

The Coast Salish are a group of ethnically and linguistically related indigenous people from the Pacific Northwest area. Coast Salish people have lived in Washington, Oregon, and British Columbia since time immemorial. This activity teaches about bentwood boxes, a traditional Coast Salish box made from cedar.

What is a bentwood box?

- A bentwood box is a box made out of just one piece of wood! These boxes are made of cedar and can be made out of a single piece of wood thanks to cedar's unique properties.
- Cedar is both flexible and water resistant. If cedar wood is heated up and steamed using hot water, the wood itself becomes flexible. Once it's flexible, the wood can be bent into a box shape. Because the box is made of all one piece of wood, you can put water in the box and it won't leak out!
- Take a look at these examples of bentwood boxes- you can see that the sides are all connected as a single piece of wood! More examples can be found online by looking for Coast Salish bentwood boxes.

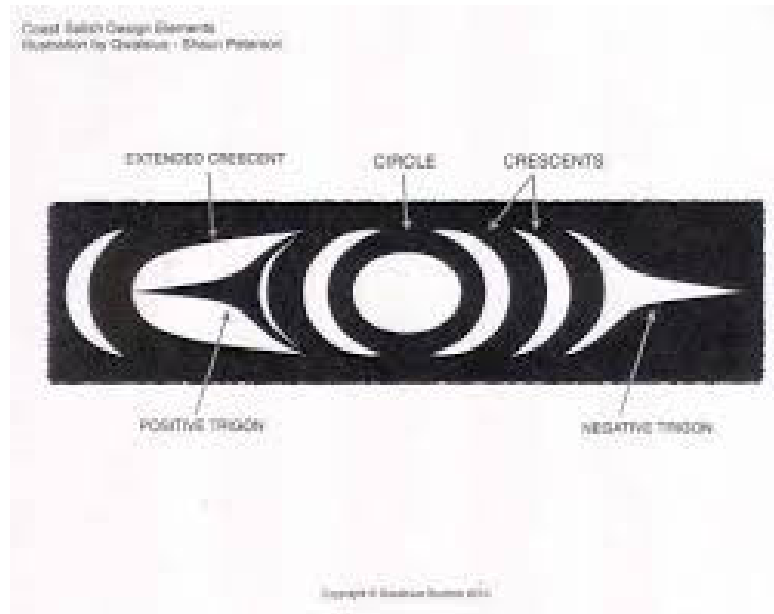


- Sometimes these boxes can be decorated artistically. Here are some examples, more can be found by searching the internet.



- There are 3 shapes that you can often find on Coast Salish art. If you look at this picture, you can find examples of all three!
 - Circles/Ovals

- Trigons
- Crescents



- You can find these shapes in several examples of Coast Salish art. Try searching on the internet for some more examples!
- Now try making your own bentwood box! Cut out the bentwood box and fold along the lines to make a mini bentwood box out of one piece of paper! Don't forget to decorate your bentwood box with circles, ovals, trigons and crescents!

