

# American Indian Heritage Day

at the BULLOCK MUSEUM

## Caddo Coil Pot Art

### OVERVIEW

Thousands of years ago people from the Caddo tribe made pottery that was both useful and beautiful. Using the soil and water where they lived, they made and shaped clay into bowls, bottles and vases. They used rough, simply designed pieces in their everyday lives for cooking, eating and storing. Finely decorated vessels that were highly polished served important roles in rituals and ceremonies.

Over time the Caddo shifted their focus and began to use metal and other materials for their pots. Archeologists found that the last traditional clay pots were made in the 1850s. However, there is a movement today by Caddo artists to revive the art of clay pot making. They are making pots using the same methods, tools and designs as their ancestors. They are also working hard to teach this craft to younger generations so that the tradition may live on.

In this activity we will be making coil pots from clay, using Caddo pottery as inspiration.

### Learn About It

Watch this [video](#) to see Jeri Redcorn, a Caddo potter, create beautiful works in clay and learn about how she has revived the art of Caddo Pottery making.

Visit these pages to explore Caddo Pottery further:

[Texas Beyond History- Created in Clay](#)

[Sam Noble Museum Caddo Pottery](#)

[Traditional Caddo Pottery Video](#)

[Caddo Pottery Iconography Video](#)

[Jeri Redcorn- "I am a Caddo Potter" Video](#)



An array of ancient Caddo pots,  
Courtesy Texas Archeological  
Research Laboratory



Engraved Caddo bottle. Courtesy Texas Archeological  
Research Laboratory



Intertwining Scrolls by Jeri Redcorn

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## Make It

Materials:

- Air-dry Clay, PlayDough or Model Magic
- Plastic knife
- Toothpick

Instructions:

**Step 1-** Take a ball of clay and roll it into a rope 1/4" to 1/2" thick



**Step 2-** Start on one end of the rope, hold and wrap clay rope around itself to create a flat spiral round with a 3-4" diameter.



**Step 3-** Repeat step 1, then place rope around the edge of the circle. When the rope reaches itself continue by wrapping rope on top of previous rope. Add ropes until your pot is between 2" and 4".



**Step 4-** Once you have added all of your ropes, gently smooth the rope together on the interior of the pot. Repeat this along the bottom and up the sides of the pot.



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**Step 5-** If you want the outside of the pot to be smooth, repeat step 4 on the outside.



**Step 6-** Using a knife or toothpick create a design on the outside of the pot. Remember that the Caddo would use pictures to tell stories on their pottery.



**Step 7-** Fire your pottery! Follow the instructions on the dough you are using. Most materials can be left outside to dry in the sun for a few hours or days. Some materials can be baked in the oven at a low temperature.

