

# Rock Art Around the World



**Subject and Grade** World History, Art, English Language Arts  
9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades

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**Time duration** Three 45-50 minute class periods or one-and-a-half 90 minute block periods

**Objective** Students will work in cooperative groups to view examples of rock art, research the culture that produced it, and write a short, guided essay describing the rock art's origins. Students will learn that cultures in different parts of the world developed in different ways at different times and that we can learn a great deal about a culture by analyzing its rock art.

**TEKS** *Art, High School, Level I*  
3(A), compare and contrast historical and contemporary styles while identifying general themes and trends;  
3(B), describe general characteristics in artwork from a variety of cultures, which might also include personal identity and heritage;

*Art, High School, Level II*  
3(A), examine selected historical periods or styles of art to identify general themes and trends;

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3(B), analyze specific characteristics in artwork from a variety of cultures;

*Art, High School, Level III*

3(A), research selected historical periods, artists, general themes, trends, and styles of art;

3(B), distinguish the correlation between specific characteristics and influences of various cultures and contemporary artwork;

*Art, High School, Level IV*

3(A), research and report on selected historical periods, artists, general themes, trends, and styles of art;

*Social Studies, High School, World History*

25(A), analyze examples of how art, architecture, literature, music, and drama reflect the history of the cultures in which they are produced; and

25(B), describe examples of art, music, and literature that transcend the cultures in which they were created and convey universal themes.

28(A), identify methods used by archaeologists, anthropologists, historians, and geographers to analyze evidence;

*English Language Arts and Reading, High School, English I*

3, Developing and sustaining foundational language skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking--self-sustained reading. The student reads grade-appropriate texts independently. The student is expected

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to self-select text and read independently for a sustained period of time.

4(F) make inferences and use evidence to support understanding;

4(G) evaluate details read to determine key ideas;

4(H) synthesize information from multiple texts to create new understanding;

5(A), describe personal connections to a variety of sources, including self-selected texts;

5(C), use text evidence and original commentary to support a comprehensive response;

5(D), paraphrase and summarize texts in ways that maintain meaning and logical order;

*English Language Arts and Reading, High School, English II - IV*

4(F) make inferences and use evidence to support understanding;

4(G) evaluate details read to determine key ideas;

4(H) synthesize information from multiple texts to create new understanding;

**Materials**

- Color examples of rock art (included)
- Student handouts of rock art (included)
- Graphic Organizer for rock art research (included)
- Access to the Internet and/or school library
- Overhead projector or blackboard
- Pens and paper for essay writing

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**Activities  
and  
procedures**

*Day 1*

**Step 1:** Ask students to give examples of famous paintings they've seen. Point out that while most paintings we recognize today were painted on canvas or wood, thousands of prehistoric and historic pictures were painted on rock in caves and open areas all over the world. These paintings are called pictographs. Archeologists can use carbon dating to determine the approximate age of the paints used in a pictograph, but we can also gain understanding of pictographs by knowing about the environment, culture, and area in which they were created.

**Step 2:** Display the following questions on the board or overhead projector:

- Describe the kind of person you think created your pictograph.
- What materials do you think were used to create it?
- Knowing what you do about the area and era that produced your pictograph, what information or "story" do you see in your pictograph?

View examples of pictographs included in this lesson. As the class views the images, point out which area of the world each is from and in what historical era it was produced. Explain that after researching the era and area that produced each pictograph, students will make inferences from their research information to write a short essay that will answer the above questions.

**Step 3:** Have students get into cooperative groups of 2-3. Distribute one graphic organizer to each group and have students begin researching the origins of their pictographs, using the Internet and/or the library.

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*Day 2:* Continue research.

*Day 3*

**Step 1:** Post the previous 3 questions again and read them aloud with students.

**Step 2:** Explain that using these questions as a guide, students will make inferences from their research information to write a first-person essay about their pictograph, writing in the voice of the artist. Essays should be as detailed as possible and should include when and where the artist lived (based on the era and area of the pictograph being researched).

**Closure:** Ask the following: What technology and materials are available to artists today? How do they compare to the technology and materials used to create the rock art studied in this lesson? If you were an artist, how would you ensure that your work would endure for 1,000 years?

**Modification** Provide an essay outline for special needs students and give them predetermined Internet addresses to research. Have gifted/talented students research and report on an archeological rock art site not included in this lesson.

**Extension Activities** For more on rock art, have students view the following Texas Beyond History websites:

- Trans-Pecos Artistic Expression:  
[www.texasbeyondhistory.net/trans-p/artistic/index.html](http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/trans-p/artistic/index.html)

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- Rock Art of the Hueco Tanks:  
[www.texasbeyondhistory.net/hueco/rockart.html](http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/hueco/rockart.html)
  - On the Trail to Lower Pecos Rock Art:  
[www.texasbeyondhistory.net/plateaus/artistic/trail.html](http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/plateaus/artistic/trail.html)
  - Lower Pecos Rock Art:  
[www.texasbeyondhistory.net/pecos/art.html](http://www.texasbeyondhistory.net/pecos/art.html)

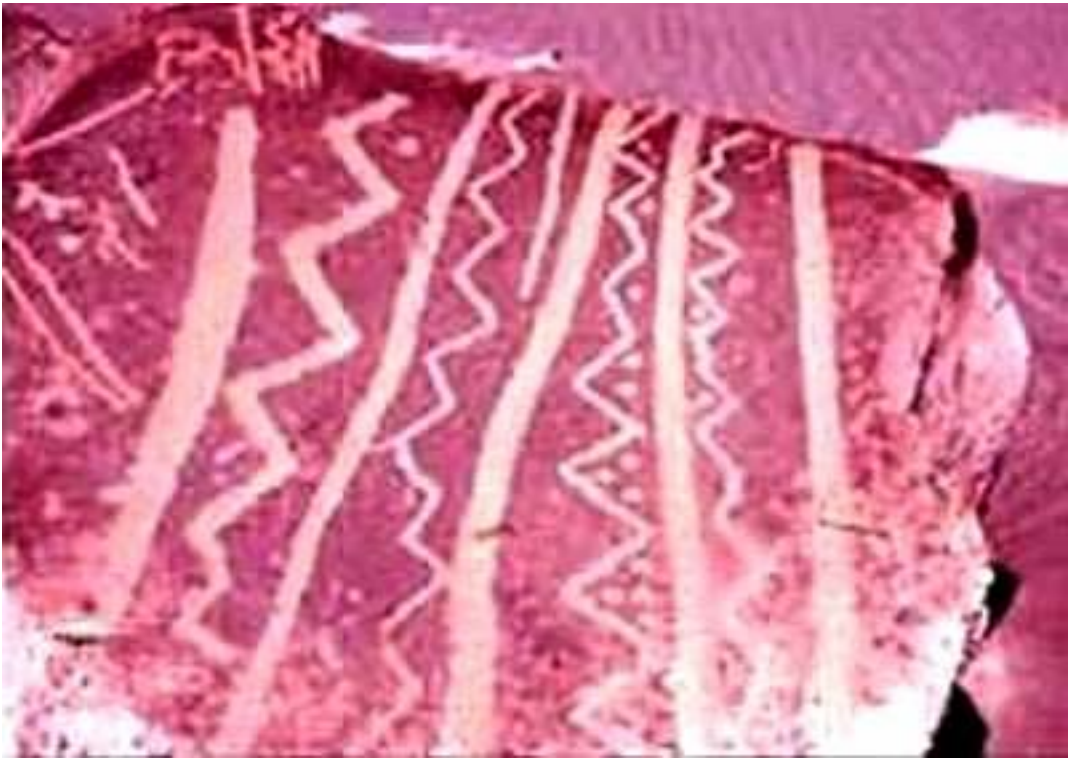
Using a wall map of the world, have a representative from each group point out where in the world their pictograph originated.

Using butcher paper, have students create a class timeline mural incorporating the pictograph dates from each group. Add information from each group's research to their respective section of the timeline. Illustrate the timeline with pictographs from each group's country and era.

**Assessment** Completed Graphic Organizer and essay

## Examples of Rock Art around the World









## Student Handouts

### Rock Art Around the World



(Photo courtesy Dr. Robert G. Bednarik, Australian Rock Art Research Association, Inc.)

Toro Muerto, Peru  
Date unknown, probably Late Archaic Era

## Rock Art Around the World



(Photo courtesy Dr. Robert G. Bednarik, Australian Rock Art Research Association, Inc.)

Chumash Indian Rock Painting,  
California, U.S.A.  
Late Archaic Era

# Rock Art Around the World



Hueco Tanks, Texas  
Date unknown, probably Late Formative  
Period

# Rock Art Around the World



(Photo courtesy Dr. Robert G. Bednarik, Australian Rock Art Research Association, Inc.)

Presumed Painting of Horse, Pech Merle,  
France  
Upper Paleolithic Era

# Rock Art Around the World



(Photo courtesy Dr. Robert G. Bednarik, Australian Rock Art Research Association, Inc.)

Wandjina Rock Paintings, Kimberley,  
West Australia  
Late Archaic Era

Rock Art Around the World



Lower Pecos, Texas  
Date unknown probably Late Archaic

# Comparative Rock Art Lesson

## Graphic Organizer

Where was your rock art created?

When was it created?

Describe the pictograph in your own words.

All of the following topics pertain to both the location and time period in which your example of rock art was created. Find information to describe the following:

Topography

Climate

Technology

Food

Clothing

Religious practices