

# “Leather” Shields

## Native American Wall Hangings

### (art + social studies)

The leather shield was a very important item to the Native American, not only because it provided protection from physical harm, but it was also believed to provide protection for the spirit. Shields were carried, attached to a horse or displayed in a place of honor within a warrior's lodge. In creating a leather shield, great care was taken to prepare the leather and to select colors, symbols and decorations for it. This project offers an easy and safe way to produce the texture and feel of working with leather in the manner of Native American craftsmen.



### Grade Levels K-6

*Note: instructions and materials based on a class of 25 students. Adjust as needed.*

### Process

1. Distribute to each student a ball of Model Magic about 3" in diameter. Work quickly, as the Model Magic will dry in about 45 minutes.
2. Pat Model Magic flat with hands or use a brayer to even the surface to about 1/4" thick. It is desirable to have uneven and cracked edges, like leather.
3. Press beads and tooled aluminum foil (for silver) into the clay. Leave space 1/2" around the edges. Use a plastic straw to make holes in the outside edge where raffia can be added.
4. Press the leather tools around the design for specific texture. Press in more beads if needed. Glue can be used as needed.
5. Add raffia and aluminum embellishments.

### Options

- Paint on designs using watercolor, tempera, acrylic or marker
- Use Metallic markers for “silver” tooled effect
- Use more Model Magic to create large, leather hide-like artwork



### Materials

[Crayola® Model Magic®](#) 2-lb bucket, assorted natural colors (33214-1008), share one bucket across classroom

[Speedball® Hard Rubber Brayer](#) (40105-1004), share six across classroom

[Leather Stamping Tools](#) (61438-1009), 6-tool set, share four across classroom

[Opaque E-Beads](#) (60726-1000), share three bags across classroom

[Bugle Beads](#) (60768-1033), share two bags across classroom

[Weldbond® Adhesive](#) (23819-1004), share four 8-oz bottles across classroom

[Mixed Colored Raffia](#) (60908-1005)

Heavy-duty Aluminum Foil

## **National Standards:**

**Content Standard #1** — Understanding and applying media, techniques and processes

- **K-4** Students use different media, techniques and processes to communicate ideas, experiences and stories.
- **5-8** Students intentionally take advantage of the qualities and characteristics of art media, techniques and processes to enhance communication of their experience and ideas.

**Content Standard #4** — Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

- **K-4** Students know that the visual arts have both a history and specific relationships to various cultures.
- **5-8** Students describe and place a variety of art objects in historical and cultural contexts.

**Content Standard #6** — Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines

- **K-4** Students understand and use similarities and differences between characteristics of the visual arts and other arts disciplines.
- **5-8** Students describe ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines taught in the school are interrelated with the visual arts.