

# THE POLE WALK

Elementary Education Program for Grades 3-5

## Teacher's Notes



*Clockwise from right: Pole Walk Presentation, MOA Great Hall (Photo: Courtesy MOA), Haida Village (Photo: Christopher Erickson), and Haida House (Photo: Goh Iromoto).*

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## Planning Your Visit

### Booking Information

Please access our online bookings guide, *Booking Education Programs: What You Need to Know*, available on the MOA website at [www.moa.ubc.ca/programs/resources.php](http://www.moa.ubc.ca/programs/resources.php).

### Class Guidelines and Requirements

All Educational Programs are led by trained Volunteer Associates (VAs). Accompanying adults and teachers are responsible to supervise their group **at all times**. We require a ratio of 1 adult per 7 students and recommend that students wear name-tags. Upon arrival, please check in with the Admissions desk and make arrangements for payment. The Volunteer Associate responsible for your group will meet you in the museum lobby.

Teachers are asked to review and communicate the guidelines for supervising adults available in our online bookings guide, *Booking Education Programs: What You Need to Know*, at [www.moa.ubc.ca/programs/resources.php](http://www.moa.ubc.ca/programs/resources.php).

### Program Description and Objectives

*The Pole Walk* is a 90 minute program designed to give students an overview of Northwest Coast (NWC) First Nations art and material culture. During this program, students are introduced to different kinds of totem poles and house-posts, and focus on their diverse stylistic and functional features. This program aims to encourage a respect for NWC cultures and an understanding of how totem poles were, and continue to be important cultural production for NWC First Nations.

*The Pole Walk* is a Volunteer Associate guided program and does not include a full tour of the museum. We welcome you to extend your visit before or after your scheduled program as there are many more exhibits to explore with your class.

**Note: The program includes an outdoor tour. Please encourage students to dress appropriately.**

## Program Outline

### Meet and Greet and Outdoor Tour

The class will be greeted outside the museum by an Education Volunteer Associate (VA) for a brief introduction to the program and activities. The class will then proceed to the outdoor exhibition spaces and will explore and discuss Musqueam and Haida material culture. Students will see contemporary house posts by Musqueam artist Susan Point, poles by Haida artist Bill Reid, and visit the Haida House. Students will learn about different types of poles/posts and their function, such as house posts, memorial poles, mortuary poles and frontal poles and begin to identify crests.

### Indoor Tour

In the museum galleries, the class will be guided through the permanent Northwest Coast (NWC) collections and observe and discuss poles/posts from the Musqueam, Haida and Kwakwaka'wakw Nations. Students will also have the opportunity to learn and identify crests such as: Frog, Bear, Beaver, Eagle, Thunderbird one poles in the Museum collection.

### Life Cycle of a Pole Activity

Building upon what students have learned or observed throughout the tour, they will engage in an activity on the life cycle of a pole. Students will have to put images into correct chronological order of a cedar tree becoming a pole and then discuss the life cycle.

### Hands-on activity with teaching collection

Students will have the opportunity to handle and examine tools from MOA's teaching collection to learn about how they are used in making poles/posts. Students will be asked arrange the tools in order of how they are used by artists in carving. Students are encouraged to use inquiry-based learning and to discover how artists might use the tools to carve a pole/post.

### Drawing Activity and Wrap Up

Students will review the crests they saw and learned about today and choose a crest figure from one of the poles in the Great Hall to carefully observe and draw. This activity aims to focus the students on the importance of crests and continuing artistic traditions. The program concludes with a review of key themes and an encouragement to share their knowledge with others.

## Curriculum Relevance

*The Pole Walk* is designed to complement the new BC Social Studies and Arts Education curricula in focusing on big ideas, competencies and cross-curricular learning. Here are suggestions in how this program relates to the curriculum subjects:

Studies		
Grades	Social Concepts	Curricular competencies
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural characteristics and ways of life of local First Nations</li> <li>Cultural and technological accomplishments of local First Nations</li> <li>How local First Nations use resources</li> <li>The role of oral history, stories, and objects as evidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use Social Studies inquiry processes</li> <li>Understand significance of individuals, groups, places, events and objects</li> <li>Determine continuities, changes, patterns, and trends between different time periods, places, and phenomena</li> <li>Understand different perspectives on past or present people, places, issues, and events</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The impact of colonization on local First Nations</li> <li>The history of local community, and connections between their community and significant people, objects, and developments</li> </ul>	
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local First Nation individuals and their contributions to contemporary Canada</li> <li>Contrasting perspectives about land ownership and use, including resource extraction and the environment</li> </ul>	

Arts Education		
Grades	Concepts	Curricular competencies
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Materials, tools, processes, techniques, and technologies to support arts activities</li> <li>Art and artistic traditions from traditional and contemporary First Nations arts and arts-making processes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore identity, place, culture and belonging through arts experiences</li> <li>Observe, listen, describe, inquire, and predict how artists use tools, processes, materials, and environments</li> <li>Experience, document, perform, and share creative works in a variety of way</li> </ul>

## Pre or Post Visit Activities

### Questions to stimulate discussion:

- What is a museum of anthropology
- What can be learned about people by studying objects they make?
- How does the environment and family influence what an artist creates?

### Introduce your students to the Northwest Coast (NWC)

Using the map First Nations in British Columbia, located in the Teacher Resource Guide available on the MOA website at [www.moa.ubc.ca/programs/resources.php](http://www.moa.ubc.ca/programs/resources.php), show the students the territories of the First Nations related to the program: the Haida, the Musqueam, and the Kwakwaka'wakw.

### Explore more about contemporary First Nations artists

Explore public art in your area. Look for contemporary work by First Nations artist that you will see in the tour like: Musqueam artist Susan Point; Haida artist Bill Reid; Kwakwaka'wakw artist Mungo Martin. Artists have their own unique styles that differ between nations and within nations.

### Outdoor Walk

Have class explore the outdoors in search for trees that would be good candidates for pole carving. Have students brainstorm/review about what makes a good tree for carving and predict or review the lifecycle of a pole.

### Family Crests

Poles/posts often have images like crests that are connected to an oral tradition that are sacred to the family that the poles belong to. Have students discuss stories and experiences that are shared within their family. Through those stories, have students think of a symbol or image that would represent their family.

### Sites that you might want to visit

To learn more about MOA's collections: <http://collection-online.moa.ubc.ca/>

To learn more about the First Nations communities in the program:

The Haida: <http://www.haidanation.ca/> and <http://haidaheritagecentre.com/>

The Kwakwaka'wakw: <http://www.umista.org/>

The Musqueam: <http://www.musqueam.bc.ca/>

To learn more about the artists introduced in the program:

Susan Point: <http://susanpoint.com/>

VMC virtual exhibition Bill Reid: <http://theravenscall.ca/>