

# MONA

Museum of Northwest Art

## Twist & Twirl: Ropemaking Inspired by Dan Friday

A HANDS-ON ART  
ACTIVITY DESIGNED BY  
MONA EDUCATORS

### Description

This project is inspired by the woven reef net created by Dan Friday for his piece *Sxwo'le Anchor*. During this activity, students will learn how to twist a simple rope and create a bracelet to wear. The rope will form in their hands as the bundle of yarn is twisted and doubled.

Age: 1st-3rd Grades

Lesson Duration: 30 minutes

Subject: Ropemaking



Image credit: Educator Sample

### Materials

- Scotch tape
- 24" strands of yarn (4-5 strands per student)
- Short video on ropemaking with cedar bark
- *Sxwole Anchor* by Dan Friday (included at the end of the lesson)



# Instructions

**1)** Introduce the students to ropemaking by showing them *Sxwo'le Anchor* by Dan Friday and use VTS to start a conversation about the piece.

- VTS is an inquiry-based method of facilitating discussion. Tips and resources on VTS are included at the end of this lesson.
- Emphasize the handmade cedar rope that is wrapped around the glass anchor in this work. Tell students that today we will be making our own small rope bracelets by hand in a similar way to Dan Friday. This would also be a good moment in the lesson to go over the relevant vocabulary listed on the next page.
- Share the [short video](#) on cedar ropemaking with students. This will create a foundation to understanding how to weave the rope bracelets.
- Images are included on this page to give a visual example of how to do this activity.

**2)** Start the ropemaking process by laying down 4-5 strands of 24 inch yarn flat on a table for each student. Tie an overhand knot 2.5 inches from the top of a strand, and then secure the strands above the knot to the table with scotch tape.

**3)** Hold all the strands together and twist them tightly in a clockwise direction until the twisted area spans about 14 inches of the strands.

- See images #1 and #2

**4)** Hold the twisted strands with one hand, and with the other hand put your index finger on the middle point of the twisted strands.

- From that middle point, fold the strand in half and let the twisted cord twirl around itself a double into a rope.
- If the rope begins to bunch up, smooth it out carefully.
- See images #3 and #4

**5)** Un-tape the doubled cord from the table and tie the loose ends together into an overhand knot. At this point you should have a rope with one knotted end and one looped end.

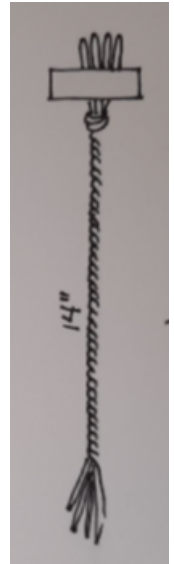
- See image #5

**6)** Slide the knotted end through the loop and wear your finished bracelet!

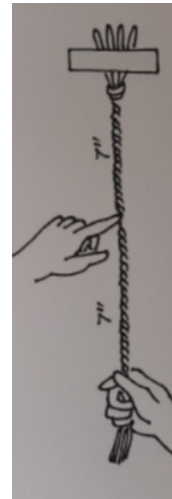
- See image #6



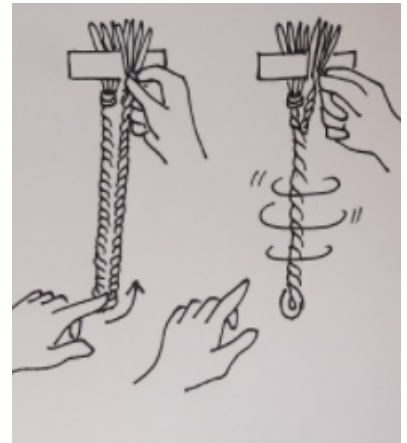
**#1**



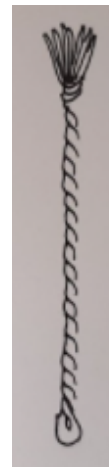
**#2**



**#3**



**#4**



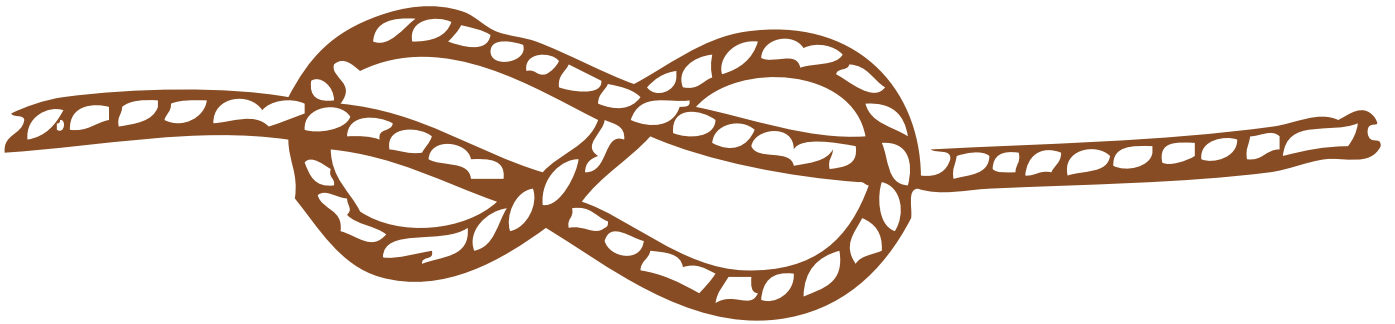
**#5**



**#6**

## Relevant Vocabulary

- ✓ Ropemaking
- ✓ Sxwo'le
- ✓ Cedar Bark
- ✓ Cordage



## Learning and State Standards

### Fulfills Washington State Arts Learning Standards:

**Grade 1: VA:Cr2.1.1** Explore uses of materials and tools to create works of art or design.

**Grade 2: VA:Cr2.3.2** Repurpose objects to make something new.

**Grade3: VA:Cr2.1.3** Create personally satisfying artwork, using a variety of artistic processes and materials.

# 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)

# Meet the Artist: Dan Friday



*Image Credit: Schantz Galleries Contemporary Glass*

Dan Friday is a glassblower and artist from the Puget Sound region in Washington state. Friday has studied glass work for over 20 years with notable artists, including Dale Chihuly and Jan Mares. As a member of the Lummi nation, Friday aims to continue the artistic traditions of his family by solidifying them in his contemporary glass art. This work can often be recognized by its simple and elegant silhouettes.



**LIVING AS AN ARTIST MAY NOT BE DIRECTLY  
SAVING THE WORLD, BUT PERHAPS WE ARE  
SAVING OURSELVES AND HOPEFULLY, IN THE  
PROCESS, MAKING THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE.**

**- DAN FRIDAY**





*Sxwo'le Anchor*, Dan Friday  
Image Credit: Ian Lewis