

Stone cutters and ceramic artists

IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW:

BASALT: lava rock that comes from a volcano, and is used to make stone tools

METATE: a flat grinding stone used to prepare many Mexican foods

MOLCAJETE & TEJOLOTE: stone bowl and hand grinding tool used to crush spices, vegetables, nuts, and other ingredients

CERAMICS: pots and other articles made from clay hardened by baking in hot kilns

JARRO: ceramic jug

In this lesson, we look at the work of stone cutters and pottery makers in Oaxaca and explore why their work is so important.

Artisans are among the many Oaxacans who keep cultural traditions alive. Stone cutters and ceramists make objects, mostly for cooking, that are very important to daily life at home. Sometimes, these are also sold to tourists.

Can you identify any of the stone or ceramic artifacts found in these homes?



What similar artifacts do you have in your home? What does your family use them for?

BEFORE you watch the video about stone cutting, think about this question:

Have your family members taught you how to make different household objects? Which family traditions have they shown and taught you?

Here are some examples of things our parents, grandparents or other family members often teach us:

- How to cook certain foods
- How to take pictures
- How to sew
- How to fix things
- How to play a musical instrument
- How to plant a garden
- How to knit
- How to sing a song
- How to paint
- How to fish

WHILE you watch the video, look for ways the stone cutters learn how to cut stone or decorate stone. At what age do stonecutters begin to learn this craft? Why is their job important? Why is it important for younger generations to learn how to cut stone?





Watch the Stone Cutter video (password: **corn**): <https://vimeo.com/255651814>

AFTER you've watched the video answer this question below:

Why is it important for you to learn things from your parents, grandparents, or other family members?
What do you gain from learning a craft or a tradition from your relatives or community?



Watch this 360-degree video exploring a market in Oaxaca.
Be sure to move your cursor, phone, or tablet around to see everything!
(password: **corn**): <https://vimeo.com/454889647>

Cultural Scavenger Hunt

Objects from the past remind us how today we do things differently or the same. In lesson 7, artisans explain how they have learned to make arts and crafts from their ancestors.

Find and identify something in your home that was bought, made or given as a gift before you were born.

Name the object: _____

Explore the object. Use your senses of sight, touch, sound, smell or taste to discover how the object can have a similar purpose but look, feel, smell or taste different.

What do you observe? _____

Explain 3 ways the object has a similar purpose but appears to be different.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Don't forget! Before selecting your object, check with an adult to be sure your object is **SAFE** and **APPROPRIATE** to use.

I finished this lesson!

To learn more about how pottery is made or how to make a clay bird flute, check out the **Extension Activities** at the end of this unit.