

Activity:

1. Students will be seated and work in groups of four
2. **BACKGROUND:**
Teacher will introduce activity with photos of traditional Osage dress - **PROJECT ON-SCREEN the “In-Lon-Schka” (een-LONE-shka) booklet** with large photos - read some aloud about dances and special clothing Osage wear in them. **EXPLAIN:**



3. Teacher will project completed examples - explain goal: “We are each going to create an In-Lon-Schka outfit for an Osage man or woman”
4. **PASS OUT TO EACH GROUP OF FOUR:** one copy each of these reference sheets (reusable)
 - o **Osage Man’s Clothing Poster - Labeled in Osage & English**
 - o **Osage Women’s Clothing Poster - Labeled in Osage & English**
 - o **Symbolism, Motifs & Color in Osage Art - List**
 - Clothing Sheets:
 - Explain, each article of clothing has a special history and purpose - these sheets tell the names of each item
 - All are labeled in English and Osage Language (note this is in a different alphabet - have students note different letters. If they would like to learn more about **Osage Orthography** (alphabet) & language - see lesson in **Osage Language Unit**)
 - Explain labels we will be using are the red ones in English
 - Give students time to look these over: In each group, have a reader read the name and point to the labeled articles of clothing - for man’s and woman’s sheets

NOTE: If limited time, each student can do one figure - either man or woman. If more time, each student can dress both a man & a woman

5. PASS OUT TO EACH STUDENT

- Plain figure (to dress)
- (both should be either men’s or women’s)
- Top set of clothing
- Bottom set of clothing for their figure



6. GIVE BACKGROUND:

- Most of these articles are very valuable to the Osage - they are often home-made and passed down through the family
- Each of these articles of clothing has special meaning to the Osage.
- Their **designs and colors are symbolic** -
- A **symbol** is something that stands for itself and something else

SYMBOLISM - see handout “**List Symbolism, Motifs & Color In Osage Art**”

DESIGNS: Each of your clothing pieces has special decorations on it.

- For example, the long decorated strips are “**ribbonwork**” created by women artists.

SYMBOLISM, MOTIFS & COLOR IN OSAGE ART - LIST 

- **symbol** - something that stand for itself and something else
 - **motif** - a shape or design that occurs repeatedly
- Some **MOTIFS** - Symbolic designs - (these are some common symbolic meanings, but some meanings can vary widely. Also different clans have their own specific symbols, i.e. paw - Bear Clan)



- o zig-zag line - lightning
- o steps-up & down design - thunder
- o arrow - protection, the hunt
- o diamond - man’s life
- o triangles - teepees
- o hearts - mating swans, new life
- o flowers - nature, beauty
- o eagle feather - creation, sacred breath - wind
- o pipe - peace & friendship
- o horde - prosperity
- o hand - touch, wearer’s identity
- o cross (plus sign) - four winds
- o star - star, nighttime
- o circle - moon, sun, community

Symbolic COLORS:

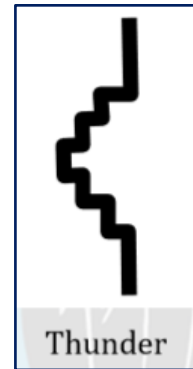
- o Red - earth, day, life, blood of life, sun, fire, energy and power
- o Green - grass, rebirth, enduring life
- o Yellow and light colors - sunlight, prosperity
- o Blue - courage, lightning, night, sky people clan
- o White - sky, peace
- o Black - earth (soil), smoke, death, night and moon

SOURCE: Bailey, Harriett Mae and David C. Lewis, John H. **Quigg** and J. Swan Standing Bear. Art of the Osage. Seattle: St. Louis Art Museum in association with University of Washington Press, 2012. “Osage Art” **Redeath**, Osage Culture Training Board Learning program. 2010. Missouri State University, Osage Nation, History of Nations on the Square. Powell, Jane. “Reading our way: Osage M&A artwork and Symbol.” **lanabhi** Alpha Journal v.18, p.12-22, 2018. copyright 2018.

- Their decorations often contain motifs - A **motif** is a shape or design that occurs repeatedly
- These motifs can have special meaning in the Osage.
- Here are a few examples - these are on handout list (Are any of these motifs on your clothing pieces?)

Symbolic DESIGN - MOTIFS:

- zig-zag line - lightning
- steps-up & down design - thunder
- arrow - protection
- diamond - man's life
- triangles - teepees
- hearts - mating swans, new life
- flowers - nature, beauty
- cross (plus sign) - four winds
- star - star, nighttime
- circle - moon, sun

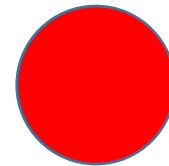


COLORS: We are going to add our own bright colors.

- Even the colors can have special meaning to the Osage.
- Most colors can symbolize more than one thing, depending on artist's intent.
- What colors will YOU use - what will you be symbolizing?

Symbolic COLORS:

- White - sky, peace
- Yellow and light colors - sunlight
- Red - earth, day, blood of life, sun, fire, energy and power
- Green - grass, rebirth, enduring life
- Blue - courage, lightning, night
- Black - earth (soil), smoke, death, night and moon



SOUND:

- The In-Lon-Schka dancers will dance to the powerful sound of drums and singing. But even their own outfits can add to the music.
- The men's leggings have bells on them. What do you think the sound of the bells might symbolize?
 - Bells - the sound of rain



- Now, you are going to design and dress your figure for the special In-Lon-Schka (een-LONE-shka) dance
 - **COLOR:** First, you are going to color in your clothing with bright colors - make them as beautiful as you can! (it's easier to color in the clothing before it is cut out)
 - **CUT OUT:** with scissors, you will cut out your top and bottom pieces along their outside edges
 - **TAPE:** You will tape the clothing onto your paper figures
 - **DRAW:** You will draw in
 - -shoes - moccasins - can put colorful bead designs
 - -face and hair (possibly roach and feather on men, side braids on women, earrings on both)
 - **LABEL:** Finally, you will label (write names of) at least five clothing items on your figure. Draw a line out from the clothing item to blank area on the side where you will have room to write. First write the label in English. If you have time, try writing the words also in Osage.
- SHARE:** then share your figure within your groups. Tell what is symbolized in your clothing designs.