

Teachers' Orientation Pages to:
Illinois Folk Art: Heartfelt/Handmade

The Collection and Exhibit

The Illinois State Museum collection contains rich examples of Illinois folk art, especially of the nineteenth century. Some objects of the collection are on display in ***At Home in the Heartland*** Exhibit at the **Illinois State Museum in Springfield**. These include the snake pot, the hair wreath, and all of the furniture except the Eastlake table. Other pieces in the collection are part of a traveling exhibit of Illinois folk art named *Heartfelt/Handmade*, which will open in Peoria, Illinois in May of 2000. Watch this URL for updates:

<http://www.lakeview-museum.org/>



The Text and Interdisciplinary Use

The text in the Folk Art section was written to include several kinds of information, including facts about the makers or artists, the art form, and the social meaning of the artwork.

- Where possible, we include information about the maker. Sometimes the maker was not a professional artist, but a private citizen such as a father, a teenager, or a widow. County clerks' offices, and county historical societies have census records and county atlases containing information on individuals, families, and houses or property. Sometimes you can find living descendants of the owners or makers who have more information. If the maker or owner of one of the artworks in this module lived in your part of Illinois, your students could go on a quest for biographical information and stories about these or similar objects.
- Another subject of the text here is to inform viewers about how some of the artworks were made because art-making tools and techniques and art forms themselves have changed since the nineteenth century.
- Because art forms have changed with the society, it is important to include some information about the meaning of folk art objects in the society and time that produced them. Strong examples are art objects that reminded the living about their deceased loved ones in the age before the invention of photography (miniatures, hair wreaths, and death portraits). This information is a bridge to discussions about the meaning of decorative objects in today's world – the study of public or social history.

Grade Levels for Activities

Each activity as written is for a general range of grade levels. Adjustments for grade or ability levels are made by preparing the students well with a discussion and a good, close look at the pertinent images and text in the module, followed by a division, if necessary, of the activity into parts that can be accomplished in one-period increments over several days or weeks. For example, the theorem painting activity could be divided into

1. Viewing and discussing several theorem paintings on line, in person, or in books
2. Drawing the still life in pencil (thumbnails, then a full-size sketch)
3. Tracing and cutting out stencils
4. Painting the theorem
5. Sharing the painting with others

Resources for Folk Art:

Andre, Linda Linnard. *Beyond the Frame: Using Art as a Basis for Interdisciplinary Learning*. Smithsonian Institution Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1995.

Lipman, Jean, Elizabeth Warren, and Robert Bishop. *Young America: A Folk-Art History*. Hudson Hills Press, New York, 1986.

Johnson, Kathleen Eagan. *The Limner's Trade*. The Newtown Bee: Antiques and the Arts Weekly. Bee Publishing, Newtown, Connecticut. The article includes a history of limners, miniatures, and the career skills of folk painters. <http://www.thebee.com/aweb/archive/limner.htm>

This is a school Web page that features a QTVR of The Carbondale Jug by Anna Pottery. <http://www.springfield.k12.il.us/schools/Jefferson/Museum/AnnaPottery.html>

This is an article about the Lakeview Museum of Peoria's collection and exhibition project of Illinois coverlets. It includes information about Illinois weavers.

McKinsey, Kristan H., Glick, Nancy Iona, with Matumby, Katherine H. *Illinois Jacquard Coverlets and Weavers*. The Newtown Bee: Antiques and the Arts Weekly. Bee Publishing, Newtown, Connecticut. <http://www.thebee.com/aweb/archive/weave.htm>

Knight, Judy. *From Hair to Eternity*. Commercial site for Victoriana article gives a description of hair weaving and other decorations of the period.

<http://www.countrycollector.com/spring98/hair.html>

This is a list of online resources for appliqué from About.com's Susan Druding's.

http://quilting.about.com/hobbies/quilting/msub_applique.htm?once=true&