. Thom's Creek Punctated
(http://www.rla.unc.edu/ArchaeoNC/time/wood_Coast_EWood.htm)

Woodland Period (1000 BC – AD 1650)

The Woodland Period is marked by cultural regionalization typically reflected in ceramic assemblages, leading to a division of the Coastal Plain into northern and southern sub-regions. The northern Coastal Plain extends from the Neuse River north to the Virginia state line, while the southern Coastal Plain extends from the Neuse River south to the South Carolina state line. Across much of the southeast the Woodland period is also marked by the introduction/adoption of maize agriculture. This is a less prevalent factor among coastal populations where a rich local resource base provided subsistence resources in sufficient abundance that maize agriculture was not as attractive an adaptive pathway as it was in more inland areas (Hutchinson 2002). Erlandson's (2001:335) statement that coastal areas are marked by "almost limitless combinations of mosaic environments that result from juxtaposing such (estuarine and maritime) aquatic habitats with equally diverse terrestrial habitats" should serve as a cautionary note: models that work in more inland areas may not be applicable to the coast.

Early Woodland Period (1000 – 300 BC)

Typically marked by the common usage, and subsequent common archaeological occurrence of, pottery. Early minority pottery types in the Coastal Plain represent a southeastern tradition and include the fiber-tempered Stallings wares and sandtempered Thom's Creek series. More common wares recovered throughout the Coastal Plain reflect more of a Middle Atlantic influence as evidenced by the frequent recovery of sandtempered, cord marked and fabric-impressed ceramic sherds.

Middle Woodland (300 BC – AD 800)

This period is known as the Cape Fear phase in the south and the Mount Pleasant phase in the north. Cape Fear and Mount Pleasant ceramics are tempered with medium sand and include “an occasional large particle of quartz sand” (South 1976:18) or “larger clastic inclusions” (Phelps 1983:32). Surfaces are cord-marked, fabric-impressed, or net-impressed. Hanover ceramics, also associated with Middle Woodland contexts throughout the Coastal Plain, are tempered with crushed sherds and/or lumps of fired clay. Exterior surfaces were also cord-marked and fabric-impressed. The Hanover series is identical to the Carteret series developed by Lofffield (1976:154). Information concerning the remainder of the Cape Fear phase artifact assemblage is limited. However, Roanoke points, biface blades, abraders, celts, and shell pendants and gorgets have been associated with the Mount Pleasant phase in the northern Coastal Plain (Phelps 1983:33). Settlement patterns during the Middle Woodland have been described as “dispersed,” marked by “a relatively high rate of residential mobility...” (Herbert 2002:302).



Figure 2. Middle Woodland pottery from the southern Coastal Plain: Hanover Fabric Impressed (top row), Cape Fear Fabric Impressed and Cord Marked (bottom row) (http://www.rla.unc.edu/ArchaeoNC/time/wood_Coast_MWood.htm)

Late Woodland/Contact Period (AD 800 – 1650)

This period is divided into the Colington phase along the northern Tidewater, the White Oak/Oak Island phase along the southern Coast, and the Cashie phase within the

interior northern Coastal Plain associated with historically documented Algonquian-speaking, Siouan-speaking, and Iroquois-speaking tribes, respectively. While Phelps (1983) has identified the southern Coastal groups as Siouan speakers, Lofffield (1990) suggests that, at least as far south as Onslow County, these were Algonquian speakers. Regardless of the language, these would be the people that met European explorers from the east. Information on the Late Woodland associations in the southern, interior Coastal Plain/Sandhills area continues to be problematic; however, the Cultural Resources division at Fort Bragg has made continued efforts to unravel the intricacies of prehistoric and protohistoric lifeways in this area. Colington phase sites along the northern coast are identified primarily by the recovery of shelltempered ceramics, although the temporal placement and antiquity of shell tempering has recently been called into question elsewhere in the southeast (Feathers 2009). Surface treatments on North Carolina shell-tempered ceramics are fabric-impressed, simple-stamped, plain, and incised, in order of popularity. Additional artifacts include small triangular points, abraders, celts, bone pins and awls, fishhooks, shell hoes and picks, freshwater pearls, and shell beads (Ward and Davis 1999:211).

Procedures

- Students can work alone, in pairs, or small groups for this activity.
- Students should find a pottery pattern from the available example pages, or create a design of their own imagination on their flowerpot.
- Once a student has completed his/her pot, they then need to place it in a plastic bag and securely seal the top.
- Students will then raise the pot within the bag at arm's length, and drop it to a hard surface. Please remind your students not to throw the pot to the ground as this will create very small pieces and make the pot nearly impossible to refit in the time allowed for this lesson.
- Once the pot is broken, students can take the pieces within the plastic bag back to their seats. They will then spread the broken pieces onto a disposable plate. (Hint: If you plan to do this lesson over the course of a few days, write the student's name(s) on the plates if they can't be left on individual desks.)
- Each student will receive a paper cup filled approximately halfway with Elmer's glue, and a paintbrush in order to refit the pottery pieces. If students sit in groups, a single cup of glue with a paintbrush for each student is recommended.
- Remind students to be patient as the glue will take a few moments to bond two pottery pieces together during refit.
- While the refitted pot is in the final stages of drying, students can then begin drawing their pottery refit. An attempt must be made to show fracture lines where the pot was refit, as well as gaps that are present on the pot where pieces were lost, too small to refit, or where there was not enough time to complete the pottery refit.

Teacher Tips

- Refitting pieces from the rim to the base is the easiest method. Once the rim has been refit, the pot can be turned upside down for students to continue refitting pieces.

- Remind students that it can take about a minute or longer for two pieces to refit, and that putting glue on both pieces of pottery they plan to piece back together will help them stick better than if only one side contains glue.

Additional Resources

Herbert, Joseph

2011 Woodland Potters and Archaeological Ceramics of the North Carolina Coast.
University of Alabama Press.

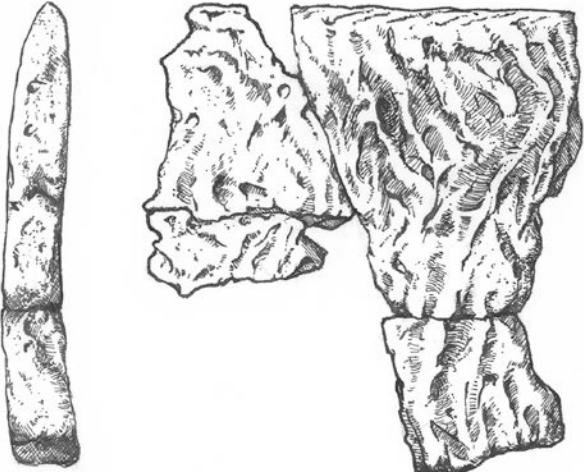
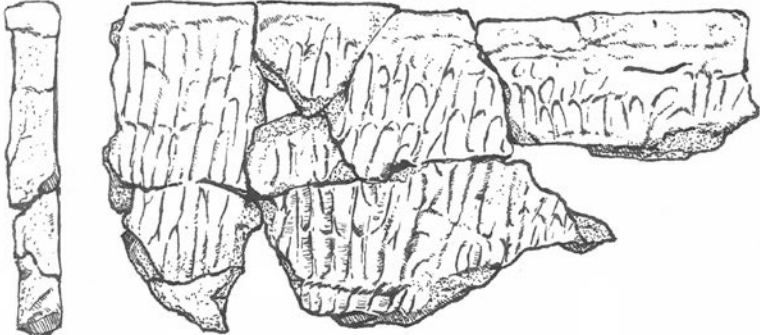
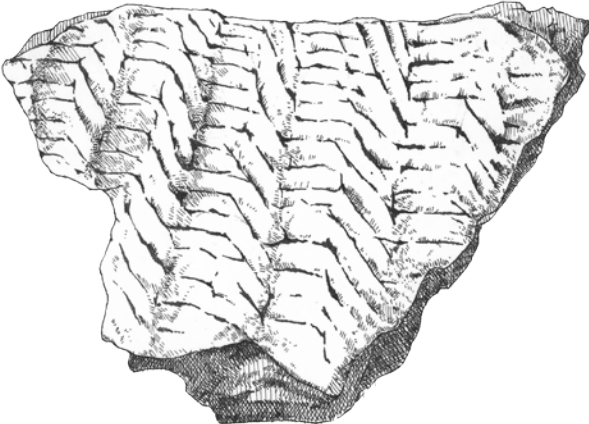
Cherokee North Carolina

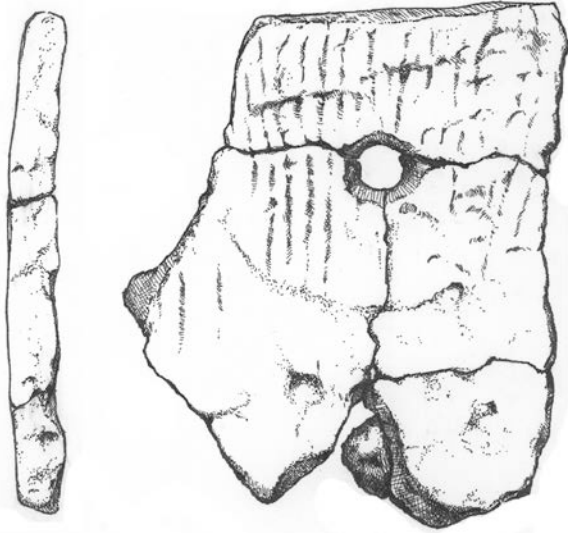
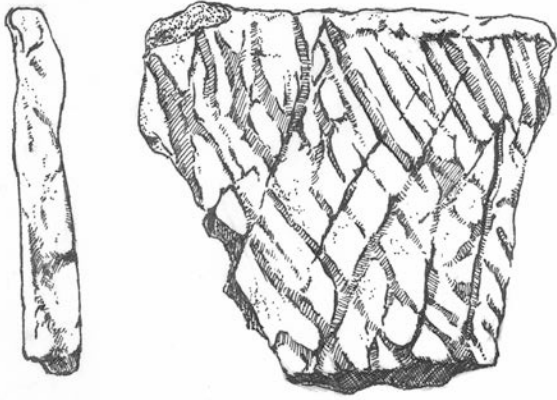
2006 Pottery. Electronic document, <http://www.cherokee-nc.com/index.php?page=22>.

Evaluation

Discuss with your students what they learned about the prehistory of the area now known as Camp Lejeune. What did they learn about the prehistory of North Carolina and the Native Americans who once lived here? Begin a discussion about Native American pottery today, and where you can find potters in your area.

Pottery Patterns from Camp Lejeune







Cape Fear Fabric-impressed
Rim
Site 31ON1059
TU 3, Stratum II, Level 1
20-30cmbd



Onslow Fabric-impressed
Site 31ON0631
TU 3, Stratum II, Level 3
47-57cmbd



Aboriginal tobacco pipe
fragment
Site 31ON1057
ST 99
0-35cmbs

