

# POTTERS

Tomorrow is going to be a great day. We are going to the Museum of History to explore how ancient settlers lived. The teacher has divided us into groups and assigned each group a different area to focus on: metallurgy (metals), pottery (ceramics), goldsmithing (gold and jewelry) and furs (leather).



My friend, Pablo and I are in the pottery group. It is exciting to study how objects were made out of mud or clay to use in people's daily life thousands of years ago.



The day before the visit, we were given several reference websites to investigate online about our assigned topic. Pablo and I met at my house and prepared a brief presentation to share with the rest of our classmates. This is what we wrote:

Pottery is the art of making objects, such as containers, utensils, and household gadgets from materials like mud or clay. The decoration of the pottery was very simple and had very few drawings or decorations on it.



Pottery and ceramics are often confused, because both are made of mud or clay, but the biggest difference is that ceramics are usually decorated with colored enamels using a special technique.

To make it easier to make clay and ceramic objects, they developed the potter's wheel which allowed a potter to manipulate and work with these materials. A very hot oven called a kiln was also developed to bake the object making it hard.





The first pottery objects date back to the Upper Paleolithic period. They used symbols of gods and goddesses on the objects believing these would help them and protect them in their lives, especially the fertility goddess to bring more children into the world.



During the Neolithic period, modeling with clay and ceramic objects greatly improved. They began to make containers and vases leaving empty areas. With this new technique came the evolution in the kitchen since they could use these containers to cook their food over a fire.

Since the Neolithic period, some villages used this same method for hundreds of years, these types of containers were used for cooking, storing things, keeping grains or other foods, and even for burying. Gradually, they began to decorate these jars and vases with assorted colors and images of plants, humans, or animals. The ones that Paul and I liked most, were ones found in Greece and Italy dating back thousands of years ago.



Other villages used pottery to make pipes to direct water to various parts of the city in an easy, safe, and clean way.

Some villages especially in the area of America, used molds to create many vessels in less time. American civilizations found in Peru and Mexico added legs to the vessels for greater stability and durability. Some made grooves and incisions inside vessels to grind chili, cocoa, and other seasonings





Nowadays, the number of potters has decreased because so much of the pottery we use today is made in factories by machines, rather than being handmade. In spite of this, potters can still be found scattered around various places in the world following the same techniques and traditions of the past.



If you stop to think about it, the creation and use of pottery allowed people long ago to live better and has improved our lives too.

After all the research we have done and the visit to the museum tomorrow, Pablo and I have been talking and are planning to ask our teacher if we could make a container in art class to take home to our families. Hopefully, he will like the idea and let us do it.

Have you ever been to the History Museum where you live? If you have, be sure to look at the at the pottery when you go back. If you haven't gone yet, ask your family to go and spend a day surrounded by so many interesting works of art.





Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



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1. Have you ever been to the History Museum in your city?

a. Yes What did you see?

\_\_\_\_\_

a. No Would you like to go? What would you like to see?

\_\_\_\_\_



2. According to the text, what does incisions mean?

a. Grooves or lines

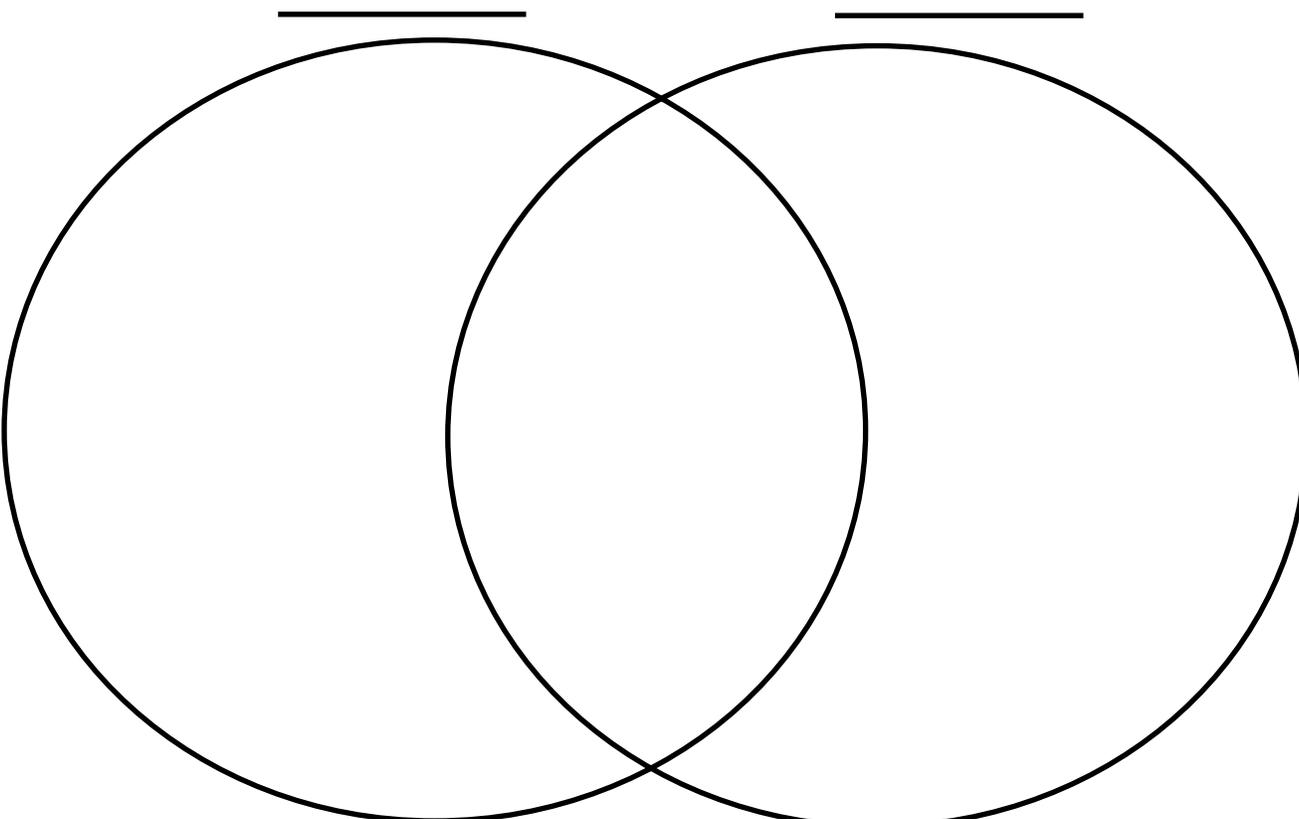
b. Vessels

c. Stability

d. Many years old



3. According to the text, how are pottery and ceramics similar and different? Use a Venn diagram.





4. According to the text, in ancient times pottery was used to ...

- a. Store food
- b. Bury people
- c. Make pipes
- d. All the answers are true.

5. Why was the potter an important profession in ancient times?

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6. Why has the number of potters decreased?

- a. They didn't pay enough money.
- b. You have to study hard.
- c. People no longer use containers.
- d. Most containers are made by machines.

7. What qualities do you think a potter must have to perform his job well?

- a. Patience
- b. Delicacy
- c. Clumsiness
- d. Sincerity

8. If you were a potter, what would you like to make? Why?

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9. What do you think would have happened if there had been no potters in ancient times?

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10. Design a piece of pottery. Write what it would do, what form and

colors would have and for how much you would sell it. Draw it.



My piece would serve to: \_\_\_\_\_

It would have form \_\_\_\_\_

It would have color or colors \_\_\_\_\_

I would sell it for \_\_\_\_\_

