

## Northwest Coastal Native Designs: Burned Cedar Boards Inspired by Kevin Paul

A HANDS-ON ART ACTIVITY DESIGNED  
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### Description

In this activity, students will explore elements of design by looking at Northwest Native Designs. Students will choose various elements, including ovoids, u shapes, circles, symmetrical, and a-symmetrical designs to create their own unique wood burning, inspired by the carvings of Kevin Paul.



*Image: Student example*  
*Source: MoNA Education*

### Materials

- 6ft Totem image by Kevin Paul (included at the end of lesson)
- Video on Coast Salish design elements
- Cedar boards
- Pencils
- Paper
- Wood burning tools
- Adult Volunteers

## Instructions

1) Discuss Northwest Coast Design elements to students so they know exactly what this art style consists of.

- Show students the attached [video on the basics of the Coast Salish design elements](#).
- Show students *6ft Totem* by Kevin Paul (included at the end of this lesson) and use VTS techniques to discuss the object. Be sure to identify the design elements mentioned in the video that you see in this totem pole carving.
  - VTS is an inquiry-based method of facilitating discussion. Tips and resources on VTS are included at the end of this lesson.
- **Further Exploration:** The Washington State "[Since Time Immemorial](#)" education standards have many resources that can help connect this art lesson to other areas of study in the classroom. We strongly encourage educators to use these resources to support this and future activities.

2) Students will then sketch their own image in pencil on a piece of paper using the main elements of Coast Salish design as inspiration.

3) Once students are satisfied with their image, they will draw their final design using pencil on the wood.

4) Finally, students will safely use the wood burning tool (with adult supervision) to burn their design onto the cedar board.

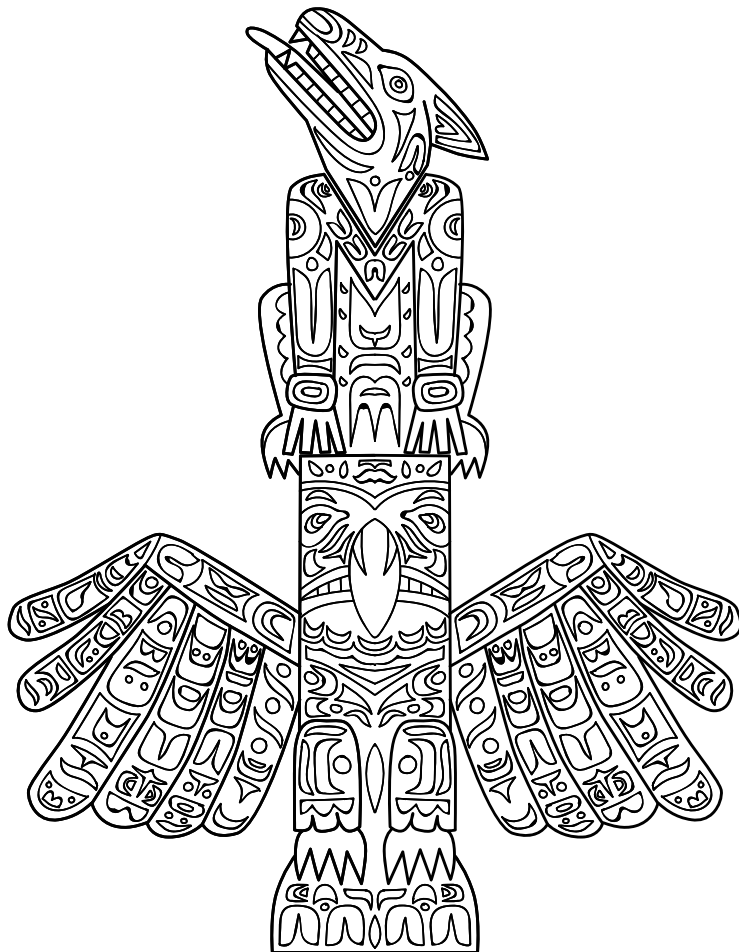
- They should first practice this by writing their name on the back of the board so that they get a feel for the tool.

5) Once students have finished their wood burnings, allow time for them to share their designs with the class and talk about their experience.

## Learning and State Standards

Fulfills **Washington State Arts Learning Standards:**

- **VA:Cr2.1.3** (Create personally satisfying artwork, using a variety of artistic processes and materials)
- **VA:Cr2.2.3** (Demonstrate an understanding of the safe and proficient use of materials, tools, and equipment for a variety of artistic processes.)
- **VA:Cr2.2.4** (When making works of art, utilize and care for materials, tools, and equipment in a manner that prevents danger to oneself and others)



# About the Artist: Kevin Paul



Kevin Paul

Image Credit:: K Paul carvings on Facebook.com

Kevin Paul is a Swinomish carver living on the Swinomish Reservation near La Conner, Washington. Paul carves traditional and contemporary Native American designs, and has been teaching carving in the La Conner school district since 1994. Paul's work can be seen all over the La Conner area, including the local schools and town hall.

**'I LOOK AT A ROUND PIECE OF WOOD AND I WANT IT TO BE DIFFERENT INSTEAD OF ALWAYS LOOKING THE SAME, I LIKE THE CHALLENGE OF PRESENTING SOMETHING DIFFERENT.'**

**-KEVIN PAUL**

# Visual Thinking Strategies

MoNA's Education programs utilize Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS), which is a research-based teaching method that promotes aesthetic development including critical thinking and communication skills. Here in the MoNA, we use VTS to engage students and general visitors with art encouraging them to observe closely, think critically and discuss respectfully; however, VTS can be effectively used across curricula. This approach teaches its participants how to take the time to observe closely, describe what they see in detail and provide evidence for their observations. Students learn that their reflections and thoughts are valued and appreciated in this inclusive teaching method.

In order to facilitate a VTS discussion, you first encourage viewers to take a quiet moment to observe the work you are going to explore. Then you ask the following questions and paraphrase the responses without adding any of your own judgements. You can insert additional vocabulary and point to specific parts of the artwork.

*What's going on in this picture?*

*What do you see that makes you say...?*

*What more can you find?*

## Visual Thinking Strategy Links

If you are interested in learning more about VTS, [here is their website](#). If you already know and love VTS, but want help finding great images to use in your classroom, here is a [fantastic gallery](#). You can also visit this website for additional resources: [www.monamuseum.org/resources-for-educators](http://www.monamuseum.org/resources-for-educators)





*6ft Totem, Kevil Paul*

Image Source: Antique American Indian Art